

## Chapter 14

### CONCLUSION

#### The political and aesthetic legacies of the early war film

In December 1899 a film show was advertised in the north west of England. Some twenty films were to be shown. These included at least half a dozen scenes (mainly actualities) depicting recent trouble spots in the world, including films of wars in the Sudan, Cuba and South Africa, along with one scene related to the Armenian massacres. Such a panoply of current conflicts offers a good example – and not the only one – of how militarism and war had become major themes and attractions of early film exhibitions.<sup>1</sup>

A show like this with so many military referents was reflecting the global reality, for this was a very violent period, with several wars being fought in the half decade after cinema's debut (including two of really historic importance: the Spanish-American and Boer wars). Because the new medium arose in this particularly conflict-ridden era – albeit a historical accident – this meant that warfare could in no sense be peripheral to the early cinema, and it was inevitable that the moving picture would confront it in some way. In the course of this thesis I have offered an account of how early cinema dealt with warfare, and in the process have presented new information, and, I hope, some new perspectives. In particular, I have explained how, in only half a decade, filmmakers began to surmount the problems inherent in recording and representing armed conflict.

In this final chapter I present some more general conclusions about the manner of this representation and some thoughts about where it was to lead. I suggest, broadly speaking, that in this meeting of medium (cinema) and message (war), the consequences were twofold: filmmakers were oriented to the military point of view, with early war films often being sheer propaganda for armed intervention; but on the other hand the military influence had a more benign consequence, for thanks to the challenge of filming modern warfare, the cinema developed faster and in different ways than it would have done otherwise. The early war film therefore has a dual legacy, for media politics and for film aesthetics.<sup>2</sup> I start with the former aspect, the militaristic ideology which informs so many of these early films.

## **PIONEERING FILM PROPAGANDA**

### **Controlling the message**

Throughout this thesis I have described various ideological ‘messages’ found in many of the early war films: often these visual ‘arguments’ tended to be about imperial triumph, the success of ‘our’ forces, and the unpleasantness and inferiority of the opposition. Given such extreme messages, and knowing the extensive audience reach of these films, one is surely entitled to call many of them ‘propaganda’ – which, by dictionary definition is any organised scheme to propagate a doctrine or belief.

Early war films as propaganda employed a number of innovative cinematic practices to create and communicate their chauvinist messages – ‘techniques of persuasion’, one might call them. I have identified several such techniques, used in various war film genres, applied at different points in the production process, from shooting through editing to exhibition. These techniques were instigated by various different ‘actors’ in the process of bringing the film to the audience, including, most significantly, the producers, the military authorities, and the exhibitors. The practices included:

- The selection of a suitable cameraman to film at the front, placing him with a suitable unit of troops, thus making him physically dependent on the army of our side (‘our’ meaning the western side).
- The ‘arranging’ of battle scenes in the field to give a more positive impression, usually with the connivance of the military.
- Filming troops and commanders in positive roles, or en route to or returning from battle (‘related films’).
- Re-titling films to make them seem more relevant to the current war, and/or more sympathetic to our side.
- Artificially staging films (with actors) to represent the victory of our troops, while belittling or demonising the other side.
- Artificially staging films which contain allegorical messages about the triumph of our flag or nation.
- Programming together any of the above films, and exhibiting them with emotive commentary and music, to create a patriotic narrative about the war.

At least one of these persuasive techniques was employed in respect of every one of the half dozen wars which I have discussed in this thesis. Here are some examples, taken from earlier chapters, listed, in order, war by war:

- One of Méliès’ fakes of the Greco-Turkish War, was re-titled as ‘Cruel murders of Christians’, this inflammatory description being the first instance of re-titling to make a propaganda point.

- The Sudan War was represented through shots of returning troops and commanders, notably Kitchener, these 'related' images becoming the object of triumphalist glorification in Britain's music halls.
- A similar glorification of Admiral Dewey took place during the Spanish-American War; and during this conflict too several war films were programmed synergistically to celebrate America's triumph.
- During the Philippine War a cameraman, Carl Ackerman, was effectively working for the US military, and was embedded with the US Army in the war zone; meanwhile, patronising fake films painted the Filipino opponents as incompetent cowards.
- This patronising of the other side advanced a step further during the Boer War when British acted films depicted the Boers as devious; and actuality cameramen glorified the British side by filming innumerable regiments and commanders in South Africa or fresh from their triumphs there.
- The height of filmic demonisation was reached in the wake of the Boxer events, when staged films represented the Boxers as savages, and actuality cameramen made heroes of the international troops and dwelled on the Chinese nation's defeat.

### **Regulating cameramen**

For actualities, an important means of ensuring films were 'on message' was by controlling who did the filming. We see in this period important developments in the relationship between war cameramen and the armed forces, and a number of different 'models' or kinds of relationship emerge. In my research to date I have found few instances in any of these half dozen wars of cameramen being completely free to film in a war zone. Mainly they were 'placed with army units, and then generally they were regulated in one of two ways, depending if they were seen as being 'friendly' to the armed forces, as being 'one of us'; or if they were seen as independent. Unattached/independent cameramen in this period were heavily regulated, restricted in their activities and movements, and their work was censored in various ways. For example, Paley suffered restrictions and rough treatment when filming under Spanish control in Cuba. Rosenthal underwent repeated hold-ups as he sought filming permission during the Boer War, and also had his films censored at the front. Dickson faced similar kinds of restriction, and repeatedly so.

On the other hand, 'friendly' cameramen were often given considerable freedom to roam by the forces at the front with whom they were based. This category of cameramen may be broken down further into four sub-classes, starting with the most closely 'tied':

- Those who were actual members of a military unit (e.g. Beevor, who was a front-line officer in the Boer War).
- Cameramen closely associated with the military (e.g. Benett-Stanford, a former officer, who filmed in the Sudan).

- Operators who were working for and living with the army, i.e. 'embedded' with the forces (e.g. Ackerman: commissioned by the US Army to film in the Philippines).
- Cameramen generally seen as 'friendlies' (e.g. Holmes in the Philippines, Villiers in the Sudan).

Incidentally, and looking ahead, the different treatment meted out to 'friendly' cameramen and to independents became even more stark during the Russo-Japanese war in 1904/05: while official Japanese cameramen were allowed to film extensively in the war zone, independent correspondents and cameramen (most notably Rosenthal) were kept from the front for a long time, and once there were heavily regulated by the Japanese authorities. These models for the regulation of cameramen were an early warning of how things would be managed in future conflicts, notably during the First and Second World Wars.<sup>3</sup>

### **Propaganda in staging and exhibition**

What of staged films? As we have seen, all these wars in the 1900 era were dramatised, and these films were often vehicles for stinging propaganda against the enemy. But it is worth analysing such films with rather more subtlety, for there were variations in the 'level' of propaganda between the two major types of staged films, fakes and symbolic scenes. These differences are most evident in films of the Boer War. I have noted in an earlier chapter that while the acted films by Pathé and Edison about this war were relatively balanced, a very different tone characterised the several British examples, which were almost all highly partisan, as was the single Dutch example.

Interestingly, this contrast was to some extent associated with genre difference, for while the Pathé and Edison examples were mainly fakes (acted battlefield incidents), the Dutch film and many of the British-made staged films were symbolic representations. In short, the symbolic scene seems to be more consistently associated with propaganda than the faked battlefield incident. As some explanation for this difference, one might say that a fake film was always trying to stay within the bounds of the vaguely possible, whereas in a symbolic film there were no limits to the nationalistic excesses.

Interestingly, symbolic films have received less attention from historians than the fakes; yet one might argue that such allegorical scenes were of more lasting influence or significance. While fakes virtually died out, as we shall see in the next section – and were regarded a few years hence as being an outdated genre – allegorical images persisted in some form, if not in this exact style of film. One thinks of swastikas in Nazi propaganda, communist symbols in Soviet films, and even flags and national figures such as Uncle Sam seen in advertising and in American war films. Indeed, some nationalist symbols are still seen in films and other moving images.

One should not forget the exhibition sector in this discussion of propaganda, and two aspects are striking. Firstly the sheer emotion which was stirred up by some war films in this period, and secondly how much the reaction varied between audiences with different sympathies – especially between different countries. The emotional power is best exemplified by the Spanish-American war, when showmen in America evoked powerful patriotic sentiments in their audiences through an accumulation of images related to the war, often combined with an appropriately partisan commentary, and stirring music.<sup>4</sup>

Yet motion pictures about the same war might stir different audiences in quite dissimilar ways. Probably the clearest example of this comes with Kruger during the Boer War, for while his image was hooted in music halls and other venues in Britain, it was cheered enthusiastically by audiences in Continental Europe. It is of course no great surprise that reactions varied (for Kruger was viewed very differently in Britain and other countries), but the interesting thing is the *intensity* of the equal and opposite reactions. I discuss some possible reasons for this passionate response in the following paragraphs.

### **Propaganda and jingoism: the power of film**

These three issues just discussed – the regulation and control of cameramen; the production of staged scenes, especially nationalist allegories; the pandering to audience prejudice – all are surely clear cases of propaganda in action. And here I must refine the use of this term ‘propaganda’, for the general belief about this practice is that it is a form of information or misinformation designed to (or likely to) change a target audience’s opinion. But this is not what propaganda actually does, according to some historians who have studied it.<sup>5</sup> There is little evidence that propaganda drastically changes a person’s viewpoint, and it is more likely that it tends merely to confirm or reinforce their existing opinion or prejudice.<sup>6</sup> This is exactly what this early film material was doing: confirming a belief in nationalism, empire and/or military triumph, among an audience which was already broadly sympathetic; and in effect marginalising dissent. In other words, these early war films, staged or actuality, rather than changing minds, tended to focus common beliefs and encourage conformity.

Propaganda is discussed by J.A. Hobson in his influential book, *Imperialism*, though he puts it in terms of ‘jingoism’. Hobson defines jingoism as the enthusiasm for warfare by people who do not actually have to take part in it, but merely view conflict vicariously from afar. He sees jingoism as capable of influencing behaviour, for the worse:

‘Jingoism is merely the lust of the spectator, unpurged by any personal effort, risk, or sacrifice, gloating in the perils, pains, and slaughter of fellow-men whom he does not know, but whose destruction he desires in a blind and artificially stimulated passion of hatred and revenge.’... ‘Tricked out with the real or sham glories of military heroism and the magnificent

claims of empire-making, jingoism becomes a nucleus of a sort of patriotism which can be moved to any folly or to any crime.<sup>7</sup>

Hobson doesn't explicitly mention film in this connection, though, given that the book was published in 1902 he must have known about this new medium, and presumably knew that films were made of the Boer War. His comments just quoted, about people seeing the conflict but not actually taking part, and the term 'lust of the spectator', do suggest the context of a film show.

In any case, film was certainly an effective means of promulgating and airing prejudice or jingoism; it was and is an excellent form of propaganda, for several reasons. As mentioned above, by dictionary definition propaganda is aimed at spreading a doctrine or belief, and while earlier media such as printed matter had done this quite well, film could do the job far more efficiently, reaching many more spectators. This is because multiple copies could be made of a film, and each copy could be screened several times to audiences of hundreds or even thousands. This mass market effect was increased by the inherent drawing power of the moving image and the social, communal context of the gathered audience: a 'crowd', all of whose members broadly shared the same culture and opinions. Emotive moving images were screened in this social, and often highly emotional context, in a dark hall with stirring music as accompaniment, making for a quite intense experience.

For the ordinary spectator, seeing these powerful images of one's own nation on the large screen, surrounded by his or her fellow citizens of like mind, the effect must have been extremely powerful, inflaming their 'spectatorial lust' (as Hobson put it) in the common cause. And if one multiplies these spectators by all the other spectators in different halls on many other evenings, the 'reinforcing' effect on the entirety of public opinion might have been substantial. The spectators for these films in the 1900 era were therefore not merely viewing early war films, they were witnessing the origins of mass propaganda.

## **WAR AND THE RISE OF CINEMA**

In the first half of this chapter I have argued for the pivotal significance of early war films in the origins of visual propaganda. But I would further suggest that war films had an even wider, and, thankfully, more positive effect. I consider, based on the many examples cited throughout this thesis, that many of the first war films were stylistically highly innovative, and played an important role in the development of cinema itself. Developments and advances in film style appeared in early war films in surprising profusion. I will mention below some specific instances of these, but first I will suggest why the war film should have been such a dynamic force.

In 1913 the German sociologist Werner Sombart published a book entitled *Krieg und Kapitalismus*.<sup>8</sup> The basic thesis of the book was that, throughout history, the preparation for war has had, as a kind of by-product, a stimulating effect on the development of business and industry. There are many instances of inventions and technologies which had been developed for military use – certain precision instruments or chemicals, for instance – which later found application in civilian fields.

I submit that Sombart's thesis also applied to the media and notably to early cinema. One can cite several examples. In time of war there is a greater demand for news, so circulation of newspapers often increases (as mentioned in Chapter 1). Other media enterprises have experienced growth during conflicts: for instance, during the US Civil War the photographic business of Anthony enjoyed a huge growth of sales.<sup>9</sup>

With the early film business too, things boomed when war erupted. The Spanish-American War offers a convincing instance of this effect. Just before the war, as one film pioneer later stated, the public had begun to tire of films of 'commonplace events', such as views from moving trains and the like which made up much of the film fare at the time. So the various films of the Spanish-American War and the war-related film shows of the summer of 1898 had a substantial impact, giving cinema, as this author noted, 'a new lease on life'. He stressed that the war, '...was directly responsible for resuscitating the art of motion pictures which for a time seemed doomed to oblivion'.<sup>10</sup> Film historian Charles Musser confirms this opinion, stating that, while in 1897, 'moving pictures showed signs of fading', the industry bounced back in early 1898 due to the war.<sup>11</sup>

A similar stimulating effect came about in Britain during the Boer War. Film output swelled at this time, mainly through the production of war-related views. What's more, the public appetite for images of the conflict helped lead to the first great proliferation of film shows around the country. In short, as producer A. C. Bromhead later declared, 'The South African War helped the development of the business very considerably'.<sup>12</sup> Or as historian Richard Brown has put it, '...the Anglo-Boer War had a significant, catalytic effect on the early development of the British film business'.<sup>13</sup> As further confirmation of the positive effect of the conflict, as hostilities came to an end, the film business in Britain stagnated again, at least temporarily – as I have noted in chapter 11.<sup>14</sup>

And if war was a stimulus for the economic growth of the industry, it was also a motor for stylistic development. As we have seen in earlier chapters, in solving the problem of how to represent modern warfare with its increasingly inaccessible battlefield and 'invisible' combat, filmmakers invented various new cinematic practices, techniques and genres. This was an extraordinary feat of creativity which has seldom been acknowledged by film historians (though which might have been predicted from Sombart's thesis). In what follows I will describe what I

see as the most important of these techniques and developments, and indicate the consequences of particular innovations for the later history of cinema.

### **New practices**

In meeting the challenge of depicting warfare, I suggest that film pioneers came up with at least three particularly significant practices and genres (some of which I have mentioned in the first half of this chapter). Firstly, there were 'war-related actualities', meaning films which, while not showing battlefield action, had some direct ('indexical') connection with the real events: for example, images of people who had fought in the war. Another innovation was programming, whereby films of various types with some connection to the conflict were projected together, sometimes as a 'war show' of considerable duration (often including lantern slides). A third innovation was to use actors to re-enact or otherwise represent the war: I classify these films into sub-categories of fakes and symbolic scenes, and I will cover these in the next section.

The category of 'war related films' was to have a long and influential legacy, for the technique has been used by newsreel makers and TV news producers ever since. This technique might not seem such a novel or original development, for it might seem obvious that if you cannot show the event itself, then a substitute shot will 'work' satisfactorily as a representation (for example, an image of the participants, or an existing shot of the site of conflict). But I submit that this practice was *not* entirely obvious, and entailed some insight. Indeed, such use of 'stand in' shots to represent the event itself was an early example of using a kind of 'symbolic' image in non-fiction films. In this sense the 'related film' may be seen as one of the ways in which a more complex relationship between film and actuality was under way, even during this early period of cinema. I will have more to say about actuality films below.

Programming was another important area of the film industry which saw unusually precocious and rapid progress due to military influence. From 1898 during the Spanish-American War, exhibitors were putting together programmes of war-related films and lantern slides to create extensive shows. In this way some exhibitors of war films were in effect pioneering the documentary feature, years before this form actually came into being (and indeed before any multi-shot dramas had been released).

### **The staged war film: innovation and influence**

Staged war films were a surprisingly early development in cinema. Little more than a year after films were first widely screened, the first war fakes were made: Méliès' films of the Greco-Turkish War in 1897. In ensuing years staged film versions were produced of other current wars, supplying action which was so lacking in the actualities.<sup>15</sup>

Though these were to some extent based on previous practice in existing media (artists' impressions, tableaux, etc.), as far as cinema was concerned, staged war



films included much which was highly original. As we have discussed in previous chapters, stylistic elements included the following innovative practices: Méliès' films of the Greco-Turkish War employed the first articulated set in a film; fakes by Amet and Smith/Blackton during the Spanish-American War included the earliest ever scale-models in cinema history; Hepworth's symbolic representations about the Boer War included words appearing on screen, well before inter-titles were standard.

As well as being innovative, these films might well have influenced later filmmakers and companies, and helped to pave the way for new genres of films. An early observer of the film industry, Epes W. Sargent, considered that, 'the preparation of war pictures left a lasting imprint on the business, for it led to the serious film'.<sup>16</sup> By 'serious film' he was referring to other fiction genres, including important ones such as the trick film. A modern historian who has studied early fake films sees another possible influence. Discussing Edison's fakes of the Boer War, Jon Gartenberg has noted that some of these films create a sense of depth, with the soldiers charging across and towards us from the background of the field to the foreground. He suggests that this stylistic feature may be viewed in retrospect, 'as an early precursor of the chase film in which characters move diagonally through the frame'.<sup>17</sup> Incidentally, both the trick and the chase film are seen by film historians as important early fiction genres.

