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CINEMA 1900|1906

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

CINEMA **1900|1906**

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY BY THE NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE (LONDON) AND THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FILM ARCHIVES

compiler Roger Holman

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INTRODUCTION

The Symposium of 1900-1906 followed the International Federation of Film Archives 34th Annual Congress which was held at Brighton, England in the Spring of 1978. The presence of film archivists from all over the world makes the Federation's Annual Congress an ideal occasion for the study of specific aspects of world cinema which are not well documented or researched.

Originally, we intended to consider all films produced between 1900-1906 and discuss the inter-relationship between fact and fiction. However, when we discovered how many fiction films had survived in members collections and how many would be available for screening in Brighton, we decided to limit our researches to this aspect of the period.

We made one further compromise. We could not afford the cost of importing all the 1900-1906 fiction films into Britain so we agreed to accept Eileen Bowser's (the Curator of the Museum of Modern Art Film Department) generous offer to organize the pre-selection of films already in the United States. Many of these were from the unique paper print collection held by the Library of Congress.

Eileen Bowser documents this work in her paper entitled PREPARATION FOR BRIGHTON - THE AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION.

In the end, her team recommended that 189 titles should be shown at Brighton. In addition we collected together 359 films from other Archives, and the long suffering projectionists at the Brighton Film Theatre screened all of them for a group of equally hardy researchers and historians between the 22nd and 26th May. Among this group were six experts who made their own choice of films from those screened and presented them at the actual Symposium which took place in the presence of all the FIAF members between May 29th and 31st. Verbatim transcripts of these interventions appear between pages 31 and 91.
We have not translated those which were delivered in French. Virtually all the films referred to appear in the Filmography in Volume 2.

The next section contains a random selection of papers submitted by both participants and non-participants on different aspects of the cinema between 1900 and 1906. Many of these are of American origin and resulted from the screenings organized by Eileen Bowser in New York.

I am pleased to say that work on this poorly documented aspect of world cinema did not stop in 1978. Since then Eileen Bowser has re-assembled her American group to look at the fiction films of 1907 and many of the Brighton and New York participants have continued with their researches, and published further articles. The list of these appears towards the end of Volume I. The final pages are occupied with a list of participants at the Symposium in Brighton. Everyone there to a greater or lesser extent contributed to the success of the Symposium and this publication.

I must, however, single out one name; it was André Gaudreault's enthusiasm which enables us to publish the Filmography in Volume 2. He, his friends in North America, and his colleagues at Laval University compiled this analytical filmography for all the 548 films shown in Brighton. It is neither a complete list of all fiction films shown between 1900 and 1906, or even of those extant, but it is one of the finest research tools that film historians could hope to have for this period. Inevitably there are omissions and inaccuracies, and I know I am speaking for André, when I ask everyone who utilises this Filmography to send any additional information or comments to him at Université Laval, Faculté des Lettres, Cité Universitaire, Québec 10e, Canada, G1K 7P4.

André Gaudreault and Barry Salt, one of the experts at the Symposium, provided all the frame enlargements - the abbreviation 'Illus' appears against any title in the alphabetical index of film titles for which an illustration is included. I must also thank André for the detailed guide for users which appears on page 12 and point out that everything in this volume appears in both English and French.

Now, just a few words about FIAF. The organization was set up in 1935 to serve the world community of film Archives. This now has 46 members and 23 observers. A small pamphlet on its work in French or English can be obtained from the Secretariat in Brussels: Coudenberg 70, 1000 Brussels, Belgium, as can a list of its publications which cover the whole field of film archiving. Finally, if you undertake further research into this period of film history please let the FIAF Secretariat know about it and if possible send them a copy of any published material. We hope, in time, to update this publication and would like to ensure that the new edition is as complete as possible.

David Francis

PREPARATION FOR BRIGHTON - THE AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION

Eileen Bowser - U.S.A.

For five days in October 1977 and two days in January 1978, a small group of film historians met to view all the surviving fiction films in North America from the period 1900-1906.

About 690 films were seen, and there may still remain as many as 100 films not seen (existing in the Library of Congress), but the number is difficult to determine precisely because of the difficulty of separating fiction from non-fiction in this period. The largest numbers of these films were from the production of Edison and Biograph. The others included one Vitagraph film, one Lubin film, several Seligs and Paley and Steiners, seventeen French films and about twenty-five British films, and one Italian film. Although seven full days were devoted to the project, it was not possible to see all the films as one group. Most of the time, we divided into three groups viewing films simultaneously in small projection rooms or on viewing tables, changing the constituents of each group frequently, to maintain communication of ideas and experiences. Several of the historians did see the whole group of films by working independently in the following weeks. At the end of the first week, we met briefly to discuss our findings, to decide which topic each would pursue, and to draw up a list of other topics that would be worth future study.

Enthusiasm for the experience was very high. The group decided to continue the team approach by exchanging outlines of papers, and to arrange a similar attack on the films of 1907 in the future. Only one year's production will be studied next time, because we found the period 1900-1906 too big to be handled in the thorough way we should have liked. We would have preferred to see all the films together as a group, with much more time for discussion. Our project was limited to the films available in the archives of North America, and we look forward to the results of our colleagues undertaking a similar project in Europe.

The films were lent by the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House and the Department of Film of the Museum of Modern Art, but by far the largest number were supplied by the Motion Picture Section of the Library of Congress, from the Paper Print Collection of films submitted for copyright. Paul Spehr of the Library of Congress had the excellent idea of mounting these films on reels in their chronological order. This enabled us to see the repetition of ideas, sets, costumes and actors, as well as the developments or lack of them, as they occurred. Since the Biograph productions of 1896-1903 were submitted for copyright in groups during 1902 and 1903, Spehr disregarded the copyright dates for the Biograph films and determined chronological order from the production logs kept at The Museum of Modern Art. However, the Edison films were seen in order of copyright, the production dates not being so readily available (these records may exist in the uncatalogued documents of the Edison Museum in New Jersey). As far as we know at present, films made at the Edison studios were normally submitted for copyright within two or three weeks after production.

Several factors make this project less than satisfactory as a view of the period 1900-1906, even if we limit it to the American production. While fiction film was the object of the study, it has to be kept in mind that the non-fiction film (news events, actualities, travel films, etc.) was the mainstay of production in this period. During the first half of the period, there were many more non-fiction than fiction films produced, and during the second half the non-fiction film remained not much less than half of the production, until the very last part of the period. We did see some non-fiction films, but only a few. But the films seen by audiences of 1900-1906 must have included very large number of films shot in the open air, in real locations, and in the streets. At the same time, what they saw as fiction film was more often filmed on a stage with painted backdrops or sets, until the later part of the period, when the fiction film moved out-of-doors as well. As one of the papers reporting on this project will show, what we did see of the nonfiction film led us to think that many developments that led to the rise of the narrative came from the non-fiction film, and from efforts of the film-makers to recreate real events in fiction films.

Fiction is very difficult to define in this period. We did include the faked newsreels, such as the Edison Boer War films, as fiction. But how does one define the films which are essentially a recording of a vaudeville act? We included most of these as fiction films too, because of the impossibility of setting limits when almost all films (including the non-fiction) were made for showing within the vaudeville program, at least through 1904.

We also have to keep in mind that there were many hundreds (maybe thousands) of films produced that do not survive, particularly those which were not copyrighted. We saw very large proportions of the Edison and Biograph production, and only slight representation of the work of other companies in the United States. Thanks to the Biograph company having imported and copyrighted many British films, we saw at least a good sampling of British film of the 1903-1905 period. We saw few of the French films from Pathé Frères, which we know dominated the American market during 1904-1907. And while we saw some of the Méliès films, we did not examine those which exist in the Library of Congress. However, I think we are at least justified in concluding that the films we saw are rather typical of all production 1900-1906, and give us a good picture of what American films, at least, were like in those days.

This paper is intended only to give some general impressions of the experience, and is by no means a scholarly analysis, which can come about only after a prolonged period of intensive study and reviewing. The film historians in our group are preparing papers on specific topics, and the films they need to illustrate them will be the first basis for selection of films to be shown at Brighton. Presumably, these will tend to be the unusual and outstanding films, not the ordinary ones. But what of all the films we saw that will not be seen by the Brighton participants? What were the ordinary films like in 1900-1906, and out of what context did the unusual films arise? We would like to try to give some idea of that here, and hope too to suggest some other areas for future study.

Our struggle is to see these films freshly, and not from the sole point of view of what happened after 1906. Ways of seeing were different in this period. Lacking any kind of film tradition, film-makers naturally were dependent on the non-film sources with which they were familiar for their material. Films made before 1907 had their own style and their own associations, their own concept of space and time, which are quite different in many ways from those we hold today.