I would identify another possible influence, specifically from allegorical war films, on later cinema.<sup>18</sup> These productions – films of flags waving or Uncle Sam triumphant or proud Britannia – are noteworthy, not only as being early propaganda (as discussed above) but more generally they may be seen as pioneering exercises in presenting a 'point of view' on film, and quite an abstract one at that. While filmmakers had realized from the first that the new medium could record the external surface of the world in an accurate form, in these symbolic scenes, film was being used to express something more intangible; to enunciate particular opinions, viewpoints and abstract ideas (in this case mainly imperialist ideas), and in a powerful manner.

### **The war fake and the development of story films**

Of all the various influences, I would suggest that it was the path from fake to fiction which was most significant for film history. War fakes shared several elements with mainstream dramatised films of later years: an acted narrative, with characters performing roles in costumes; a storyline involving exciting action and conflict; both interior and exterior performance spaces, whereas nearly all acting in the pre-cinema period had been on stage. Significantly, fakes were a leading (possibly dominant) form of acted narrative film up to 1900, so they established quite a body of practice which could be drawn on.

There was some realisation among filmmakers of a connection between fakes and early dramatised films. This comes through in terminology. Sometimes the word 'fake' was applied not only to re-enacted news/war incidents, but to any

films shot with actors in a studio, such as trick films. For example, a writer in a trade journal in 1900 referred to Méliès' trick reels as 'fakes'.<sup>19</sup> A few years later another writer, in explaining to his readers how scenes in *The Great Train Robbery* (USA, 1903) had been made, told them that films of this kind were half 'fake' and half real, i.e. half shot in studio and half in genuine outdoor locations.<sup>20</sup> The term 'fake', in this writer's view, implied anything shot in an artificial manner (in a studio, with actors, etc).

One particular war fake was among the earliest films to incorporate the creative leap of editing, a practice which would help lead to the rise and dominance of acted films. The film in question, Williamson's *Attack on a China Mission*, was made up of several shots. This was in contrast to most fakes (and most other dramatised films) until then, which were almost always in one shot, taken from one fixed, mid-distance camera position. The problem with this one-shot format is that such films are often difficult to understand because so much is going on in the frame. As I have noted in chapter 10 with respect to the M&K Boer War fakes, the action in these one shot films is generally convoluted; there might be several characters on screen at the same time, doing different things in different parts of the frame. Such uncentered shots cannot draw our attention to specific, narratively important incidents or parts of the action, and so these kind of fakes are frequently confusing and difficult to comprehend at a first viewing. The description I gave in my Boer War chapter of *The Dispatch Bearer*, should serve to make the point, for this film has a very complicated narrative all in the one shot, which is simply not possible to grasp in a single viewing.

The idea to use multiple shots occurred to James Williamson (and to others at about the same time), and he put it into practice in a story of threat and rescue during the Boxer Uprising.<sup>21</sup> With *Attack on a China Mission* the war fake had in a sense reached its apotheosis, for though it was a staged war film, it had many of the hallmarks (multiple shots, etc) of a classical narrative fiction film. From this point on, other multiple-shot fiction films started to appear. Thus it is possible to argue that fakes had helped give rise to the future trend of story films. John Barnes writes, in his discussion of staged war films including Williamson's:

'As naive as some of these 'fakes' may have been, there is no doubt they provided filmmakers with the impetus to experiment with the dramatization of reality that was finally to lead to more complex forms of film narration such as we begin to witness, for example, in the films of Williamson and see more fully developed in *A Daring Daylight Robbery* of 1903.'<sup>22</sup>

### **The tidying up of genres and the fate of fakes**

Despite their influential character, staged war films (and indeed staged news films in general) were relatively short-lived as a film genre. From soon after the Boer and Boxer conflicts, the production of fakes and other staged films went into decline, say from around 1902. Though such films appeared after this in limited numbers – fakes were made of the Russo-Japanese War, for example – they

were never again produced in the large numbers of the heyday up to 1901. Why this decline? I have mentioned one reason – to do with trust and deception – in Chapter 2. In addition, though, a sea change was occurring in the balance of genres, with the industry increasingly categorising films as either fiction or non-fiction, and this, I will argue, meant that fakes simply didn't fit in.

We have just discussed one part of this process of genre realignment, as the multi-shot story film started appearing tentatively between 1900 and 1903. In this new form, the function of bringing drama to audiences – about any subject, including war – could be done entirely in fiction form, as fully-fledged filmic playlets, with no recourse to the controversial fake genre. Thus the drama role of fakes had effectively been shunted into the story film, meaning that the fiction side of filmmaking became increasingly separate.

An analogous change was also taking place in non-fiction, mainly through the improvement of equipment and skills. Lighter cameras and longer loads of film became available; panning heads made it easier to depict both large areas and fast-moving incidents; a greater variety of lenses was being introduced. Furthermore, cameramen were becoming increasingly skilful and professional. While the very earliest war cameramen were amateurs (Benett-Stanford or Villiers, for example) more professional operators soon came along, most notably Rosenthal and Dickson in the Boer War, and to some extent Paley (in Cuba) and Holmes (in the Philippines). While in the early days of war filming, such as at Omdurman, there had been an almost total failure to capture moving images from the war zone, by the time of the Boer War cameramen were at least managing to keep up with the troops, recording some images near the firing line, and a greater variety of other war-related images. So, while the difficulties of filming 'hot news' events in war zones and elsewhere had once seemed insurmountable, a few years later the problem was being seen as a little more solvable. This progress in actuality filming helped reduce the need for fakes to represent the conflict.

Perhaps the most important factor in this evolution of non-fiction was a growing appreciation among spectators and production companies of the intrinsic value of genuine footage; or the 'feeling for the photographic document', as Bazin put it (see chapter 1). This was probably all tied up with a public mood of impatience with fake films, and the atmosphere of deception which surrounded them (note my discussion of 'trust' in Chapter 2). A number of industry professionals lobbied for something more genuine, and films were increasingly valued which had a direct ('indexical') connection with real events – to the war or other happening – even if such films did not capture the news event itself, and even if they were technically somewhat deficient. One of the earliest firms to take this attitude was the Warwick Trading Company, under their far-sighted director, Charles Urban. The company's catalogue made this point rather well, at about the same time as their first films – far from perfect, but genuine – were coming back from the Boer War:

‘While every endeavour is made to adhere to the high photographic standard of our films, it is occasionally impossible to do so, especially among the war subjects from the front, as our operators are compelled to photograph many of the incidents under the most trying conditions and varying circumstances; but the few examples of indifferent quality are more than compensated for by the highly interesting events portrayed, all of which are absolutely genuine. On no condition will we sell faked or pre-arranged war subjects.’<sup>23</sup>

Warwick was saying, in short, that the genuine nature of these films more than made up for their defects. In ensuing years this attitude gained ground, and I would suggest that audiences became more understanding of the limitations of news and war filming. They therefore didn’t expect to see faultless or complete material from the war zone; they certainly didn’t anticipate seeing hand-to-hand fighting on screen.<sup>24</sup> Instead, the category of ‘related films’ which I have discussed above, became a staple of news coverage; and these somewhat unexciting films were compensated for in the cinema news programme with livelier images derived from more easily filmed news events, such as sports and pre-planned happenings. But in all cases, as far as spectators were concerned, the fact that the shots were genuine was often more important than that they were dramatic.

It seems then that, after its first decade, a new status quo had come into being in the film industry, in which the way that war was represented on screen was being transformed. In the first place, a multi-shot type of fiction film had been invented, which would dominate fiction filmmaking for years into the future (becoming the feature film). Meanwhile the actuality had acquired new life thanks to a combination of increasing professionalism among filmmakers, a better understanding of what could be achieved in practice, and a positive demand for authentic films. In effect, therefore, these two sides of the filmmaking firmament – fiction and non-fiction – were becoming more established in their aesthetic ways and more rigid and inflexible as categories. Staged war films in this new universe were an ill-fit, being both drama and news; they sat uncomfortably and looked increasingly out of place in the new well-ordered ranks of film types. The muddled-up edges where fakes had lurked in the past were being ‘tidied up’, and with little demand any more for such vague entities, these kind of films were quietly done away with.<sup>25</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter and thesis I have discussed the development and significance of early war films, and have suggested that these kind of films embodied two important phenomena in film history. Firstly, they were some of the earliest examples of film propaganda; and secondly, they pioneered some cinematically

highly innovative practices. One might therefore view these pioneering war films in both negative and positive ways. In the first sense, they could be seen as the parents of all the misleading 'films of persuasion' which followed for many years, from political advertising to Nazi propaganda. In the second more positive sense, these early war films could be appreciated as important 'test-beds' for several cinematic techniques which were of vital importance in films throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond.

The filmmakers responsible for these pioneering motion pictures, in leaving us this twin legacy, were reflecting two somewhat contradictory aspects of the age in which they lived; for while the period around 1900 was almost constantly wracked by military conflicts and colonial incursions, it was also characterised by unprecedented levels of invention, scientific innovation and technical advance. The cinema itself was a product of this inventive age, and the stylistic features which the war film helped to foment were therefore ultimately derived from this well of originality. But, as we have seen, on top of this fast-developing cinematic apparatus, the military preoccupation of the time meant that elements of propaganda were pervasive in many of these early war films. So, when as film historians we stop and admire the rapid early development of moving pictures, we should not overlook the fact that this extraordinary inventiveness was often embodied in films which were, as products of their time, ideologically retrograde.

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<sup>1</sup> A handbill for this show is in P. A. Carson and C. R. Garner, *The Silver Screens of Wirral: A History of Cinemas in Wallesey, Hoylake, West Kirby and South Wirral* (Birkenhead: Countyvise Limited, 1990), p.111. A similar phenomenon in which films of more than one war were exhibited together took place at the time of the Boer and Boxer conflicts (see my chapters on film exhibition of these wars). In these ways, war was becoming a kind of generic theme for film shows.

<sup>2</sup> By 'media politics' I mean the role of the war film in promulgating certain assumptions and viewpoints, usually related to imperialism, which in its extreme form is propaganda. By 'film aesthetics' I mean the stylistic means by which cinema represents facts, opinions and stories, and transmits this information to its audience.

<sup>3</sup> During the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913 (the next major conflicts after the Russo-Japanese War) the level of regulation of media representatives varied markedly between the various combatants, the Bulgarian authorities being the most strict. Incidentally, other conflicts in the interim included that in Somalia in 1903, the Ilenden revolt in the Balkans from the same year, and troubles in Morocco from 1907.

<sup>4</sup> Musser, *Emergence*, p. 225.

<sup>5</sup> Some scholars have argued that propaganda can act to control and manipulate the behaviour of populations, though historian Philip M. Taylor is very sceptical about how propaganda's influence could ever be assessed or measured. Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda in the 20th Century: Selling Democracy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). Taylor states in 'Propaganda from Thucydides to Thatcher' (on Taylor's web-site) that: 'The alleged historical functions of propaganda have been to promote homogeneity of thought and deed and to restrict the development of the individual's capacity to think and act for him or herself.' But in practice: 'We will never know for certain whether any given behaviour might have been different if more or less

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propaganda had been directed at the target audiences.' Interestingly, Taylor calls censorship 'the siamese twin of propaganda'.

<sup>6</sup> Something similar is said about advertising: that, contrary to a certain popular view, it doesn't make people purchase new products, but only affects which *brand* they buy of a product they probably wanted to buy in any case.

<sup>7</sup> J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism, a Study* (London: James Nisbet, 1902), p.227-28.

<sup>8</sup> Werner Sombart, *Krieg und Kapitalismus* (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1913). Unlike some of his other works, this one has never been translated into English, therefore its influence in the Anglophone world (where foreign language skills are such a rarity) has been somewhat limited. Other scholars have come to similar conclusions as Sombart, though his remains the most elaborated treatment of this theme.

<sup>9</sup> Reese V. Jenkins, *Images and Enterprise: Technology and the American Photographic Industry, 1839 to 1925* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1975), p.50. This probably applied to other photographic companies too.

<sup>10</sup> Lee Royal, *The Romance of Motion Picture Production* (Los Angeles: Royal Publishing Company, 1920), p.9, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Musser, *Emergence*, p.225-6; similarly on p.241.

<sup>12</sup> A. C. Bromhead, 'Reminiscences of the British Film Trade', op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Brown, 'War on the home front: the Anglo-Boer War and the growth of rental in Britain. An economic perspective', in *Film History*, 16, no. 1, 2004, p. 28-36.

<sup>14</sup> It is worth adding, although it is not within the date range of this thesis, that the Russo-Japanese war had an even greater galvanising effect on the motion picture business (in Japan), for such was the public's demand for pictures of the conflict that Japanese production companies made a major effort to film at the front: this effectively initiated the first strong development of the film industry in that country. See Hiroshi Komatsu, 'Some Characteristics of Japanese Cinema before World War 1', in *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, ed. D. Desser and A. Nolletti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.229-258.

<sup>15</sup> The motive in making such films was to fill a gap in the market at a reasonable cost when few genuine films were available, as A.C. Bromhead, the head of British Gaumont, recalled in later years (as we have quoted already in connection with the Boer War): 'Those who had not the means, or the enterprise, to send cameramen overseas... were content with such staged scenes as they could produce at home.' A.C. Bromhead, 'Reminiscences of the British Film Trade', *Proceedings of the British Kinematograph Society*, no. 21, 11 Dec 1933, p.8.

<sup>16</sup> Epes W. Sargent, 'The growth of the industry', *The Nickelodeon* 1 Jan 1910, p.17-20.

<sup>17</sup> Jon Gartenberg, 'Camera Movement in Edison and Biograph Films, 1900-1906', in *Cinema 1900-1906: An Analytical Study*, ed. R. Holman (Brussels: FIAF, 1982), p.171. He is referring to, for example, films numbers 801 and 802 in Musser's Edison filmography.

<sup>18</sup> Allegorical war films are often relatively neglected in studies of early war films in favour of war fakes, yet I would suggest they were as important.

<sup>19</sup> OMLJ Dec 1900, p.154. By 'fakes', the writer meant trick films and not the French filmmaker's war re-enactments, and Charles Urban, whose company distributed Méliès' films in the UK, wrote in to criticise this usage, stating that the term 'fakes' should apply only to staged news and war scenes, which he also called 'counterfeit' films.

<sup>20</sup> 'The experiences of a newspaper photographer – by one of them', *Photographic Times Bulletin*, May 1905, p.203. This section was an aside in an article mainly about newspaper work. As the author explained, the station and baggage car scenes in *The Great Train Robbery* were, as he put it, 'taken in an outdoor gallery', because in the real locations there wasn't enough light. One could argue about how pejorative the term 'fake' was in this context of general story films; some people might have taken it purely as a descriptive term, meaning 'artificial' – i.e. these were, in Méliès' phrase, 'artificially arranged scenes', shot in a studio.

<sup>21</sup> Film historians call this division of a film into separate shots, 'shot articulation'. Another Brighton filmmaker, G.A. Smith, at about this time was practicing a variation on Williamson's multi-shot approach, by breaking up individual scenes into shots (so-called 'scene dissection'). Incidentally, exhibitors had already developed a multi-shot means of presenting war in film, by selecting individual shots (or lantern images) to make each point, and exhibiting them in the

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chosen sequence: in this way, at any given moment, they could draw the audience's attention to a significant subject or personality through the requisite image.

<sup>22</sup> Barnes, 1900 volume, p.109. An early spectator later noted that these fake war films really excited an audience, and some even were convinced that the films were genuine. He argued that such panache ultimately helped lead to 'Hollywood': '... the achievement was there; an audience had been persuaded to pay money to sit and watch these absurdities, had been bamboozled into accepting them seriously and even enthusiastically, and had been sent away vowing to return. The great figures of the film world, the Laemmles, the Foxes, the Schencks, and the Goldwyns, have, after all, achieved little more than this; only they have done it on a grander scale, and profited vastly thereby.' Edmund G. Cousins, *Filmland in Ferment* (London: Denis Archer, 1932), p.32-33. The fakes he saw included what was probably an Edison Boer War film.

<sup>23</sup> 'New Warwick Subjects', c. Jan 1900. This is a brochure at the back of Warwick's 1899 catalogue: held in the Urban Collection.

<sup>24</sup> In any case, post-production technique moved on, and was better able to gloss over 'missing' footage, with inter-titles and the like.

<sup>25</sup> What is more, whereas in the early era various hybrid and irregular forms were produced, including fusions of fiction and actuality, by the second decade of cinema, with some exceptions, genres were becoming more tightly demarcated.