We should try to keep in mind the context in which the films were shown. Until the rise of the nickelodeon theater in 1905-1906, films were chiefly shown as part of the vaudeville program, another one of the novelty acts in a medium that devoured talent and ideas nearly as voraciously as television does today. Vaudeville historians tell us that the period 1900-1906 was one in which the producers sought a respectable, middle-class audience. Previously, the vaudeville or variety hall had been the domain of a low-class, predominately male audience, a place where liquor was sold, and probably where prostitutes were not difficult to find. In the period under consideration here, vaudeville eliminated the sale of alcoholic beverages, added luxurious surroundings, cleaned up the material offered by the performers, and began to draw a family audience. The low-life atmosphere continued, however, in the burlesque show, which took over the place of the old vaudeville, and was the second-largest consumer of films. Films were seen in dime museums, freak shows, peep shows, travelling shows, and were carried about the country by itinerant showmen. But the vaudeville houses used the most films during the period, and continued to use them in large numbers even after the rapid rise of the nickelodeons and store-front cinemas. In turn, when competition got heavy among the nickelodeona, they turned back to include live vaudeville acts in the film program, a practice that lasted long past the period under consideration.

It isn't surprising, then, that the key word for the films we saw is "novelty". Like the live vaudeville acts with which the films were shown, a new idea or a gimmick was always in demand. The same sources which provided ideas for live vaudeville acts also inspired films; current events, popular songs, magic acts, transformations, living pictures, tableaus, cartoons, shadowgraphy (silhouette acts), melodramas, slide shows accompanied by lectures, and the comic "sketch". The films of 1900-1906 would provide a rich source of study for historians of vaudeville. Surely many of them represent a photographic record of live vaudeville acts. As Robert Allen (1) has argued convincingly, although films were often shown at the end of the program, as "chasers", they were not designed to drive out audiences, as has so often been repeated by historians, but were a very popular part of the vaudeville program. Because they were silent, they took the place of what were known as "dumb acts", placed at the beginning and end because arriving and departing audiences made it difficult to hear dialogue. On the other hand, it may be doubted that they were ever shown without some kind of musical accompaniment, and many of them seem specially designed to accompany popular songs.

Looking at the films today, it is very difficult to judge which ones were intended for the respectable vaudeville stage, and which ones would only be shown by the burlesque houses. On the whole, the period was a wide open one, full of vulgarity, sex and violence. The majority of the films were comedies

(except of course for the non-fiction films which dominated the period), employing crude slapstick humour. They were often cynical toward authority and moral systems. Infidelity was expected. Corruption was subject for a joke. Racial and professional stereotypes abounded. Practical jokes reigned supreme. Even as early as September 1900, a film was made showing a pie in a face (Biograph's FAMILY TROUBLES), which we assume had its origin in a live act. Sensational events of the day - murder, war and disaster - were sure to be recreated either as fake newsreels or fictional re-enactments. The films, at least, and we assume vaudeville too, did not portray that mythical era of pre-war innocence. There were, to be sure, a few sentimental and moralistic dramas, such as Biograph's THE DOWNWARD PATH and A CAREER IN CRIME, both made in 1900 and both probably inspired by slide lectures, and these were among the earliest of the multi-shot films leading toward the development of the narrative. These were rare, however. During the same time, Biograph appeared as the leading producer of erotic films, little films made with a wink or a leer, which were presumably destined for the burlesque houses and peep shows.

The trick films were popular at first, up to the end of 1903. According to the reminiscences of Billy Bitzer (2) of Biograph, after mastering the mechanical difficulties of the camera, the next thought was of the possibilities of trickery, in masking part of the lens, rewinding the film, superimposing images, matte shots, stop motion, reverse motion, etc. He said, "I guess all beginners were intrigued with these possibilities ... They were an art, a mystifying art, some so cleverly done that viewers were unable to figure how it was done." He explained that Biograph felt itself to be under a handicap because double exposures could not be made in the Biograph camera: perforations were cut into the film during its exposure in the camera, and this made rewinding impractical. The Méliès trick films began to appear in the vaudeville houses in October 1902, but by this time the interest of the American producers had begun to fall off. Trick films cannot be said to have dominated the production. The earliest use of stop-motion we know of was Edison's THE EXECUTION OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS in 1895, and stop-motion continued to be the chief device used in the trick films we saw. They were not as elaborate in production values as most of the Méliès films. Magic acts and transformations were common to the vaudeville stage, with the aid of lighting, trick sets, wires and black curtains. Among the 1900 films, there were THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, A TERRIBLE NIGHT, MYSTIC SWING, SHERLOCK HOLMES BAFFLED, and THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY, this an erotic film in which "naked" women wearing what we now call body stockings were transformed into skeletons; magicians performed in THE MAGICIAN, paintings came to life in AN ARTIST'S DREAM, and food transformed into its animal origins (ANIMATED LUNCHEON). Among the 1901 films, people were flattened into dummies by accidents, in 5 MINUTES TO TRAIN TIME, Biograph, and THE TRAMP'S MIRACULOUS ESCAPE, Edison, or had their heads brutally removed in A QUICK RECOVERY, Biograph. Biograph had a much-abused dummy that survived a long use in trick films and fights (rough-house fights were also very popular among vaudeville acts), such as WHO PAYS FOR THE DRINKS, 1903, NEVER TOUCHED HIM, 1903, OFF HIS BEAT, 1903, and THE WAY TO SELL CORSETS, 1904.