## Appendix 1. DECEPTION IN NINETEENTH CENTURY WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

As we have seen, especially in Ackerman's work in the Philippines, early film cameramen sometimes set-up ('arranged') shots of troops in a war zone to improve the action or framing of the scene. This practice also has a considerable history in stills photography of war. The best known example comes from the American Civil War. At Gettysburg, in July 1863, Alexander Gardner took one of the most famous photographs of the war, *The Home of a Rebel Sharpshooter*, which shows a Confederate soldier lying dead in a rocky ravine with his weapon beside him. It has now been demonstrated, states photographic historian Colin Harding, that Gardner dragged the body from where it originally lay, and posed it to create a dramatic composition, adding a rifle. Gardner's photograph is therefore certainly manipulated, but as Harding asks:

*'..does this make it any less truthful a statement regarding the horror and waste of war? Indeed, by "improving" on reality might it even be claimed that Gardner is serving the need of some "greater truth"?'<sup>1</sup>*

However, I suspect that this would not have been the view of many commentators at the time, had they known of the 'improvement'. This was not the only example during the US Civil War of the rearrangement and moving of corpses for photographs. And in addition, false captions were sometimes contrived, images retouched, and when engravings of battle scenes were published, additional bodies and debris might be added.<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes too, more blatantly deceptive arranging was done, and perhaps the most vivid example of the practice – rarely mentioned in photographic history – took place during the Franco-Prussian War. Coming back from the front at Metz, the correspondent of *The Scotsman* newspaper observed what seemed to be a group of bandaged, wounded men. It made his blood boil, he wrote, to see them laid down on the wet ground, 'while photographers grouped their stretchers with a view to reducing them to the scale of *cartes de visite*'. But then, he added:

*'Judge of my amazement, when the picture was taken, to find the men rise up, discard their sham splints and bandages, and dance round their crutches in anticipation of the drink-money the photographers had promised them to make up this miserable sham.'<sup>3</sup>*

He adds that this was a somewhat unnecessary exercise, given that genuine examples of war's destruction and of wounded men and refugees were to be found aplenty. However, the photographer might have countered that the advantage of doing it artificially was that the bodies could be grouped in a more effective manner than one would find by chance on the battlefield. A similar case was reported from the Boer War. One of the gunnery officers in South Africa in June 1900, described how, during their lunch break, his unit



was snapped by 'a photographer, belonging to a well-known firm...in a most wonderful selection of striking attitudes'. As the officer relates sarcastically, this series included the following arranged pictures:

*'Charging a Kopje' (enemy left to the imagination), 'The Last Cartridge,' 'The Last Bugle-Call,' 'Carrying off the Wounded' (who were specially bound up for the occasion in handkerchiefs dipped in mud and wound round their heads) – altogether a magnificent and true series of pictures of the war!'*<sup>4</sup>

While such elaborate posing of live soldiers – in both Metz and South Africa – was probably unusual, more basic examples of battlefield 'arranging' or posing were probably more common, in which soldiers were photographed in appropriate poses to represent a general military scene or a particular battle. One form of this involved posing a group of soldiers to point their guns as if firing, the resulting picture supposedly showing them 'in action'.<sup>5</sup> There are instances of this in wars from the 1890s and later. Journalist George Musgrave who was in Cuba during the insurrection against the Spanish, reproduces in his book, for example, photographs of events claimed to be real, but which definitely look arranged.<sup>6</sup> Also in Cuba, a photograph of the Spanish-American War reproduced in *Leslie's Weekly*, shows Spanish soldiers posing in a trench as if fighting off the Americans.<sup>7</sup> This kind of posing was practiced in subsequent wars – certainly during the First World War – and indeed even up to the present day.

## Appendix 2. TELEPHOTO LENSES AND EARLY WAR FILMING

As I have discussed in the main body of my thesis, during the Boer War it became very clear that with modern weaponry, the battlefield was enlarging and new tactics were emerging, particularly in emphasising concealment. This new situation presented problems for photographers and cameramen, limited by using the somewhat basic cameras and optics of the time. In the large landscape of South Africa, in which the Boers (and often the British troops too) were hidden, conventional lenses, which took a wide field, were almost useless. The *British Journal of Photography* in the early days of the war, noted:

‘The lens, gaping to the horizon, has no power of selection, and loses the heated moment of the battle in the vast spaces of unoccupied ground.’<sup>8</sup>

One solution in this effort to photograph or film modern warfare was to use telephoto lenses, which were being pioneered in the 1890s by Dallmeyer, and this had indeed been proposed in the early days of the Spanish-American War. Initially the suggestion was made for comic effect: a cartoon of the time depicts a naval battle off Cuba being filmed by cameramen – and significantly they are equipped with telephoto type lenses.<sup>9</sup> [See illustrations for Chapter 5]. In the same month, the *British Journal of Photography*, noticing that the first films to be released relating to this war did not show action – titles such as s.s. *Olivette* sailing out of Havana Harbour (‘these... only depict incidents of the war, and are in no sense battle pictures proper’) – believed that nevertheless war films of genuine action might be secured, using telephoto lenses. The writer noted:

‘It will, we fancy, be a little difficult to secure cinematographic pictures of actual engagements by the lenses with which cinematographs are now supplied, unless they are fitted with telephoto attachments (by reason of the distance they necessarily must be from the spot), and that will render them slower.’<sup>10</sup>

Presumably what he means in the final remark is either that these lenses were somewhat cumbersome to use or that their f-stop value was less than a normal lens. Both are true, and meant that in the 1890s even stills photographers used these lenses with some trepidation. Ace photographer H.C. Shelly did use such a lens during the Boer War, but photographed only a small number of images with it: notably, Lord Methuen directing operations during a battle, and Boer positions taken from an observation balloon – in both cases shot from about a quarter of a mile away. According to Shelly and others, the latter images of the distant landscape were indistinct with heat haze.<sup>11</sup> However, the same is not true of the photograph of Methuen: I have found a reproduction of this, published in a periodical of the time, and it is fairly sharp and of quite good quality.<sup>12</sup> Probably the difference is partly to be

accounted for by the fact that Methuen was in the open, and I suspect closer, while the Boer positions would, of course, have been intentionally hidden.

The same problem of haze affected W.K.-L. Dickson, and he had similarly mixed results with a long lens. Dickson is the only film cameraman in this early era who definitely tried to use a telephoto lens to film warfare (the next instance is probably not until 1912). In Dickson's account of the war, he mentioned trying to use his telephoto to capture the effect of artillery shots as they hit their target, but he gave up due to 'the haze and the indistinctness which made it impossible to focus properly'.<sup>13</sup> This focussing problem is quite predictable technically, since focus becomes more critical the longer the focal length of the lens; and film cameras of this era didn't have reflex viewfinding, which would have made it more difficult still to maintain focus.<sup>14</sup> However, as with Shelly, the surviving results from Dickson suggest that he might not have been completely unsuccessful with the long lens. One of the most effective films of this war by Dickson, which survives, shows horse-drawn ambulances crossing the Tugela River after the battle of Spion Kop, filmed from the farther bank. It seems that no fewer than three versions of this exist, including one seemingly shot with a long lens or telephoto, which is not by any means unacceptably fuzzy, and details can be made out.<sup>15</sup>

As mentioned, I believe that Dickson was the only filmmaker to use such a lens for war camerawork at such an early date. However, various companies and exhibitors claimed their films were telephoto views. Such a claim first appeared during the Spanish-American War. The filmmaker Edward Amet made model-based fakes of naval battles of this war, and on several occasions it was stated by some commentators that the films were genuine, shot during the naval battle itself with a telephoto. One review of Amet's films began: 'The new telescopic lens is a triumph of modern photography. It is possible to obtain accurate pictures at very long range'.<sup>16</sup> It went on to praise this 'marvelous picture', which showed the American battleships 'in full action' as they bombarded the Spanish positions. People who saw these films at this time recall the showmen claiming they were genuine, shot from far offshore with 'a telescopic lens'. This implies that perhaps Amet's company had suggested to showmen that they spin this yarn about the lens (for more on this, see my Chapter 6 on dramatised Spanish-American War films).

A similar claim was made in Britain three years later – though about different events. An advertisement for a show run by Waller Jeffs in Hull includes the following text:

'The martial sound of the drums and the booming of cannon announcing the inauguration of Edison's animated pictures of the China and Boer wars taken by the latest and most wonderful invention, the telephoto lens, which enables our operators to photograph scenes four and five miles distant, and bring them life-size to the animated camera, thus reproducing the living incidents of actual warfare at your very doors.'<sup>17</sup>

Almost certainly, as with the Amet examples, this advertising patten was also mere boasting, and the films had not really been shot at the real place with a telephoto. Given that Jeffs and the other showmen involved were regular clients of Mitchell and Kenyon, it seems likely that the films involved could be M&K's staged war scenes, as well, perhaps, as one of the model-based fakes of this conflict (see my Chapter 13 on the Boxer Uprising).

The following month the films were shown in Manchester, drawing an enormous audience to the St James's Hall, attracted by 'the prospect of seeing some new and stirring animated pictures of the China and Boer wars'. Again the claim was made that the films were of the real events taken from far away using a special apparatus, though this time a sceptical journalist commented:

'One would have thought though, however, that a machine capable of photographing scenes four or five miles distant would have produced much more graphic views of the actual fighting.'<sup>18</sup>

One further instance from this era of a claim to have used a long lens to film a conflict comes from the Philippine War. The Warwick Trading Company stated of one of Rosenthal's films of the war that, 'This subject was procured with a long focus lens'.<sup>19</sup> Unlike the examples just cited, this is entirely credible, as Rosenthal filmed these scenes the year after filming the Boer and Boxer conflicts, so filming equipment had evolved by then (and Rosenthal was always keen on forcing the technical limits). The term 'long focus' is a relatively modest claim, for it could mean a focal length considerably shorter than a true telephoto.

### Appendix 3. ACKERMAN'S FILMS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA – FILMOGRAPHY

#### Filmography: Philippines

*This filmography lists 46 films shot by Ackerman from 1899 to 1900, of which 44 were made in the Philippines and two were filmed en route there. They are listed with my assigned numbers in rough order of filming, with the Biograph catalogue number [#]. Other information is: place of shooting; date of shooting, given as year/month/day; length given in feet of Biograph negative and/or [feet] of release (35mm.) print, whichever is known; and alternative title(s). (Original spelling mistakes are uncorrected).*

- 1) *Back from Manila.* [#?] (San Francisco, USA. 1899/9 ?). Length: [55].
- 2) *33rd Infantry, U.S.A in Honolulu.* [#1348] (Honolulu, Hawaii. 1899/9?). Length: 300. Alternative title(s): *33rd Infantry, U.S.A*
- 3) *Coolies Carrying Cargo; Port of Manila.* [#1349] (Manila. 1899/10- ). Length: 153. Alternative title(s): *Coolies carrying cargo ; Coolies at work*
- 4) *Co. "L" Thirty-Third Inf. Going to Firing Line.* [#1350] (Manila. 1899/11/1). Length: 160 or 164 [28]. Alternative title(s): *33rd Infantry going to firing line ; Going to the firing line*
- 5) *Blanco Bridge.* [#1352] (Manila. 1899/11- ). Length: 159. Alternative title(s): *Famous Blanco Bridge*
- 6) *Train with Red Cross Supplies, Manila.* [#1386] (Manila. 1899/11 ?). Length: 152. Alternative title(s): *Train bearing Red Cross hospital supplies*
- 7) *Panoramic View of Manila Harbor.* [#1353] (Manila. 1899/11- ). Length: 306. Alternative title(s): *Panorama of Harbor*
- 8) *Capt. C.W. Hobb's Battery Third Artillery.* [#1387] (Pampanga region. 1899/11/11). Length: 310 [53]. Alternative title(s): *Battery K, 3rd Artillery, going into action ; Going into action*
- 9) *Bridge of Spain; Manila;.* [#1380] (Manila. 1899/12/16). Length: 311. Alternative title(s): *Bridge of Spain ; Bridge of Spain - Center of Activity - Manila*
- 10) *The Escolta, Manila.* [#1351] (Manila. 1899/12/21 ; Deocampo says November). Length: 152. Alternative title(s): *The Escalta, Manila ; The Escalta: a busy street in Manila*
- 11) *Unloading Lighters at the Government Dock.* [#1354] (Manila. 1899/12/21). Length: 162. Alternative title(s): *Unloading Lighters ; Unloading lighters at Gov. Dock*

- 12) *The Call to Arms!* [#1381] (Manila? 1899/12 ?). Length: 311 [53].  
Alternative title(s): *Guadalupe [B]ridge: Comp. L. 37 Reg. Call to arms*
- 13) *In the Field.* [#1381?] (Manila? 1899/12 ?). Length: [53].
- 14) *Repelling the Enemy.* [#1383] (Manila. 1899/12 ?). Length: 311.
- 15) *Making Manila Rope.* [#1384] (Manila? 1899/12 ?). Length: 152.  
Alternative title(s): *Making Manila Rope - natives at work*
- 16) *Water Buffalo, Manila.* [#1388] (Manila. 1899/12 [one source says 1900/03/01]). Length: 312 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Water buffalo, captured from insurgents* [this longer title gives the shot much more point]
- 17) *The Market Place; Manila.* [#1385] (Manila. 1899/12/15). Length: 303.  
Alternative title(s): *Market Place Manilla [sic] ; Market Place*
- 18) *Bringing General Lawton's Body Back to Manila.* [#1389] (Manila? 1899/12/29?). Length: 312. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Lawton's remains being removed to cemetery ; Gen. Lawton's funeral*
- 19) *Gen. Lawton's Funeral in Manila.* [#1396] (Manila. 1899/12/30). Length: 455. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Lawton's funeral, Manila ; Funeral of Major-General Henry W. Lawton*
- 20) *Gen. Fred D. Grant and Staff.* [#1402] (Pampanga region? 1900/01/07). Length: 153. Alternative title(s): *Gen. F.D. Grant and Staff ; Brigadier-General Frederick D. Grant and Staff*
- 21) *Attack on Mt. Ariat.* [#1399] (Pampanga region. 1900/01/07 ?). Length: 308 [53]. Alternative title(s): *The battle of Mt. Ariat (Arayat) ; Battle of Mt. Ariat ; Gen. A.S. Burt. at Gen. Grant's orders taking charge, 25th Inf.*
- 22) *Twenty-Fifth Inf. Returning from Mt. Ariat.* [#1401] (Pampanga region. 1900/01/07 ?). Length: 312 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Back from battle ; 25th Infantry Returning from Mt. Ariat ; 25th Inf. Gen Burt & Grant returning from fight ; 25th Infantry (Back from Battle)*
- 23) *Gen. Fred D. Grant Inspecting Market-Place.* [#1397] (Pampanga region: Angeles. 1900/01/08). Length: 154 [27]. Alternative title(s): *Gen. F.D. Grant and officers inspecting market ; A military inspection*
- 24) *Responding to an Alarm.* [#1400] (Pampanga region. 1900/01). Length: 298 [53]. Alternative title(s): *The attack on Magalang ; Cap. H.G. Lenhauser's 2nd Bat. & Gen. AS Burt's 25th responding to alarm*
- 25) *The Train for Angeles.* [#1403?] (Pampanga region? 1900/01- ). Length: [27].
- 26) *Guarded Ox-Train Carrying Rations.* [#1403] (Pangasinan? 1900/01/11). Length: 151 or 157 [26]. Alternative title(s): *A Train Carrying Rations for U.S. Troops ; Under armed escort*
- 27) *Col. Jacob H. Smith and Seventeenth Inf.* [#1398] (Pangasinan.

- 1900/01/11). Length: 314 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Col. Jacob H. Smith, 17th Inf. Regd. ; The 17th Infantry, U.S.A.*
- 28) *Major-General Arthur Macarthur and Staff.* [#1404] (? 1900/01/12). Length: 154. Alternative title(s): *Major Gen. Arthur and Staff ; Maj. Gen. Arthur McArthur and Staff*
- 29) *A Filipino Town Surprised.* [#1461] (Dagupan [Calamba region, says another source]. 1900/01/30 [another source says 1900/03-04]). Length: 307 [53]. Alternative title(s): *3rd battalion of 13 Infantry charging insurgent trenches*
- 30) *Gen. Bell and Staff.* [#1458] (Pangasinan - Dagupan. 1900/01/31). Length: 153. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Franklin Bell and Staff ; Brigadier-General Franklin Bell and Staff*
- 31) *An Advance by Rushes.* [#1390] (Pangasinan. 1900/02/0 ?). Length: 147 [26]. Alternative title(s): *Comp. I in action - a real scrap*
- 32) *Aguinaldo's Navy.* [#1454] (Pangasinan - Dagupan. 1900/02/02). Length: 152 [27]. Alternative title(s): *Native boats on the run: Aguinaldo's Navy ['on the run' meaning sailing (not meaning chased by US)]*
- 33) *The Fighting Thirty-Sixth.* [#1460] (Pangasinan. 1900/02/04). Length: 308 [53]. Alternative title(s): *3rd battalion of famous 36th Infantry. Col. R. Grove and staff ; The Fighting 36th*
- 34) *Bell's Pack Train Swimming Agno River.* [#1455] (Pangasinan - Salasa [Salaea, says AFI]. 1900/02/05). Length: 312 [54]. Alternative title(s): *An historic feat ; Gen. Bell's pack train swimming Agno River ; An Historic Fleet*
- 35) *Into the Wilderness.* [#1449] (Pangasinan - near Sual. 1900/02/06). Length: 310 [51]. Alternative title(s): *General Bell's expedition ; Gen. Bell's expedition near Sual*
- 36) *Pack Train. Gen. Bell's Expedition.* [#1451] (Pangasinan - near Sual. 1900/02/06). Length: 154 [27] [or 15]. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Bell's expedition near Sual ; Into the wilderness! [1] ; Gen. Bell's Expedition*
- 37) *Breaking through Jungle. Gen. Bell's Exp.* [#1453] (Pangasinan - Sual? 1900/02/06). Length: 310 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Bell's expedition through the mountains near Sual ; Into the wilderness! [2]*
- 38) *Bell's Pack Train Breaking through Jungle.* [#1459] (Pangasinan - Dagupan. 1900/02/06). Length: 312 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Bell's expedition near Sual ; Into the wilderness! [3]*
- 39) *Lieut. Howell's Light Battery D.* [#1452] (Manila. 1900/02/18). Length: 311 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Lt. Howells' light battery D, 6th artillery, Laloma Church ; With the guns !*
- 40) *Water Buffalo Train.* [#1450] (Manila. 1900/02/28). Length: 314 [54]. Alternative title(s): *Slow but sure ; Bull train*
- 41) *Panorama of Water Front, Manila.* [#1462] (Manila. 1900/03/01). Length:

- 155 [28]. Alternative title(s): *Panorama of river front, Manila*
- 42) *Artillery in Action. Gen. Wheaton's Advance.* [#1457] (Calamba region. 1900/03/05). Length: 316 [55]. Alternative title(s): *A charge on the insurgents ; A Charge of the Insurgents ; On the advance with Gen. Wheaton* [though this title seems rather to be no. 1448]
- 43) *On the Advance with Gen. Wheaton.* [#1448] (Calamba region. 1900/03/05). Length: 311 [54]. Alternative title(s): *On the Advance of Gen. Wheaton ; On the advance with Gen. Wheaton, Manila* ['Manila' meaning Philippines, presumably]
- 44) *Gen. Floyd Wheaton and Staff.* [#1464] (Calamba region. 1900/03/06). Length: 294 [52]. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Wheaton's staff ; Major-General Lloyd Wheaton*
- 45) *Fourth Cavalry on the March.* [#1463] (Manila - Pasay. 1900/03/12). Length: 312 [54]. Alternative title(s): *4th Cavalry on the march ; After Aguinaldo*
- 46) *Fourth U.S. Cavalry; Philippines.* [#1456] (Manila - Pasay. 1900/03/12). Length: 154 [28]. Alternative title(s): *4th Cavalry in platoon formation ; The 4th Cavalry*

## Filmography: China

*This filmography lists 63 films made in China by Ackerman from 1900 to 1901 in the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising. They are listed in order of Biograph catalogue number [#] along with my assigned numbers, 1 to 63. Other information is: place of shooting; length in feet; and alternative title(s). Dates of shooting are less certain than for the Philippines, and so are not given.*

- 1) *Russian Sharpshooters.* [#1732] (Tientsin). Length: 147. Alternative title(s): *C Von Waldersee reviewing 9th and 10th Russian sharp shooters*
- 2) *Review of Russian Artillery.* [#1733] (Tientsin). Length: 165. Alternative title(s): *C Von Waldersee reviewing 2nd and 4th Russian artillery and 3rd Siberia*
- 3) *Von Waldersee Reviewing Cossacks.* [#1734] (Tientsin). Length: 33. Alternative title(s): *Von Waldersee Reviewing 1st Chila and Reg. Cossacks*
- 4) *Japanese Soldiers on the Taku Road.* [#1735] (Tientsin). Length: 192. Alternative title(s): *Japanese Soldiers on Taku Road*
- 5) *Capt. Reilly's Battery Limbering.* [#1736] (Pekin). Length: 138. Alternative title(s): *Capt. Reilly's Light Battery F Limbering for advance on Pekin*
- 6) *Capt. Reilly's Battery, Bombardment of Pekin.* [#1737] (Pekin). Length: 264. Alternative title(s): *Capt. Reilly's Light Battery F Bombardment of Pekin*
- 7) *Charge of Reilly's Battery.* [#1738] (Pekin). Length: 158. Alternative title(s): *Capt. Reilly's Light Battery F furious charge on gates of Pekin; Reilly's Battery, before south gate of Pekin; Reilly's Light Battery F*



- 8) *Street Scene Taku Road*. [#1739] (Tientsin). Length: 159. Alternative title(s): *The Taku Road [in Picture catal.]; Street Scene, Tientsin; Street Scene, Tientsin [China]*
- 9) *Street Scene Taku Road*. [#1740] (Tientsin). Length: 135.
- 10) *Street Scene Taku Road*. [#1741] (Tientsin). Length: 261.
- 11) *Von Waldersee and Staff*. [#1742] (Pekin). Length: 159. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Von Waldersee and Staff; Field Marshall C. Von Waldersee reviews English troops*
- 12) *Von Waldersee's Review*. [#1743] (Pekin). Length: 131. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Von Waldersee's Review; Field Marshall C. Von Waldersee reviews Bengal Lancers; Von Waldersee reviewing Bengal Lancers*
- 13) *The Bengal Lancers*. [#1744] (Pekin). Length: 141. Alternative title(s): *1st Bengal Lancers, Capt. Griffin; First Bengal Lancers on the march*
- 14) *First Bengal Lancers, Distant View*. [#1745] (Pekin). Length: 100. Alternative title(s): *1st Bengal Lancers, Distant View*
- 15) *Li Hung Chang, High Priest and Mandarins*. [#1746] (Pekin). Length: 193. Alternative title(s): *Li Hung Chang; Li Hung Chang in Pekin*
- 16) *Li Hung Chang and Suite. Presentation of Parlor Mutoscope*. [#1747] (Pekin). Length: 99. Alternative title(s): *Li Hung Chang; Presentation of Mutoscope to Li Hung Chang*
- 17) *Japanese Infantry on the March*. [#1748] (Tientsin). Length: 205.
- 18) *Japanese Artillery*. [#1749] (Tientsin). Length: 164.
- 19) *Japanese Infantry*. [#1750] (Pekin [or Tientsin]). Length: 183. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Japanese Infantry; Japanese assaulting a mud wall; Japanese assaulting mud wall, Pekin*
- 20) *British Light Artillery*. [#1751 & 1752] (Tientsin). Length: 190 & 219. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: British Light Artillery; 3rd Bombay Cavalry and Royal Light Artillery; British Royal Light Artillery, Tien-Tsin*
- 21) *Bombay Cavalry*. [#1753] (Tientsin). Length: 135. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Bombay Cavalry; 3rd Bombay Cavalry and Royal Light Artillery; Third Bombay Cavalry, Tien-Tsin*
- 22) *An Army Transport Train*. [#1754] (Pekin). Length: 194. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: An Army Transport Train; American Transportation Train; American Transportation Train, Tien-Tsin*
- 23) *Coolies at Work*. [#1755] (Tientsin [or Pekin?]). Length: 106. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Coolies at Work; Coolies loading junk; Coolies loading a junk, Pekin*
- 24) *Ruins of Tien-Tsin*. [#1756] (Tientsin). Length: 156. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Ruins of Tien-Tsin; Panoramic view of Tien-Tsin after bombardment; Panorama of Tien-Tsin after bombardment*

- 25) *Tien-Tsin*. [#1757] (Tientsin). Length: 149. Alternative title(s): *Panoramic view of Tien-Tsin French bridge; French bridge at Tien-Tsin*
- 26) *A British Donkey Train*. [#1758] (Tientsin). Length: 231. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: A British Donkey Train; Sikhs guarding donkey train; Sikhs guarding donkey train, Tien-Tsin*
- 27) *French Bridge, Tien-Tsin*. [#1759] (Tientsin). Length: 216. Alternative title(s): *French Bridge Pei-Ho river; French Bridge over Pei-Ho river, Tien-Tsin; The French Bridge*
- 28) *On the Pei-Ho*. [#1760] (Tientsin). Length: 164. Alternative title(s): *Pei-Ho River, Panoramic view; Panorama of Pei-Ho River at Tien-Tsin*
- 29) *Panoramic View on the Pei-Ho River: Opium Junks*. [#1761] (Tientsin). Length: 164. Alternative title(s): *Pei-Ho River, Panoramic view; Panorama of bank of Pei-Ho River*
- 30) *British Rajputs*. [#1762] (Tientsin [or Shanghai]). Length: 219. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: British Rajputs; 7th Rajputs "D.C.O." bayonet charge; Bayonet charge by Seventh Rajputs*
- 31) *Assault on the South Gate*. [#1763] (Pekin). Length: 264. Alternative title(s): *Sixth U.S. Cavalry assaulting South Gate of Pekin; 6th Cavalry Assaulting South Gate of Pekin*
- 32) *Market Scene Japanese Quarter, Hatomen St.* [#1764] (Pekin). Length: 153. Alternative title(s): *Market scene, Pekin; A Chinese Market[?]*
- 33) *The Forbidden City, Pekin*. [#1765] (Pekin). Length: 152. Alternative title(s): *Panorama of Forbidden City, Pekin*
- 34) *The Forbidden City*. [#1766] (Pekin). Length: 245. Alternative title(s): *Panoramic view courtyard, Forbidden City; In the Forbidden City, Pekin*
- 35) *Chinese Junks*. [#1767?] (Inland sea). Length: 181. Alternative title(s): *Japanese junks, inland sea; Japanese junks*
- 36) *Bolster Sparring, "Empress of China"*. [#1768] (Empress of China). Length: 380. Alternative title(s): *Bolster sparring*
- 37) *Presentation of Flags, German Infantry, Pekin*. [#1769] (Tientsin). Length: 148. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: Review of German Troops; Presentation of flags to 5th and 6th Infantry, Asiatic Corps; Review of German Troops*
- 38) *Review of German Infantry Corps; Pekin*. [#1770] (Tientsin). Length: 224. Alternative title(s): *The War in China; Presentation of flags to 5th and 6th Infantry, Gen Von Lessel*
- 39) *The German Contingent*. [#1771] (Tientsin). Length: 175. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: The German Contingent; Presentation of flags to 5th and 6th Infantry, Gen. Von Lessel; Gen. Von Lessel and staff, Pekin*
- 40) *C.P.S.S. "Empress of China": Crew Lowering Boats from Cradles to Deck*. [#1772] (Empress of China). Length: 127. Alternative title(s): *A boat drill in*

*mid ocean*

- 41) *C.P.S.S. "Empress of China": Crew Taking in Boats and Making Fast.* [#1773] (*Empress of China*). Length: 249. Alternative title(s): *After a Rescue at Sea*
- 42) *C.P.S.S. "Empress of China": Capt. Archibald's Crew Leaving Deck for Quarters.* [#1774] (*Empress of China*). Length: 175. Alternative title(s): *Crew of a Pacific Liner*
- 43) *6th U.S. Cavalry in a Wild Charge.* [#1775] (*Tientsin [or 'Yang Tsin']*). Length: 96. Alternative title(s): *Sixth U.S. Cavalry Charging*
- 44) *6th U.S. Cavalry, 2nd Squad St. Col. Wint with Colors.* [#1776] (*Tientsin [or 'Yang Tsin']*). Length: 160. Alternative title(s): *Second squad, Sixth U.S. Cavalry*
- 45) *6th U.S. Cavalry, Skirmish Line.* [#1777] (*Tientsin [or 'Yang Tsin']*). Length: 289. Alternative title(s): *Sixth U.S. Cavalry, Skirmish Line*
- 46) *Charge of Cossack Cavalry.* [#1778] (*Pekin*). Length: 64. Alternative title(s): *Cossack cavalry doing a resistless charge*
- 47) *Cossack Cavalry.* [#1779] (*Pekin*). Length: 256. Alternative title(s): *Gen. Levovitch staff and cossack cavalry; Gen. Livevitch and Cossack cavalry, Pekin*
- 48) *Squad of Men Clearing the Road.* [#1780] (*Pekin*). Length: 29. Alternative title(s): *Squad of Men Clearing Road, south gate Pekin; Squad of men charging round South Gate, Pekin; The War in China: The Evacuation of Pekin*
- 49) *Street in Shanghai.* [#1781 [or 82]] (*Shanghai*). Length: 143. Alternative title(s): *A Side Street in Shanghai*
- 50) *Street Scene in Shanghai.* [#1782 [or 81]] (*Shanghai*). Length: 204. Alternative title(s): *Nankin Road, Shanghai*
- 51) *Street Scene, Shanghai.* [#1783] (*Shanghai*). Length: 206. Alternative title(s): *Street Scene in Shanghai. The Bund*
- 52) *Shanghai from a Launch.* [#1785] (*Shanghai*). Length: 328 as shot, 292 as edited ('corrected'). Alternative title(s): *In Old China*
- 53) *Shanghai from a Launch, Panorama.* [#1786] (*Shanghai*). Length: 262. Alternative title(s): *Shanghai from a Launch*
- 54) *General Chaffee in Pekin.* [#1787] (*Pekin*). Length: 442. Alternative title(s): *The War in China; Maj. Gen Adna R. Chaffee and Sixth Cavalry, Pekin; Departure of 14th Infantry from Pekin, China*
- 55) *The Evacuation of Pekin.* [#1788] (*Pekin*). Length: 241. Alternative title(s): *The War in China: The Evacuation of Pekin; Departure of 14th Infantry from Pekin, China; Departure of Fourteenth Infantry from Pekin*
- 56) *The 9th Infantry, U.S.A.* [#1789] (*Pekin*). Length: 536. Alternative title(s): *9th Infantry, U.S.A. leaving Temple of Agriculture, Pekin; Ninth Infantry, Pekin*
- 57) *The Fourth Ghorkhas.* [#1791] (*Shanghai*). Length: 234. Alternative title(s):

*4th Ghourkas bayonet exercises; Bayonet Drill; Fourth Gourkhas, Shanghai*

- 58) *The 14th Sikhs*. [#1792] (Shanghai). Length: 325. Alternative title(s): *The 4th Sikhs; 14th Sikhs marching; The Fourteenth Sikhs, Shanghai*
- 59) *Charge by 1st Bengal Lancers*. [#1793] (Shanghai?). Length: 217.  
Alternative title(s): *Charge by the 1st Bengal Lancers; 1st Bengal Lancers; Charge by First Bengal Lancers; A cavalry charge [Niver]*
- 60) *1st Bengal Lancers*. [#1794] (Shanghai). Length: 162. Alternative title(s):  
*The War in China: First Bengal Lancers; First Bengal Lancers*
- 61) *1st Bengal Lancers*. [#1795] (Shanghai). Length: 170. Alternative title(s):  
*First Bengal Lancers, Shanghai*
- 62) *Second Queen's Rajputs*. [#1796] (Shanghai). Length: 510. Alternative title(s): *2nd Queen's Rajputs and 4 Gourkas marching; Second Queen's Rajputs, Shanghai*
- 63) *The Fourth Goorkhas*. [#1797] (Shanghai?). Length: 279. Alternative title(s):  
*The War in China: The Fourth Goorkhas; 4th Gourkhas; The Fourth Gourkhas*

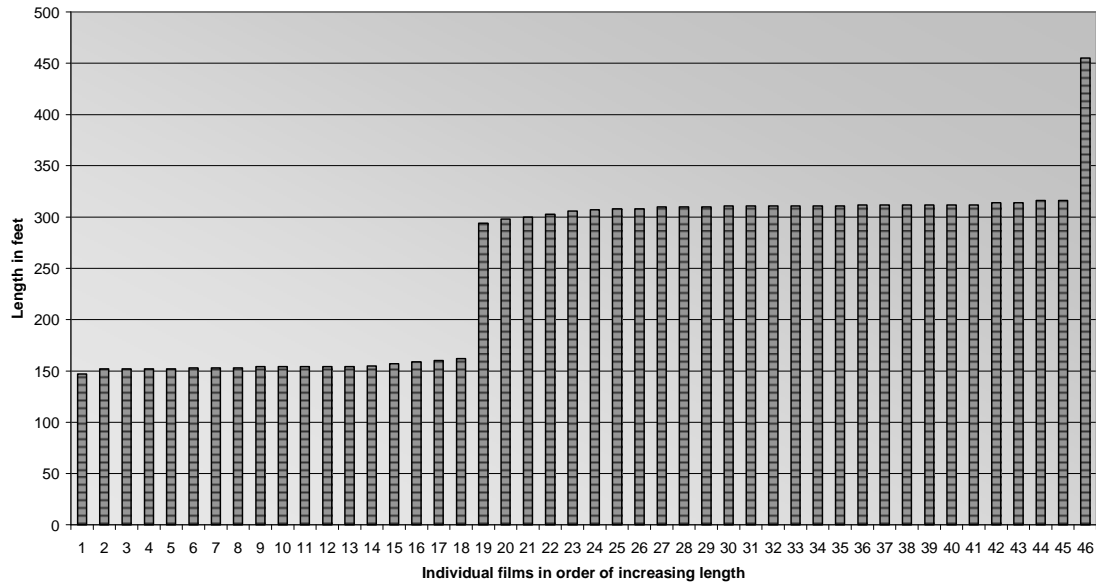
### **Different patterns of film lengths in the Philippines and China**

The graphs below represent Ackerman's films shot in (A) the Philippines, and (B) China. In these graphs each column corresponds to one film, the vertical axis representing the length of that film in feet. The films are listed in order of increasing length so as to show more clearly the striking differences between lengths of Ackerman's films in the two countries, (i.e. not in the same order as in the filmographies above).

For his assignment in the Philippines Ackerman mainly shot films of either about 150 ft. or about 300 ft., and the graph shows these two plateaus. But in China there is a fairly smooth curve from the shortest film to the longest film, with no favoured lengths, and a greater range from shortest to longest films (29' up to 536').<sup>20</sup> Why this difference between the two assignments? Was Ackerman using a different camera, or had his instructions changed? Perhaps, a year on, it was not considered so important to have films at standard lengths, but if not, why not? An answer to these questions may only come when all the data from the Biograph register in MOMA and other sources are analysed numerically, a relatively simple task which could and should be undertaken.

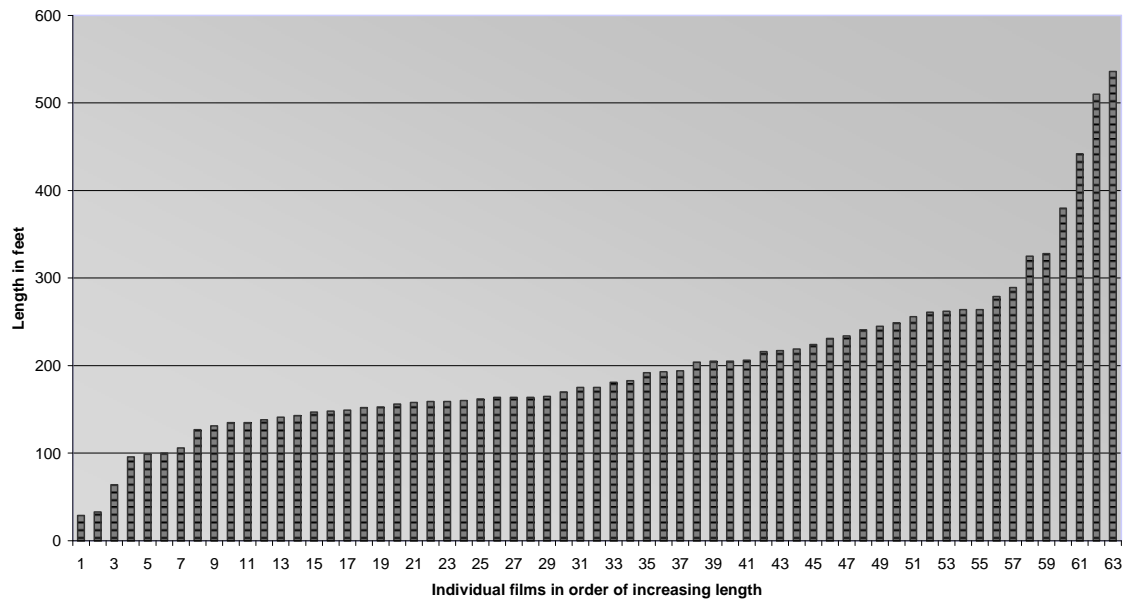
## A. Philippines

Ackerman's Philippine films, 1899-1900



## B. China

Ackerman's China films, 1900-1901



#### Appendix 4. WINSTON CHURCHILL'S PLAN TO FILM THE BOER WAR

While almost every aspect of the career of Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) has been examined in detail, his contacts with the cinema have been rather overlooked, including his plans to film the Boer War.<sup>21</sup> Churchill encountered the new medium of cinema when he took part in Lord Kitchener's Nile Expedition in 1898, for he wrote of war correspondents arriving in the Sudan, 'equipped with ice machines, typewriters, cameras, and even cinematographs'. (As we have seen, Frederic Villiers and John Benett-Stanford – and perhaps René Bull – brought film cameras to the Sudan.) The cinema had evidently entered Churchill's consciousness by the time of this campaign, because after he took part in the famous charge of the 21st Lancers at the Battle of Omdurman, he used a filmic image to describe his impressions of the experience, writing: 'The whole scene flickered exactly like a cinematograph picture; and, besides, I remember no sound, the event seemed to pass in absolute silence'.<sup>22</sup>

The following year the Boer War broke out, during which Churchill made his name as a daring war correspondent, being captured by the Boers and then making an audacious escape. What is less well known is that, back in Britain before leaving for the front, he had planned to film the war. This 'cinematograph scheme' was a joint venture with his friend Murray Guthrie, M.P.<sup>23</sup> Each of them was to pay half the expenses of sending an operator out with camera and films, the total costs estimated at not more than £700. In a letter to Guthrie (see Box) of 4 October 1899 Churchill speaks positively about their 'venture', as if he really thought it might happen, later adding that, 'I have no doubt that, barring accidents, I can obtain some vy strange pictures.'

But he soon found out that they would face competition, for by chance he had booked on the same ship to South Africa (the *Dunottar Castle*) as Biograph's W. K.-L. Dickson and his crew, departing on 14 October. Apparently Churchill travelled on the same boat train from London as the crew, for he noted in a letter to Guthrie written on the train that the Biograph Co. had already 'sent out a machine'.<sup>24</sup> Churchill seems rather to have got cold feet at this stage, and feared that all the theatres would be 'pledged to the American Coy', though he added that, 'even then I might make a lecturing tour' using the films. Churchill did indeed lecture after the war, but using lantern slides rather than films as illustration.<sup>25</sup> His plan to film the Boer War seems to have come to nothing.<sup>26</sup>

On board the *Dunottar Castle* he probably would have realised in any case that the process of filming was not as straightforward as he had supposed. He records in his account of the campaign that he noticed Dickson and his crew filming on the ship, and observed that their machine was 'cumbrous' and slow to work. The crew tried to film a ship which they passed, but because the Biograph camera took so much time to set up, 'the chance of making a moving picture was lost for ever', as Churchill wrote.<sup>27</sup>

**Box:**

**Winston Churchill's letters about the scheme**

On 4 October 1899 Churchill wrote from London to his friend, Murray Guthrie:

My dear Murray,

I sail on the 14th inst. for S. Africa: of the other possibilities you are as good a judge [as] I am. About the Cinematograph scheme: I do not expect it would require more than £700 altogether: and I am willing to join with you in the venture on the following simple terms:

Each to pay half the expenses: You to make all arrangements & do all business here: I all that is necessary in South Africa.

My own idea is that the expenses would not be vy great. (Machine 50. Expert 200. Transport & Feeding in S.A. 100. Passage out & home 50 = 400) The division of labour seems to me a fair one: and if you think the game is worth the candle in interest, in enterprise & in prospect of profit, I beg you to write to me. It is not necessary that the machine & expert should start when I do: though I suppose the sooner the better.

Yours sincerely, Winston S. Churchill

On 14 October in the boat train to Southampton, Churchill wrote another letter to Guthrie:

My dear Murray,

I see that the American Biograph Coy have already sent out a machine. This consideration will not of course escape you. I trust entirely to your business knowledge, and if you think the venture sound after your enquiries, I shall be delighted. But do not think yourself pledged to me in any way. Judge the situation for yourself and if you decide to send the machine & expert, Jack [Churchill's brother] will find the money for my half share & I beg you to write to him. I most sincerely hope you will find that the chances are in favour of success.

The expert must go out under his own name & report himself to me on arrival. Jack will know the address. I have no doubt that, barring accidents, I can obtain some vy strange pictures. My only fear is that all the Theatres will be pledged to the American Coy. But even then I might make a lecturing tour.

If you wire to me Standard Bank — Capetown 'Biograph coming' I shall know that the business is settled. And you may be sure, I shall do my best to win my money — and yours.

Your sincere friend, Winston S. Churchill<sup>28</sup>

## Appendix 5. BOER WAR CELEBRITIES ON SCREEN

### The first 'film stars'

Just as there are a number of quite well-defined genres or sub-genres of fiction films, there have always been sub-genres in non-fiction too, from the early days of cinema. One of these is the 'celebrity view', a scene in which a famous person is portrayed going through some action (often this was specially arranged for filming purposes by the cameraman). The genre is especially interesting from a film historical point of view because in a sense (as Martin Loiperdinger has argued) these filmed celebrities may be seen as forerunners of the 'stars' in later fiction filmmaking.<sup>29</sup>

Vanessa Toulmin has examined this phenomenon in respect of the Boer War, notably in the films of Mitchell and Kenyon (M&K), and identifies a number of individuals who feature prominently.<sup>30</sup> Toulmin finds that while certain outstanding individuals in the lower ranks were portrayed, the main subjects were the military commanders. The leading names in the M&K films were Generals Roberts, Kitchener and Buller, and to a lesser extent Baden-Powell and Methuen. In what follows I essentially use the model advanced by Toulmin, though with the addition of some different material from various sources (including from the NFA). I also add one important element, in that I also look at films of the Boer leaders: Generals such as De la Rey, and most significantly, President Kruger. Kruger was especially interesting in this respect, for though he was the *bête noir* of the British public, he was admired by the rest of the world: he was much filmed when he came to Europe, his image becoming a rallying point for the Boer sympathisers.

## THE BRITISH LEADERS

### Celebrity in general

By the turn of the century the phenomenon of the 'celebrity' was already well-established and the various media were used to featuring certain people very prominently. Politicians, performers, writers, military leaders were all the subject of quite personal articles, interviews and photographs. These 'celebrities' achieved this status in three main ways: either by virtue of their social position in society, or by their achievements, or both. War leaders fell into this latter category: they were celebrated for their given service rank, and also for their military success. During a war they would be featured more often in the media, in this way ascending the celebrity ladder (especially if they were victorious).<sup>31</sup> Perhaps the best personification of this phenomenon in this era is from the USA, in the shape of Admiral Dewey, hero of the battle of Manila Bay, but British Generals enjoyed a similar boost during the Boer War.

As some indication of this, in the Spring of 1900 at the height of British success in South Africa was turning, it was reported that the sales of images of war leaders or war heroes had for the first time outstripped sales of pictures of actresses.<sup>32</sup> By this stage photographs of generals were featured in



periodicals, in magic lantern shows, advertising, and in the music halls.<sup>33</sup> The generals were not only celebrated, they were for a time almost above criticism, even when unsuccessful, at least according to a visitor to London during the Boer War. This French journalist noted that when images of war leaders were projected in music halls, at a time when the British army 'was suffering defeat after defeat' (perhaps he means 'Black Week' in December 1899), there was no recrimination: '... never was there a jeer, never a hostile cry heard in the hall. The audience cheered the unfortunate generals with all their hearts'.<sup>34</sup>

It is certainly clear from my own researches that such moving images were received by audiences of the time generally with just such enthusiasm. In what follows I will look at the cinematic portrayal and reception of three commanders: Buller, Roberts and Kitchener. Vanessa Toulmin has noted perceptively some variations in how these and other Boer War leaders were received by the public of the time and in films: Buller was always highly popular with the people; Lord Roberts was popular and media savvy too (and both were met with enthusiastic crowds during their public appearances); Kitchener on the other hand came across as more distant, was never a friend of the media, and was received more formally by the crowds and by film audiences. In what follows I will show that these differences translated into the film medium, for the three men were portrayed on film, and the films then received by audiences, in divergent manners.

### **General Buller**

General Redvers Buller was the first commander in South Africa during the Boer War. He suffered a series of reverses from November 1899 through to the new year, and was replaced by Lord Roberts who assumed overall command. Buller was demoted to command the Natal front alone, though modern historians suggest that he actually did rather well in his final six months in the war. But the controversy about his initial command never dissipated and he was dismissed from the Army in the Autumn of 1901 at the instigation of Roberts.<sup>35</sup>

Buller was first seen on screen in connection with the war as he departed from Southampton, 14 October 1899. This departure was recorded by the Biograph company, under head cameraman W.K.-L. Dickson in a couple of views. It was also filmed by Warwick whose film survives in the NFTVA as *General Buller Embarking on the Dunottar Castle*. Interestingly this catches Dickson in shot, watching as Buller embarks (showing incidentally that one of Dickson's assistants, rather than Dickson himself, was operating the Biograph camera). A series of four films of the departure of Sir Redvers was also released by Fuerst Brothers, showing him embarking, inspecting the ship, bidding farewell from the bridge, and the ship leaving dock.<sup>36</sup> Versions of these departure films were extremely popular at this time, bringing forth 'rounds of cheering' in East Anglia.<sup>37</sup> And similarly at the other end of the country in Exeter the scene of 'General Buller's Departure' was the top film for a couple of weeks.<sup>38</sup>

During the voyage to South Africa, as we have seen in my earlier chapter, Dickson tried to film Buller, and tried again during the campaign in Natal,

though with limited success, the General being very camera shy. However, it would seem that, after his disappointing experiences in South Africa, and a year after he had departed Britain with such fanfare, the General suddenly became more accessible to the cameras. His return to Southampton in November 1900 was filmed by Biograph and shown at the Palace Theatre the same night.<sup>39</sup> By this time, Buller, despite his patchy record in South Africa and his effective demotion in the military hierarchy, had become the hero of the masses in Britain, especially in army districts. One observer noted the passion of the working people near Aldershot, a leading garrison town, for Sir Redvers: 'he is their hero: not Roberts'.<sup>40</sup> A film made of Buller's welcome home in this town captured the veneration. The General was first given an official presentation and then, in an extraordinarily casual act for this era (though presumably arranged in advance) was taken out of his carriage by the local firemen and led by hand along the route. This part of the proceedings was filmed by Walter Gibbons' cameraman. It showed Buller, in surprisingly informal demeanour:

'The General comes towards the camera and when just in front raises his hat in response to the tremendous cheers of the crowd, thus a splendid portrait is obtained, which is greeted with rounds of applause at each performance at the London Hippodrome.'<sup>41</sup>

But Buller was by now a spent force, for his first unsuccessful weeks in command in South Africa were never forgotten by some of his Army rivals. In October 1901 Roberts engineered his dismissal from the British Army, for alleged indiscipline.<sup>42</sup> But this dismissal was seen by large parts of the general public as unfair and undeserved, and it seems to have served only to increase the public sympathy for Sir Redvers. Public feelings were seen most intensely in the music halls and film shows.

At the Palace Theatre in late October – i.e. soon after the news of his sacking – Biograph threw upon the screen, *General Buller arriving at the Cape* (a film which had presumably been shot in November 1899). The *Era's* reporter noted that, '... as the well-known figure was represented stepping across the gangway the house cheered him to the echo'. The packed house roared, 'Buller! Tommy Atkins!!' (a conflation of Buller with the pet term for British soldiers, 'Tommy Atkins'). At another music hall, the Royal, George Gray was using the same conflation in his song, 'Buller Atkins', which was 'received with the wildest enthusiasm', the singer being encored again and again.<sup>43</sup>

Buller's final appearance as a British military man was at Aldershot a short while later, and he was filmed by Gaumont at this event, while supervising Infantry training. The film description noted the particularly human qualities of the General which the shots expressed:

'...a close view of him is obtained as he walks across in front of the camera. Another view of the popular General is obtained while he is standing among a group of officers, and being life like, kindle[s] much enthusiasm among his many admirers.'<sup>44</sup>

By this time in late 1901 the General had become virtually an object of veneration at the halls. In Liverpool an entire life story of Buller was presented at the Prince of Wales Theatre in the form of a pictorial lecture by Lindon Travers, entitled 'How Buller Won the Victoria Cross'. Illustrated by many graphic pictures of the ex-General's 40 year military career, this show, '...completely carried away the people, Buller's name being cheered again and again to the echo...'<sup>45</sup> It seems that Roberts' action in having Buller dismissed had backfired on him, by increasing Buller's popularity – and what's more in diminishing Roberts' own. A quick change artist performing in December found that, when made up as General Buller he was cheered, while as Lord Roberts he had to retire 'amid much hissing'.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, a couple of weeks later in Exeter, Buller's home town, pictures (films?) of Sir Redvers received loud 'Huzzas', whilst those of Roberts, his replacement, 'came in for boos and hisses'.<sup>47</sup>

### **Lord Roberts**

It seems that Roberts had shot himself in the foot over Buller, though until the Buller debacle he had himself been popular with the public. This was due not least to his manipulation of the media to his own advantage. Field-Marshal Lord Roberts indeed was one of the first military men who were skilled in this way, and one historian has shown how well he managed his image in the traditional, especially print, media.<sup>48</sup> It seems from my and Toulmin's research that he was equally savvy regarding the new medium, cinema.

Being newly-appointed commander in chief, Roberts – or 'Bobs' as he was commonly known – was an immediate magnet for the cameras, and he was first filmed in relation to the Boer War on his departure from England on 23 December 1899 (on the *Dunottar Castle*). Films of this event were released by Fuerst brothers and by Warwick, and the latter survives, shot from shipboard, showing Roberts and officials walking up the gangway, preceded by Lady Roberts.<sup>49</sup> Roberts' arrival in Cape Town was also filmed (again by Warwick). There is no particular indication that he had manipulated the filming on these occasions, though he certainly didn't object to being filmed (unlike Buller, in the early stages) and probably Roberts realised that such images of himself would be in great demand. Indeed so it proved, for Warwick's film of the commander's arrival in Cape town was, 'one of the most popular of the war-pictures' – in the words of G.A. Smith who developed multiple copies of this one title.<sup>50</sup>

As the campaign proceeded, indications of Roberts' influence on media coverage become more apparent, particularly in his handling of ceremonies. These he arranged for maximum visual impact, such as the surrender of Kroonstad, and at such events he ensured a prominent role was reserved for himself.<sup>51</sup> It was to an extent up to the cameramen how they recorded these events, as it was up to the press as to how they commented on Roberts' command, but the Field-Marshal pursued a subtle strategy here too: he was rarely domineering in regard to the press, and relatively light on censorship, and so was popular with the correspondents. Thus the very freedom which he gave the journalists and photographic reporters helped to ensure he got a 'good press'.

After the taking of Pretoria, and once installed at the British Residency in Pretoria, Roberts was filmed several times by Dickson (see Chapter 9), who had a special expertise in these kind of celebrity shots. Several of these appearances were specially 'arranged' for the camera. One film was set up to depict Roberts receiving despatches. Another scene had a double appeal, for it showed Roberts meeting Colonel Baden-Powell, hero of the siege of Mafeking, who was almost as much of a celebrity as the Field-Marshal. Though Dickson implies that this was a major scoop for himself, in fact several still photographers also were in on the act. A journalist who was there described this media frenzy:

'At every corner they [Roberts and Baden-Powell] were subjected to heavy camera fire. As they dismounted they had to submit to a volley of machine-photography; and I suspect the London music-halls have shown the field-marshal and the keen-eyed, thin-faced man with the cowboy hat, with the well-known "Denver poke" in the crown, come strolling down across the canvas screen.'<sup>52</sup>

This shot of the two celebrity commanders was indeed later shown in London – at the Palace Theatre – and presumably at Biograph's other venues. I estimate that some half dozen of Dickson's films depicted Roberts, which is quite a high number considering that only about 30 or so from South Africa were released. A song of the time about 'Biograph pictures' of famous people referred to Roberts appearing on the screen ('To country and duty devoted, revered far and wide in the land'), suggesting that his filmed image really was being seen widely.<sup>53</sup>

About a year after he had left the UK, Roberts returned, and was filmed on his arrival and welcome home. The film cameramen kept him in their focus, and in the following couple of years he was recorded as he took part in various ceremonies, and as he presented medals to those who had served in the Boer War: some of these films, notably those by M&K, still survive.<sup>54</sup>



Fig. 1. A multi-image lantern slide about the Boer War. Significantly, the first two images after the title slide are 'war celebrities': Roberts and Kitchener

## Lord Kitchener

The third British celebrity commander of the Boer War, Kitchener, came to South Africa as Lord Roberts' Chief of Staff, but then assumed overall command when Roberts departed at the end of 1900; thereafter he instituted harsh measures to put an end to Boer resistance. He was never as immediately popular as the other two leaders whom I have covered, though was probably admired (and certainly feared) more than either. As Vanessa Toulmin has observed,

‘Kitchener never inspired the form of loyalty and devotion accorded to ‘Our Bob’ either by his troops or the British public. His image was more severe, stern, not loveable like Roberts and he was revered for his strength and resolution.’

In South Africa Kitchener was filmed less frequently than the other two commanders. During the first part of the war this was because he was number two to Roberts, rather than overall commander (he was seen with Roberts in Rosenthal's film of the surrender of Kroonstad). Then by the time he took over command, it was the latter stage of the war and film cameras were no longer covering hostilities. The absence of cameras indeed might have been partly Kitchener's doing, for he mistrusted journalists (and had rigidly controlled them during the Sudan conflict).

However, after his return from the war, Kitchener was quite extensively filmed. He was after all coming back as the man who had (following a gruelling struggle) won the Boer War, so the public interest was considerable. The first opportunity for filming was when he arrived in Southampton on the ‘Orotava’ on 12 July 1902.<sup>55</sup> From Southampton railway station Kitchener and Generals Sir John French and Sir Ian Hamilton departed for London in a specially decorated train. Kitchener then travelled in a procession through Hyde Park. His arrival and subsequent itinerary were filmed by the Hepworth and Gaumont companies (see Box), and M&K's operator recorded part of the proceedings; probably other companies did too. The M&K and Hepworth titles survive as *Lord Kitchener's Return* and *Lord Kitchener's Arrival at Southampton* respectively.<sup>56</sup>

These films were of considerable public interest, one music hall journal stating of their reception in Leeds: ‘Lord Kitchener's return is, of course, the chief film of interest, and every night this subject comes in for a most hearty reception’.<sup>57</sup> The Gaumont version, had it survived, would have been of especial interest, for it contained a relatively close view of Kitchener, the catalogue describing it as: ‘The celebrated portrait of the General half filling the screen. The best animated portrait ever taken.’<sup>58</sup> Even more notably, the normally stern General was actually smiling in some shots (see Box).

In addition to the three major figures I have discussed, a number of lesser military figures were also filmed in this period and some of these films survive. Sir George White was recorded disembarking at an English port in April 1900, invalided home after his failure in South Africa (IWM 1025). A jerky film by

Hepworth manages to catch the camera-shy Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain departing England for the Cape to sign the peace treaty in 1902: he is shown as he strides from the train to the ship (NFTVA). M&K filmed the visit of Lord Methuen to Bristol in 1902, and the company also filmed a couple of scenes of lower ranking soldiers who had distinguished themselves during the war: Private Ward, V.C., and Lieutenant Clive Wilson.

**Box:**

**The smiling commander**

Two reviews of films of Kitchener's return

'Splendid pictures of the arrival of Lord Kitchener and Generals French and Hamilton, were secured by Messrs. Hepworth and Co., of Cecil Court, W.C. Their cameras were on many excellent positions on the route, and the operators in charge were successful in getting admirable likenesses of the distinguished subjects. Commencing with the disembarkation from the "Orotava," Lord Kitchener and his staff are shown passing up and down the quay at Southampton, inspecting the Guards. Then the carriage containing his lordship is seen entering the beautifully decorated railway station, and in the last part of this particular film a splendid photograph of the special train, drawn by a bedecked engine, and bearing a portrait of the General, is obtained, showing the train emerging from the station. The next film begins by showing the arrival at Paddington, and the procession from beginning to end passes towards the camera. The concluding portion of the film is devoted to a splendid piece of animated portraiture, wherein Lord Kitchener faces the camera for some seconds and salutes. Altogether it is [a] most stirring series of photographs, and these films should remain in the list of topical subjects for many weeks to come. For music hall proprietors, as well as for fair work, this subject is eminently suitable.' (MHTR 18 Jul 1902, p.40, col.1)

'The erroneous idea that Lord Kitchener has never been known to smile, is pleasantly disproved by the animated photographs of the famous General's arrival at Southampton, which were secured by Messrs. L. Gaumont and Co. On several occasions when directly confronting their cameras, the distinguished soldier favoured the instrument with a good-natured smile, which was clearly and sharply recorded. In the series made up for projection, the first picture depicts the "Orotava" coming alongside the dock. Lord Kitchener is then seen descending the gangway, and his reception and review of the guard of honour is strikingly shown. For several minutes the General stands before the camera, conversing with Colonel Stackpool, and the Mayor of Southampton. Then his train is shown departing for London. The whole film is stereoscopic to a very striking degree, and the portraits are always most distinct.' (MHTR 1 Aug 1902, p.82, col.1)

## THE BOER LEADERS

### **Kruger: loved in Europe, hated in Britain**

Though the Boers were scarcely filmed in South Africa during the war, on a couple of occasions late in the day their leaders came to Europe, and this was a rare opportunity for film companies to cover the Boer side in the conflict. The two occasions were, firstly in the Autumn of 1900 when President Kruger fled South Africa in the wake of British advances; and secondly when the Boer leaders came to Europe in 1902 after signing the peace treaty. The film companies covered both these visits with thoroughness.

When British forces took Pretoria in June 1900, President Paul Kruger had already left his capital. Some time later he was brought from Africa to Europe on a Dutch warship, the *Gelderland* (public opinion in Holland had forced the Queen to arrange this).<sup>59</sup> He was to enjoy unprecedented adulation in various European countries.

Throughout this visit to Europe there was extensive coverage from the visual media, beginning with his arrival in Marseilles; indeed this event was effectively a 'media scrum'. One report mentions 'hordes of photographers' who were present in the port to record his arrival.<sup>60</sup> These included several film cameramen, and various companies later released versions of the events. Warwick issued two films showing Kruger's landing in Marseille harbour on 22 November, and two views of his ensuing procession through the streets. Pathé issued a long film about the Marseilles arrival. Nöggerath's cameraman also filmed the events.<sup>61</sup>

A drawing published in a periodical at this time illustrates three cameramen and their cameras set up near the dock, awaiting Kruger's arrival. [see Fig. 2] These cameras include what seems to be a Warwick instrument, and, most prominently, two huge Biograph machines. This was highly unusual to have two of the company's cameras covering an event, and testifies to the importance of the occasion for Biograph. One of the cameras was being operated by Biograph's French representative, and the other by the company's leading operator, W.K.-L. Dickson himself (pictured standing above the others in the centre).<sup>62</sup>

Dickson was as ever working with an assistant on this assignment, Emile Lauste, and they had departed London over a week earlier in order to arrange matters for this shoot in good time.<sup>63</sup> A newspaper stated that thanks to the films that Dickson and his colleagues were taking, audiences would be able to witness Kruger's arrival in Europe, 'to vastly better advantage than thousands of the people who actually were on the scene when he came ashore'.<sup>64</sup> This was quite possibly correct, for Dickson was very skilled in filming this kind of occasion, and unlike some other cameramen, he was not content with merely filming events haphazardly as they happened, but liked to set the scene up.

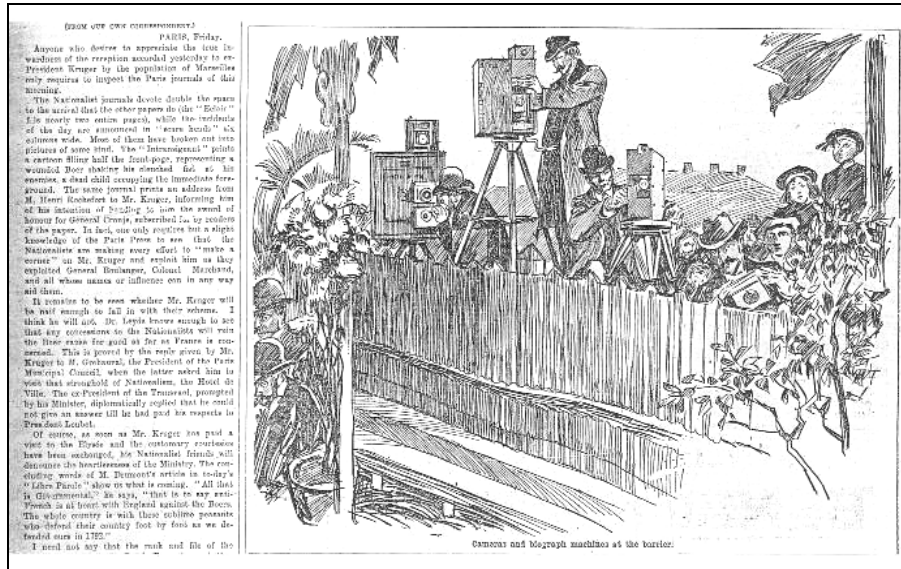


Fig. 2. Cameramen, including Biograph's men, preparing to film Kruger's arrival in Marseilles (*Daily Graphic*, 24 Nov 1900)

He was well practiced at persuading celebrities to pose for his camera, having dealt with several big names including the Pope, British Generals, Admiral Dewey, as well as the world's royalty. Apparently on this occasion too he expended considerable effort to persuade the taciturn Kruger (or 'Oom Paul' as he was known) to be filmed. As a photographic magazine reported: 'The preliminaries would have daunted anyone with less tact and patience [than Dickson], and it was only after about half an hour's palavering that Oom Paul somewhat unwillingly gave his assent'.<sup>65</sup> As a result, Dickson managed to obtain a shot of, what was described as, 'Paul Kruger and his suite' in Marseilles. It is not clear what exactly this depicted; possibly it was a re-enacting of the arrival.

The following day Kruger boarded a special train to convey him to Paris, the train making stops at various towns *en route*, and in each town he was greeted warmly and cheered by the populace. At Lyons 25,000 people gathered to see him, and when he reached Paris there were over 50,000 well-wishers at the station.<sup>66</sup> The Biograph company filmed Kruger in Paris, the President being recorded as he was leaving the Hotel de Ville (the film survives in the NFM).

Interestingly, it may be that the actual Biograph camera which filmed these scenes in Marseilles or Paris survives. A Mutagraph (Biograph) camera is preserved in the Cinémathèque française, and on one of the film boxes the words 'Pres. Kruger' are written. The company is not known to have filmed Kruger on any other occasions, so it might refer to this French filming.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps – and this is pure supposition – the words were written on the film box to ensure that this unique film of Kruger was not mistaken for anything else, and would be safely delivered to the lab for development.



In December 1900 several Biograph Boer War films were shown at Cambrai in France, with the Hotel de Ville title being the evening's featured and final film: Kruger was applauded enthusiastically by the audience who requested that the film be shown again.<sup>68</sup> This fervour was a regular reaction in Paris and the rest of France to films of Kruger (also to the man himself, of course).<sup>69</sup> When the film of Kruger's Marseilles visit was shown in one French town, it 'roused the patriotic enthusiasm of the spectators who responded to the celebrated man's waves [as shown in the film] with cries of "Long live the Boers!"'<sup>70</sup> Kruger films were also screened in Germany in late 1900, and quite probably the audience reaction was just as positive as in France.<sup>71</sup>

After his French visit, Kruger travelled to the Netherlands where he was filmed by Nöggerath's cameramen in Amsterdam and on the balcony of the Hotel des Indes in The Hague. Later he was filmed in Rotterdam (26 June 1901) and Dordrecht.<sup>72</sup> These films and others of Kruger were widely shown in Holland.<sup>73</sup> Much like the British commanders in the UK, Kruger in the Netherlands became a kind of early film star. In the Dutch fairground cinema shows Kruger was ever the hero. A foreign visitor, probably American, recorded a visit to one Dutch fair late in the Boer War (or possibly even after it had ended), and noted: 'We saw the Boer War in a cinematograph and applauded Kruger and Cronje with the Dutchmen, and heard them hiss Kitchener and Lord Bobs'.<sup>74</sup>

Kruger remained in exile until his death in 1904, for after the war ended in 1902 the British, back in control, were certainly not going to let him return to South Africa: the ex-President was widely blamed for instigating the war. In fact throughout the conflict Kruger had been a particular object for hatred and derision in Britain – the exact opposite of the near reverence with which he was regarded in Holland and elsewhere. In Britain Kruger was regularly insulted in cartoons, and his image was pelted in fairground stalls. Interestingly, the hatred was far more for Kruger than for the rest of the Boer population. A music hall writer, predicting what subjects would appear on the halls in 1901, stated that 'there will be very little jibing at the Boers', who had been 'misguided' into starting the war: the real villain was Kruger, who 'will not be spared'. The writer predicted that the Transvaal leader would be energetically ridiculed, for, 'Obviously the ex-President's personal appearance lends itself very readily to comic caricatures, and the comedians will make the most of their opportunity'.<sup>75</sup> (Kruger was bearded and stocky, resembling an Old Testament preacher, some people thought).

On British screens Kruger fared no better than in music halls. For example, in a lantern show in Sussex in May 1900, 'Kruger's and Cronje's visages were greeted with hisses and cries of "Rats."'<sup>76</sup> At this stage of the war, before Kruger had visited Europe and been filmed there, moving images of the President were rare. As a result, Warwick's view of 'President Kruger getting out of his carriage', filmed before the war, was in 'enormous' demand in Britain.<sup>77</sup> Presumably it too would have been received with hisses.

### **The Boer Generals on film**

At the end of May 1902, the Boer War finally came to an end, and the British and Boer representatives in South Africa signed a treaty and terms of surrender. No film cameramen were on hand, and the only film version was Gaumont's staged 'representation', *Signing Peace at Pretoria* (as mentioned in chapter 10). However, just a few weeks later the Boer leaders came to Europe, including a visit to Britain. This was a first opportunity for the British people, or at least their media, to catch a glimpse of the elusive Boer generals. Unlike Kruger, these men who had held out against the might of the Empire for so long were widely admired in Britain, and there was great interest in seeing them for the first time. The day before the Generals were due to land a music hall paper proclaimed:

'The arrival in this country of the Boer leaders to-morrow [16 August] will be an event of national interest, and Messrs. Gaumont and Co. have secured the exclusive rights to take animated photographs of the landing of the party.'<sup>78</sup>

The word 'exclusive' was inaccurate, because at least one other company, R.W. Paul's, was filming the arrival in Southampton, and according to one recollection there were as many as four film companies there.<sup>79</sup> These companies and their cameramen comprised: Gaumont itself (cameraman, A.C. Bromhead), the Warwick Trading Co. (cameramen, Charles Urban and John Avery), R.W. Paul (cameraman, Jack Smith) and the Hepworth company (cameraman, Cecil Hepworth). The fact that for all companies but Paul's, the head of the firm was acting as cameraman (Messrs. Bromhead, Hepworth, and Urban), suggests that this was seen to be a very important event.

However, the cameramen had their work cut out, for this assignment on 16 August was a somewhat tricky and complicated one. The Boer Generals – Botha, Delarey and De Wet – were due to arrive on the Castle liner 'Saxon', and meanwhile at another nearby wharf the British top brass were quartered on the 'Nigeria': Lord Kitchener, Lord Roberts and the colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain.<sup>80</sup> What's more, a naval review at Spithead would take place in the afternoon. It would be a busy day. Bromhead later recalled:

'I went down overnight with a camera and an assistant to film the lot. The first arrival was the "Saxon" and the only rival cameraman found prepared for this event was my friend, Captain Jack Smith, representing Paul. We both found, however, that we were not going to obtain a picture of the Boer leaders from the position allotted to us. We certainly got the "Saxon" arriving, but when she came alongside, the deck was 25 or 30 feet above us and no Boer leaders were visible. Smith and I consoled and both told each other that we were giving it up. Neither of us mentioned the "Nigeria", perhaps hoping that each other did not know about it. I shouldered my camera and made a little detour and then found my way to the "Nigeria" – Smith had done the same, so we both met there again... When Kitchener disembarked, Hepworth, Paul, Avery, Urban and myself were lined up behind a rope.'<sup>81</sup>

Smith also remembered this day in later years, including a variation on this anecdote of rivalry between himself and Bromhead.<sup>82</sup> However, Bromhead's and Smith's recollections contain some discrepancies. The implication from Bromhead's telling is that because the deck of the 'Saxon' was out of sight, neither cameramen managed to film the Boer Generals. But actually, the film of the event shot by Smith survives (see description below) and does show the Boers. This either means Bromhead mis-remembered, or, perhaps the Boer leaders were filmed at the 'Nigeria', for this is where they were taken after disembarking the 'Saxon', to meet the British leaders (Kitchener et al).<sup>83</sup>

The results of Bromhead's and Smith's efforts were released by the Gaumont and Paul companies, each nearly a hundred feet in length.<sup>84</sup> Paul's version is in four shots/set-ups, showing the Southampton quayside with a large crowd around. The first view is from across the heads of onlookers at quayside, with another cameraman in foreground who looks round at us, and moves his camera to the left: the presence of this other cameraman suggests that there might indeed have been several operators jostling for position on site.<sup>85</sup> Then the Boer Generals walk down the gangplank onto the Southampton quayside, tipping their hats. They are seen in closer view, walking along dock, led by policemen. Then three British officials pass and there is a jump-cut to the Boer party with two spectators shaking a Boer leader (de Wet?) by the hand.<sup>86</sup> This film is interesting in showing the warm reception for the Generals, which is confirmed by the detailed reports in newspapers of their arrival (and of their subsequent visit to London where they were cheered 'with wild enthusiasm').

After their visit to Britain, which must have been an uneasy experience despite the evident admiration of the British people, the Boer leaders travelled on to the more comfortable climes of the Continent. First they went to Holland and then to Germany and France, being welcomed enthusiastically everywhere. In Holland they were filmed on several occasions: arriving in The Hague and Rotterdam, and in Amsterdam, the latter film surviving.<sup>87</sup> In addition, Gaumont released views of the Boer Generals arriving in Paris.<sup>88</sup>

## Appendix 6. 'HORROR AND CARNAGE' : EARLY OPPOSITION TO FILMING WARFARE

When one examines the early history of war filming, with its strong tendency to generate moving images of imperial and militaristic propaganda, it would be all too easy to believe that this was the only point of view at this time. Certainly some historians have gained this impression, and perceive such attitudes – glorying in blood lust – even where the evidence is slim. Historian Kristen Whissel quotes from a writer in *Leslie's Weekly* of January 1900 who noted that, with cinematograph operators at both the Boer and Philippine conflicts, 'we are promised some vivid, soul-stirring pictures of actual, grewsome [sic] war'. Whissel tells us that this phrase means that *Leslie's* commentator, 'expressed desire for' such pictures.<sup>89</sup> Actually this is not a valid interpretation of the phrase, for this 1900 writer was merely reporting a prediction that such 'grewsome' pictures would probably materialize, but took no view on whether this would be a good thing or not.

While in general one would think that commentators and many ordinary people in this era would not particularly have minded seeing war portrayed, and indeed glorified on screen – and the large audiences for early screen warfare testify to its popularity as a subject – this can be overstated, and there were some who took a different view. While this was a militaristic era it was not a homogenous one, and militarism was tempered with other trends of the age, such as the desire for social reform and progressivism, and there was a large pacifist lobby. In this regard, the following 'anti-war' sentiments which I have uncovered – in relation to the early possibilities of showing warfare on screen – make some interesting reading.

### **'The true horrors of war... graphically presented'**

The first example of this kind of opinion which I have found dates, surprisingly, from before the first filmed war had even broken out. The Greco-Turkish War began in mid-April 1897, and that very month there appeared in a British photographic journal, *The Photogram*, a letter suggesting that films be used for the discouragement of war.<sup>90</sup> The letter was headed, 'The Kinetograph in War', and the writer was an artist and social commentator who gloried in the name of Evacustes A. Phipson.<sup>91</sup> Phipson began by expressing the wish that,

'It is to be hoped that the powers of the Kinetoscope will not be confined to the reproduction of ordinary scenes for amusement merely, but that Kinetograms of genuine scientific interest and value will also be taken, especially of events which are of rare occurrence.'

This was in effect a call for 'news films' (an interesting early reference to this possibility). Phipson hoped that 'in all future cases of any extraordinary phenomenon, which can by any means be anticipated... some competent kinetographer will be in attendance'. He mentioned such incidents as explosions or volcanic eruptions, and, 'above all, the encounter of two armies at battle'.<sup>92</sup> Phipson concluded this part of his argument on a moral note:

‘Now anybody can imagine what a battle is like as well as an artist, and if not, every picture gallery in Europe is full of such scenes, none of which, except perhaps M. de Neuveville's [sic] Franco-German war paintings, have much verisimilitude. What we want is to know exactly what it really is, and possibly if the true horrors of war were graphically presented to all there would be more chance of its being abolished.’

This remained a lone opinion as far as I can discover, with no other writer expressing this view that screening films of warfare might help to eliminate it. I have however, found several other instances in the following three years or so of the converse point of view: i.e. that by screening films of war one was pandering to the blood lust, and such subjects should neither be filmed nor shown.

The first tones of disquiet appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* newspaper in September 1897. The writer mentioned a film of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons boxing match – or ‘animatographic fight’ as he called it – which had recently been shown at the Royal Aquarium in London (the fight had been filmed in America in March). He was alarmed at the ‘appalling possibilities’ opened up by this example, in that other violent incidents might be filmed, or even fomented for filming purposes, to provide sensational entertainment: ‘Revolutions, wars, battles, murders, and sudden deaths will all be fostered for the same purpose’.<sup>93</sup>

#### **‘We can hardly imagine anything more ghastly’**

In March the following year a similar point of view was expressed in the *Photographic News*, and indeed this periodical published variations on this opinion over the next couple of years – these presumably being the beliefs of the editor.<sup>94</sup> At this stage, however, the journal or its editor seemed to view the prospect of war on screen with equanimity. In reporting fears that battles in future might be filmed for later showing in music halls (which he’d read in a contemporary newspaper), the *News’* man pointed out that actually films of war – the Greco-Turkish War – had already been shown. And besides, he added, this objection was an irrelevance, for this era of the 1890s was ‘the age of realism’, so realistic representations of war were going to happen anyway!<sup>95</sup>

However, as the Spanish-American War erupted in the Spring of that year, 1898, the *Photographic News* changed its tune. The journal started by noting that many of the films so far released related to the war had merely shown troops preparing and the like, and that there hadn’t yet been a chance to capture real fighting on film. But if such films were secured, the *News* earnestly hoped, they should not be shown:

‘For ourselves we can hardly imagine anything more ghastly than a music-hall audience sitting gazing at an animated photograph of two bodies of men engaged in killing each other as fast as they can. To us the idea is ghastly, and we hope such exhibitions, should they be attempted, will not be permitted. Indecency is rightly stamped out of our

entertainment, so should also be the lust of horror and carnage, a vice just as bad in its way as any other.<sup>96</sup>

Early the following year the *Photographic News* returned to this theme, in criticising a contemporary writer for his prediction that films of 'battles in progress' would be shown in future. The *News* sincerely hoped that this would not come to pass:

'...it is bad enough to have to read about the horrors of war; but that to sit and contemplate the "animated" representation of the carnage would be pandering to the most terrible of all human passions – the blood lust.'<sup>97</sup>

In the summer of 1900 the commentator in the *Photographic News* made a further impassioned statement, his most detailed yet. It was prompted by reports that a couple of cameramen were on their way to film aspects of the Boxer crisis in China hostilities. Already disgusted with the numerous films of preceding wars, this was the last straw for the *News*' man:

'During the past three or four years photography has overfed the public appetite for scenes of carnage and destruction. Of the Chino-Japanese War, the Greco-Turkish War, and the Spanish-American War, and the Boer War, unnumbered photos were taken for public exhibition. It may be an old-fashioned notion on our part, but we are not in love with the idea that our music-halls and other places of amusement should be turned into permanent scenes of exhibition for war photographs. [i.e. films and slides] Regarded in its most favourable aspects war is a horrible thing. If it brings out some of the best instincts of human nature it richly illustrates some of the worst. An intelligent interest in the progress of a campaign is a laudable thing to be encouraged among the public, but there should be a limit to the sordid cravings of those entrepreneurs who make the display of gruesome war photographs the double means of pandering to the grosser side of the public appetite and of earning dividends for their shareholders.'<sup>98</sup>

## Notes to Appendices:

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<sup>1</sup> Harding adds: 'Today, the possibilities presented by digital imaging make this issue more pertinent than ever. In March 2003, Brian Walski of the Los Angeles Times succumbed to the temptation to "improve" one of his photographs. Using photo manipulation software he combined elements of two of his photographs taken during the Iraq war so as to create a more dramatic image. Only after publication was it noticed that several civilians appear twice...' Colin Harding, NMPFTV website.

<sup>2</sup> See Dino A. Brugioni, *Photo Fakery: The History and Techniques of Photographic Deception and Manipulation* (Dulles, Va.: Brassey's, 1999), p.31-3.

<sup>3</sup> 'The war', *The Scotsman* 31 Oct 1870, p.3. Cited in 'Sham war photographs', BJP 11 Nov 1870, p.537. This took place about 25 October; two days later Metz fell to the Prussians. The incident is interesting by comparison with what other photographers had done in different conflicts, for while here at Metz the photographer used sham bodies, in the American Civil War Gardner moved bodies, while in the Crimea Fenton avoided photographing bodies at all.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas T. Jeans and Charles N. Robinson, *Naval Brigades in the South African War, 1899-1900* (London: Sampson Low & Co., 1901), p.133-34. For this piece of arranging, the operator photographed the Naval Brigade as well as their Highland escort.

<sup>5</sup> Villiers notes that many photographs of war are faked by 'posing men in the act of deadly conflict many miles from the scene of action'. Raymond Blathwayt, 'Fresh from the Front... a Talk with Mr. Frederic Villiers', *Daily News*, 19 April 1900, p.7. And see Gus Macdonald, *Camera: A Victorian Eyewitness* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1979), p.85-6. Macdonald also relates Gardner's behaviour in moving the dead soldier to photograph him.

<sup>6</sup> George C. Musgrave, *Under Three Flags in Cuba: A Personal Account of the Cuban Insurrection and Spanish-American War* (London; Cambridge, U.S.A.: Gay & Bird, 1899), p.74, 154.

<sup>7</sup> LW 11 Aug 1898, p.101.

<sup>8</sup> 'Ex cathedra', BJP 9 Nov 1900, p.705.

<sup>9</sup> Reproduced in *The Photogram* May 1898, p.153.

<sup>10</sup> 'Cinematography and the war', BJP 6 May 1898 p.293. The writer added that smokeless powder would aid the cinematographer considerably, by reducing the haze on the battlefield. This is contrary to the practice of filmmakers from this period onward who used smoky powder as a good way of giving a visible sign of a shot being fired (see my Chapter 1).

<sup>11</sup> AP 21 Dec 1900, p.490-92, and H.C. Shelley, 'Photography in war', PJ 31 Jan 1901, p.156-167, especially p.163.

<sup>12</sup> Published in *The King* 13 Jan 1900, this was stated to have been taken with a telephoto from a quarter of a mile away.

<sup>13</sup> *The Biograph in Battle*, p.75. See also introduction by Richard Brown in W.K-L. Dickson, *The Biograph in Battle: Its Story in the South African War* (Trowbridge: Flicks Books, 1995), p.iii; and see Barnes 1900 volume, p.144.

<sup>14</sup> My guess is that it would have been even more difficult to adapt telephotos to fit onto smaller film cameras (and also then to focus), as the film area is so much less than for either the Biograph camera or stills cameras for which the lenses had been developed. Also film emulsions were not particularly fast in this era. See W. K-L. Dickson, *The Biograph in Battle: Its Story in the South African War* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1901). There is an ad for Dallmeyer telephoto lenses in Dickson's book. His comments are reported in David Levy, 'Re-Constituted Newsreels, Re-Enactments and the American Narrative Film', in *Cinema 1900-1906: An Analytical Study*, edited by R. Holman (Brussels: FIAF, 1982), p.248.

<sup>15</sup> This film, a version of *Battle of Spion Kop*, was shown at the NFT, October 1999.

<sup>16</sup> *NY Clipper*, 2 July 1898. Quoted in Musser, *Emergence*, p.256.

<sup>17</sup> Advert for a show that Waller Jeffs was managing at the Assembly Rooms, Hull, for A.D. Thomas. From the *Hull Daily News*, 19 Apr 1901, p.4. This was sent to me by Jonathan Burrows, who added that, as Jeffs and Thomas were regular Mitchell and Kenyon clients, 'I wonder if they could be talking about the latter's staged war films here?' I think he may be right. See what may be the same ad for Edison Boer and China war films, claimed to have been taken using a telephoto lens, in John H. Bird, *Cinema Parade; Fifty Years of Film Shows* (Birmingham: Cornish Bros., 1947), p.71.

<sup>18</sup> 'Edison's Animated Pictures at the St. James's Hall', *Manchester Evening News*, 7 May 1901, p.5. The writer noted that the hall had been very full of spectators, and added that

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pictures depicting the funeral procession of the late Queen and of the Boer war were the best. Reference from NFA.

<sup>19</sup> Warwick Trading Co. 1901 catalogue supplement, c. Aug 1901, p.237-241.

<sup>20</sup> There are a couple of anomalies in film lengths: footage of *Shanghai from a Launch* was given in Biograph's register with two different lengths: length as shot and length as edited. For my graph I have used the former (328 ft.) *British Light Artillery* was listed with two different lengths, 190 & 219 – I have taken an average of the two.

<sup>21</sup> His full title in later years was Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill.

<sup>22</sup> Winston Churchill, *The River War : The Sudan, 1898* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1899-1900), v.1, p.364; v.2, p.142.

<sup>23</sup> Guthrie was MP for Bow and Bromley from 1899 to 1906.

<sup>24</sup> His second letter to Murray (14 Oct) about filming is headed 'In the train', and presumably it was the same 'boat train' as Dickson's group were on.

<sup>25</sup> A letter from Churchill to Wolseley, 4 Oct 1900, states that he was to give a lecture on the war at St James Hall the Tuesday after 26 October. Wolseley Collection, Hove Library. (This letter is missing, but the summary indicates the content). Churchill presented the lecture, 'The war as I saw it', in various locations in November, illustrated with slides (including one showing his own arrival in Pretoria). From cuttings in a scrapbook in the Wolseley collection, including from *Yorkshire Post* 16 Nov 1900 and *Morning Post* 31 Nov 1900.

<sup>26</sup> Guthrie himself visited South Africa later, though to inspect hospitals rather than to make films. See Murray Guthrie, 'The South African war hospitals', *Nineteenth Century*, Sep 1900, p.510-20. He went to Pretoria in early June, and also to Bloemfontein.

<sup>27</sup> Winston Churchill, *London to Ladysmith Via Pretoria* (London, 1900), p.8. Another mention of Churchill during the trip to South Africa is in W. K-L. Dickson, *The Biograph in Battle : Its Story in the South African War, Related with Personal Experiences, Illustrated from Photos and Sketches by the Author* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1901), p.173-74; and in *Black and White Transvaal special*, 10 Feb 1910, p.5 there is a photo showing Churchill arriving by ship at Durban.

<sup>28</sup> Both letters, Churchill to Murray Guthrie, are in Randolph S. Churchill and Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill. Vol.1: Youth, 1874-1900* (London: Heinemann, 1966), p.1054-55.

<sup>29</sup> Martin Loiperdinger has remarked on this phenomenon with respect to the many early films of the Kaiser, and I have found an equivalent in Biograph films, particularly those directed/photographed by W.K.-L. Dickson. Loiperdinger calls the Kaiser Germany's first film star. See Martin Loiperdinger, 'Kaiser Wilhelm II: Der Erste Deutscher Filmstar', in *Idole des Deutschen Films : Eine Galerie Von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. T. Koebner (Munchen: edition text + kritik, 1997), p.41-53. Stephen Bottomore, "'Every Phase of Present-Day Life": Biograph's Non-Fiction Production', *Griffithiana*, no. 66/70, 1999/2000, p.147-211.

<sup>30</sup> Vanessa Toulmin, 'Militarism in the Edwardian Age', chapter 8 of *Electric Edwardians: The Story of the Mitchell & Kenyon Collection*, ed. V. Toulmin (London: BFI, 2006), p.239-279.

<sup>31</sup> One might add a fourth way of gaining celebrity status, and that was and is through the deliberate manipulation of the media by the celebrity himself: there is some evidence that Roberts did this, as I shall discuss below.

<sup>32</sup> This was reported in AP 13 Apr 1900, p.282, credited to an article by 'Dagonet' (i.e. George Sims) in the periodical, *Referee*.

<sup>33</sup> A lightning sketch artist at this time was sketching the personalities and events of the war including Buller and Lord Roberts, the latter of which could be finished in less than 60 seconds. Frank Foulsham, 'Instantaneous War Pictures', *Royal Magazine* 3, no. 18, Apr 1900, p.491-94. The artist was Rossi Ashton, an ex-soldier, whose lightning sketches also included a scene entitled 'One for Majuba', depicting a Highlander bayoneting a Boer, which was greeted by the audience with 'howls of enthusiasm'.

<sup>34</sup> Gustave Téry, 'L'enthousiasme populaire au cinématographe', *Ciné Journal*, 14 Oct 1911, p.17. Originally in *Le Journal*. (My translations). Téry added that as explanation for this stoicism, people in Britain said that final success was not in doubt. In addition to the images of the Generals, he notes that the latest war news was also displayed on the screen.

<sup>35</sup> Military historians, such as Pakenham, suggest that after his reverses Buller changed tactics, having learned in effect how to fight a modern war, with the proper use of cover, a 'creeping' bombardment, etc. Buller was still in charge of a third of Britain's fighting force at this time, and was certainly not the incompetent leader as he has sometimes been painted (by Symons and others).



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<sup>36</sup> 'War films', PD Nov 1899, p.120.

<sup>37</sup> The *Eastern Daily Press* in January 1900 reported: 'The view of the embarkation of Sir Redvers Buller for South Africa on October 14th brought forth rounds of cheering. The scene displaying the troop-ship, Roslin Castle, leaving for South Africa met with a similar greeting.' Quoted in Stephen Peart, *The Picture House in East Anglia* (Lavenham: Terrence Dalton, 1980), p.12.

<sup>38</sup> The film was shown by Poole's in November 1899. By the last week of the three-week run the Buller film had been ousted by a film of the "Fitzimmons and Jeffries prize fight". Alex Rankin, 'The History of Cinema Exhibition in Exeter 1895 - 1918'. U. Exeter, 2001, chapter 1.

<sup>39</sup> AP 16 Nov 1900, p.381. This source notes that the film had been shot on Saturday morning last (10 November?) The journal added that this promptness between filming and showing meant that the film medium had virtually become, 'an illustrated supplement to the evening newspapers'.

<sup>40</sup> E.D. MacKerness, *The Journals of George Sturt, 1890-1927* (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), p.326-9.

<sup>41</sup> Gibbons' ad, *Era* 17 Nov 1900, p.30. *General Buller Home Again. The Welcome at Aldershot*. [1097]. Length 75ft. This was claimed as the only film of the event.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London: Cardinal; Sphere, 1991), p.457. An M&K film, *General Bullers' Visit to Manchester*, was probably filmed just before his sacking, in Summer 1901.

<sup>43</sup> 'Music hall gossip', *Era* 26 Oct 1901, p.20. This gives details of both the film show at the Palace Theatre on 'Thursday night', and to Gray's song.

<sup>44</sup> *Showman* 15 Nov 1901, p.152. It was also shot by Biograph, whose version is listed in the Barnes 1900 volume, p.150.

<sup>45</sup> *Liverpool Daily Post*, 26 November 1901, p.5; *Liverpool Daily Post*, 26 Nov 1901, p.5, col.4. References from the NFA. The show was by the North American Animated Photo Company.

<sup>46</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 10 Dec 1901. Reference from NFA. Buller continued to find support in the music halls, states Dave Russell, "'We Carved our way to Glory": the British soldier in music hall song and sketch, c. 1880-1914', in John M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Popular Imperialism and the Military 1850-1950*, p.58.

<sup>47</sup> The *Devon Weekly Times*, 27 Dec 1901. Cited in Alex Rankin, 'The History of Cinema Exhibition in Exeter, 1895 - 1918'. PhD, U. Exeter, 2001, chapter 2.

<sup>48</sup> Heather Streets, 'Military Influences in Late Victorian and Edwardian Popular Media: The Case of Frederick Roberts', *Journal of Victorian Culture* 8, no. 2, August 2003, p.231-256.

<sup>49</sup> Fuerst bros. film is mentioned in BJP Suppl. 5 Jan 1900, p.8 as Departure of Field-Marshal Lord Roberts for South Africa; in the NFTVA is held Warwick's *Lord Roberts Leaving for South Africa*.

<sup>50</sup> Smith told his interviewer that he was developing many copies of this film at that moment. See V.W. Cook, 'The Humours of 'Living Picture' Making', *Chambers Journal*, 30 June 1900, p.488.

<sup>51</sup> Though it must be said that his idea of using the small flag made by Lady Roberts at these surrenders wasn't a very media-savvy one, as it didn't show up on camera (see my Chapter 9).

<sup>52</sup> James Barnes, *The Great War Trek. With the British Army on the Veldt* (New York: D. Appleton, 1901), p.322-23. Incidentally, a similar description of this filming is found in Barnes' article in *The Outlook*, 1 Sep 1900. Baden-Powell had come unannounced to meet Lord Roberts, and stayed only a day in Pretoria.

<sup>53</sup> 'At the Top of the Tree, or Biograph Pictures' by Harry B. Norris was published in 1900 by Frank Dean and Co, London, Jos W. Stern in New York, and W.H. Paling and Co. in Sydney. It is held in the Music Department of the British Library.

<sup>54</sup> M&K films which feature Roberts include: *Lord Roberts' Visit to Manchester* (1901), *Lord Roberts Presenting Medals to Boer War Volunteers in Liverpool* (1901), *Visit of Earl Roberts and Viscount Kitchener to receive the Freedom of the City, Liverpool* (1902). Other films with Roberts are in the IWM: IWM 1081 shows Roberts disembarking from a ship, while IWM 1080 shows him riding past in a procession.

<sup>55</sup> The *Illustrated London News* (ILN) of 19 July published a detailed series of illustrations of Kitchener's return.

<sup>56</sup> The surviving material in the NFTVA (108ft and 54ft) does not seem to match the reviews exactly. It shows: Lord Kitchener walking on Southampton quayside accompanied by officers,

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then in an open carriage with General French passing through decorated streets (Southampton?), next we see a train with the letter 'K' and a portrait of Kitchener steaming out of the station. There is also a scene of Lords Roberts and Kitchener departing from the Harley Institute.

<sup>57</sup> *Music Hall and Theatrical Review* (MHTR) 18 Jul 1902, p.47. However, the following sentence suggests that these films of Kitchener were not entirely what the audience were after, for the journal added, 'But comic and local pictures are the ones which are the most appreciated'.

<sup>58</sup> Film no. 10B, *Lord Kitchener at Southampton, 1902*. Length, 100 ft. Listed in *Gaumont Elgé catalogue, Jan-June 1903* (issued Oct 1903), p.4.

<sup>59</sup> The ship was almost captured by the British at one point, thanks to the new Marconi wireless, but managed to make it to Europe. Jay Stone and Erwin A. Schmidl, *The Boer War and Military Reforms* (Lanham ; London: University Press of America, 1988).

<sup>60</sup> Archives Nationales: 81 AP4 d<sup>2</sup>-10, file 'Boers, 1900'. This is a 17 page account by Rimbaud of the arrival. (It is cited in research fichier, no.77.829, re Boers: international agitation).

<sup>61</sup> Warwick film nos. 7207 and 7208: *Era* 15 Dec 1900, p.32. Nöggerath showed a film described as 'Arrival of President Paul Krüger at Marseilles on 22nd November 1900' (letter from G. Donaldson, 1 Feb 1993). Pathé issued : *Arrivée de Krüger à Marseille* (35 m. or 115 ft). Film no.536 in Henri Bousquet, *Catalogue Pathé des Années 1896 à 1914: Vol 1, 1896-1906* (Charente/Bures sur Yvette: Henri Bousquet, 1996), p.859 ; from Pathé's 1903 catalogue.

<sup>62</sup> The picture is captioned, 'a line of cameras and Biograph machines' at the barrier. *Daily Graphic* 24 Nov 1900, p.13. My identification of cameramen on the picture come from markings on Biograph's own copy of the cutting pasted into their scrapbook – held at the Seaver Center. Another picture in this same periodical shows one of the Biograph cameras set up on a far pier of the docks, while 'Waiting for Mr Kruger', as the caption states. Strictly speaking these images do not actually show the occasion when Kruger was filmed, but rather the day before, Wednesday 21 November, when Kruger was expected but his ship was delayed: the cameramen were waiting (says *D. Graphic* p.14, col.2).

<sup>63</sup> On 13 Nov 1900 Dickson left the UK for Marseille, to film Kruger's arrival, and returned to England on 30 Nov. From Emile Lauste's diary entries, a transcript of which was kindly supplied to me by Frank Gray of SEFVA.

<sup>64</sup> 'Pictures of important events quickly presented', *The Sun* (NY) 25 Nov 1900, Section 1, p.2. This notes of the proposed Marseille filming: 'Within ten days thousands of people here in New York will witness the arrival of the former President of the South African Republic to vastly better advantage than thousands of the people who actually were on the scene when he came ashore. In other words spectators in New York, thousands of miles away will be placed right up in the front row among the officials and within the very holy of holies of police reservations.'

<sup>65</sup> AP 7 Dec 1900, p.442.

<sup>66</sup> The 'Kruger mania' was intense in France by this time, and numerous Kruger souvenirs were available in the capital, including statuettes, sheet music, postcards, even waxworks were on show. See H. Daragon, *Le Président Kruger en France* (Paris: Daragon, 1901), p.30 and passim ; see also *Daily Graphic* issues, especially 23 Nov.

<sup>67</sup> This Mutagraph camera (for 68mm film) is no. AP-95-1434 in the apparatus collection, Cinémathèque française. See photos in *The Will Day Historical Collection...*, in 1895 hors série, Oct 1997, p.197. Incidentally this cannot refer to Dickson's Boer War filming in South Africa, as has been suggested, because the cameraman did not film Kruger at this time. Information from Laurent Mannoni.

<sup>68</sup> This information comes from programmes in the Lauste Collection, SEFVA. Incidentally, these programmes are made up of several subject-based series, each with several films. One show from March 1900 had a dozen or so of Biograph's Transvaal War films, and the show of Dec 1900 included 16 war-related views, including the Hotel de Ville title. Regarding Biograph's Boer war screenings in Holland, see Mark van den Tempel, 'Als Daguerre dat eens kon aanschouwen...' *Jaarboek Media Geschiedenis* 8, 1997, p.66.

<sup>69</sup> Gaumont released a film of Kruger arriving in Paris, which, as their catalogue stated, depicted 'the enthusiasm of the crowd and the cheers that they voiced'. L. Gaumont et Cie.: *Collection Elgé* (catalogue of unknown date), p.58 (last page), film 401, *L'arrivée du Président*

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*Kruger à Paris* (16.50m); and also see French Gaumont catalogue, Jan 1903, p.36. Courtesy Sabine Lenk. The film's description reads: 'Cette bande prise après la sortie de la gare montre l'enthousiasme de la foule et les ovations qui sont faites. Le Président passe rapidement en voiture au milieu d'une foule compacte.'

<sup>70</sup> This refers to a screening at the Grand Biorama, Foire des Innocents, Limoges, in Dec 1900. See Pierre and Jeanne Berneau, *Le Spectacle Cinématographique à Limoges, de 1896 à 1945* (Paris: AFRHC, 1992), p.34. According to *Courrier du Centre* 18 Dec 1900, the film in question, which was entitled, *L'Arrivée du Président Krüger à Marseille*, 'soulève l'enthousiasme patriotique des spectateurs qui répondent par des acclamations de "Viv les Boers !" aux saluts de l'illustre vieillard'.

<sup>71</sup> The Kruger films were the subject of Pathé's first ad in *Der Komet*. See *Der Komet* no.819, 1 Dec 1900, p.27, which stated, 'Just appeared, three outstanding films: President Krüger's Arrival in Marseille and Paris. Price 200 Marks'. Films of Kruger in Paris, described as 'actuelle Aufnahme', were a feature attraction at the Hansa Theater, Hamburg. *Hamburger Fremden-Blatt* 1, 4 and 6 Dec 1900 (courtesy Deac Rossell).

<sup>72</sup> Letter from Donaldson, 1 Feb 1993; and information from NFM's research department. The Rotterdam scene is in *Intocht Boerengeneraals uit de Boerenoorlog te Amsterdam*, held in the NFM. Karel Dibbets suggests that Kruger became 'the first hero' of the cinema in Holland.

<sup>73</sup> See website [www.cinemacontext.nl](http://www.cinemacontext.nl).

<sup>74</sup> Nina de Garmo-Spalding, 'Behind the Dunes', *New Catholic World* 78, no. 466, Jan 1904, p.509-519. She notes that they saw the fairs ('kirmess') everywhere and loved them, with merry go rounds etc, though finally tired of them. She states that fairground 'ornate booths' were clustered at the base of Haarlem cathedral, which is possibly where they saw the cinematograph show. Unfortunately she doesn't give the date of their visit to Holland.

<sup>75</sup> 'The pantomimes of 1900-1', MHTR 21 Dec 1900, p.405.

<sup>76</sup> This was a show of 'limelight views' by Charles Tee entitled, 'With the Flag in South Africa'. *Mid Sussex Times* 8 May 1900. Cutting in the Tee collection, Brighton Public Library.

<sup>77</sup> G.A. Smith stated that for films with any connection with the war 'the demand was enormous', mentioning 'President Kruger getting out of his carriage, scenes in Johannesburg, scenes of embarking and disembarking troops, of manoeuvres of cavalry and infantry'. V.W. Cook, 'The Humours of 'Living Picture' Making', *Chambers Journal*, 30 June 1900, p.488.

<sup>78</sup> 'Showmen's notes', MHTR 15 Aug 1902, p.117.

<sup>79</sup> The claim of four companies comes in Bromhead's article of 1933, quoted below.

<sup>80</sup> The Boer Generals' full names were Louis Botha, Koos De la Rey, Christiaan De Wet. Their arrival as well as the Coronation Naval Review were reported with full page spreads in the ILN 23 Aug 1902.

<sup>81</sup> Bromhead also notes that the cameramen had been allotted strict places behind this rope, with sentries to prevent their moving. He adds 'Things were very different then from present day conditions, and even when permission was reluctantly given to take a picture, efforts seemed to be made to prevent one getting a good view.' From Alfred Claude Bromhead, 'Reminiscences of the British Film Trade', *Proceedings of the British Kinematograph Society*, no. 21, 11 Dec 1933, p.12. Elsewhere Bromhead notes that 'We took our film at nine in the morning, and at three it was shown at the Hippodrome'. See A.C. Bromhead, 'Survivors' tales', *Titbits* 12 Jan 1929, p.575. However this article is full of misinformation, for he confuses filming the Boer leaders' return with filming Kitchener's return the previous month.

<sup>82</sup> See Jack Smith, 'One-reel production in one day', *Kinematograph Weekly* 17 June 1926, p.58. Smith's recollection, in contrast to Bromhead's, was that this attempt to mislead the rival was in connection with filming the Spithead review, not the 'Nigeria': 'After the disembarking, we started to pack up, and each led the other to believe he was going to return to London, but both had in their minds the taking of a picture of the review of the fleet'. He adds that they both independently made an arrangement to film the review from a launch, only to find when they met in the launch that the rival was doing the same. Bromhead in the *Titbits* article also describes competition with Smith on 16 August over filming the review that afternoon. This was a foretaste of the fierce 'newsreel wars' which would occur in the teen years and beyond, when cameramen would try to 'spike' their rivals.

<sup>83</sup> The *Times* report states that the Boer leaders appeared on the gangway of the 'Saxon' about 10.15 am and from there were escorted by police to the 'Nigeria', where they met the British leaders for a few minutes. Then they returned to the 'Saxon' for a short while before

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taking the train for London. As Bromhead mentioned above, both he and Paul were there to film at the 'Nigeria'.

<sup>84</sup> R.W. Paul's was entitled *Arrival of the Boer Generals Botha, DeLarey and De Wet* and the NFTVA's print of it is 97ft long. Gaumont's was entitled *Arrival of the Boer Generals at Southampton*. This appears in the company's *Elgé catalogue, Jan-June 1903* (issued Oct, 1903), p.5, film no. 18B, and was 95 ft long, so probably was in several shots too, like Paul's.

<sup>85</sup> The camera of the operator seen in shot has a detachable square film box on top and a panning handle. Incidentally, all of Paul's film is shot from slightly above head height.

<sup>86</sup> The *Times* report (18 Aug) of the landing mentions the two police inspectors seen in shot, who were there to help the Boer leaders. The *Times* also confirms the British public's admiration for these Boer visitors.

<sup>87</sup> The arrivals in the first two cities were probably filmed by Nöggerath: letter from G. Donaldson, 1 Feb 1993. The NFM preserves a segment from a compilation film *Intocht Boerengeneraals uit de Boerenoorlog te Amsterdam*, depicting the group of Generals coming past camera, shot in September 1902, possibly on the 11<sup>th</sup>, because a spread in ILN depicts the Generals at the Station, Amsterdam on that date (ILN 20 Sep 1902).

<sup>88</sup> French Gaumont catalogue, Jan 1903, p.36 and p.66. The Paris visit was in mid October.

<sup>89</sup> Kristen Whissel, 'Placing the Spectator on the Scene of History: The Battle Re-Enactment at the Turn of the Century, from Buffalo Bill's Wild West to the Early Cinema', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 22, no. 3, Aug 2002, p.225-243. This example underlines the dangers in scholars jumping to conclusions based on a 'broad-brush' view of an historical period.

<sup>90</sup> 'The Kinetograph in War', *The Photogram* 4, Apr 1897, p.127. As the letter appeared in the April issue, it was probably written the month before – i.e. even before the war.

<sup>91</sup> Evacustes A. Phipson (1854-1931) was born Edward Arthur Phipson, but adopted a more American first name. He was a competent painter in watercolours towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the founder of a colony in South Australia. The author of a book, *Art Under Socialism* (1895), he was active in social issues, and a man of strong opinions, who commented publicly on a host of issues including economics, taxation, pronunciation, simplified spelling, feminism, children's rights, and... war filming.

<sup>92</sup> Phipson stated that 'I am glad to find that the recent artificial railway collision in Texas was kinetographed'. I have not found details of this incident. But he also noted with regret that '...so far as I know not a single instantaneous photogram of an actual battle scene in the late Chino-Japanese war was published in any of the illustrated papers, although there were any number of comparatively uninteresting views, such as of soldiers preparing for battle, marching along the street, and so on, as well as imaginary pictures of the fighting, from sketches taken by hand'.

<sup>93</sup> *Westminster Gazette*, 25 Sep 1897, p.2.

<sup>94</sup> The editor of the *Photographic News* at this time (between 1896 and 1900 according to some sources) was Edward John Wall (1860-1928). While there is no record of his having strong social opinions, his predecessor as editor at the journal certainly did. Thomas Bolas, as well as being an expert on photography, was a well known socialist, who published on this theme as well as on camera arts, and he collaborated with Wall on one book. I guess that either Wall shared/ 'inherited' Bolas' social views, including an anti-war stance, or perhaps Bolas was still writing editorials for the *News*. Pacifism was strongly linked to socialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>95</sup> PN 18 Mar 1898, p.162 (reprinted in *The Photographer* Apr 1898, p.57). The fears had been expressed in a 'daily contemporary' (unnamed) which also objected to war photographs in magazines.

<sup>96</sup> PN 20 May 1898, p.314.

<sup>97</sup> PN 3 Feb 1899, p.66. In addition to the predictions which I have mentioned that wars would be filmed as they happened in years to come, a similar one appeared in the *American Annual of Photography* 1900, p.102. This suggested that in future 'the vitagraph man and the phonograph man' would be on hand to record battles, and 'in the coming century we shall see and hear all the details of fierce battles reproduced in the theatres to after-dinner audiences'.

<sup>98</sup> 'Biograph-ing the Chinese War', PN 3 Aug 1900, p.481.