Statistics are a bit shaky here, since they depend on the number of films which survived and also on some of the dates still being uncertain, but among the films viewed, about 26% of the 1900 production were trick films; about 20% of the 1901 films; about 21% of the 1902 films (but here the number of Biograph

films copyrighted in 1902 for which we don't yet have production dates may have slightly increased this percentage incorrectly); and about 10% of the 1903 films. After 1903, there were only four or five trick films a year, at least among the American films. Camera tricks continued to be used, not as the raison d'etre of the film, but as one of the tools of the medium.

The explosion film was a kind of sub-genre, and the most common one, of the trick films, involving a stopping of the camera after the explosion to re-arrange the sets and costumes. Explosions were also popular among the live vaudeville acts. For the most part, stoves exploded when the wrong element - kerosene, dynamite, gas - was introduced. Two examples, HOW BRIDGET BUILT THE FIRE, Edison, June 1900, and THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MCKEEN, Biograph's two-shot explosion film of March 1901, which ended with a shot of a tomb-stone bearing the doggerel, "Here lie the Remains of Bridget McKeen, Who Started a Fire with Kerosene", led us to suspect that these films had a common source in a popular song or children's rhyme. The same is probably true for the many films which showed dogs and cats being ground up for sausage by the butcher's machine (some of them trick films, some of them not): children at camp today still learn a cruel song in which this happens. Many explosions were caused by the accidental detonation of fire-works. Two of the more interesting fire-works explosion films were made by Biograph immediately following, rather than in advance of the national holiday, which leads us to suppose that they were inspired by real events rather than with a showman's sense of what is topical. These were ALGY'S GLORIOUS FOURTH OF JULY in 1902 and A PIPE STORY OF THE FOURTH in 1902, both of them expanding the explosion film into several made by Biograph in which, instead of setting off smoke effects, the explosion was curiously scratched onto the emulsion of the film itself; example, THEY FOUND THE LEAK, in May 1902. In THE POET'S REVENGE, Edison, 1902, the poet blows up the stove of the publisher who rejected his manuscript; in A NIGGER IN THE WOODPILE, Biograph, 1904, white men load a stick of wood with dynamite to play a cruel trick on the poor black men who steal it and use it in their stove. A very common variety of explosion films were those in which the camera blows up in the face of the subject: THE OLD MAID HAVING HER PICTURE TAKEN, Edison, March 1901; FUN IN A PHOTOGRAPH GALLERY, Biograph, July 1902; THE CAMERA FIEND, Biograph, September 1903; WILLIE'S CAMERA, Biograph, July 1903. The photographer's studio was a frequent comedy subject in this period, even outside of the explosion film.

The explosion film genre was well enough established to be the subject for a nice joke in a film made at the very end of 1903, called SAVED!, in which a man carrying an umbrella is blown up, but instead of being dishevelled or even dismembered, he descends calmly unscathed in a second shot, in another location, using his umbrella as a parachute.

Some of the most charming trick films were the Edison fantasies using a horizontally split screen to show people travelling at unreal speeds over the real skyscrapers of New York, in TWENTIETH CENTURY TRAMP in 1902, and the well-known THE DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND in 1906; or through the New York subway system, in CITY HALL TO HARLEM IN FIFTEEN SECONDS in 1904. It is interesting to note that THE DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND was made at the end of the trick-film period in American cinema, not at the beginning, as one

might think from the film histories. Biograph also made two quite unusual trick films. Among the Biographs copyrighted in 1903 for which we don't yet have production dates, was ANIMATED PICTURE STUDIO. A female dancer is filmed (we see the camera itself being used), under the lascivious eyes of a bystander; the film is developed in a dark room at the back of the set, and then shown on a screen in the middle of the set. The screen is knocked over, and the miniature figures of the dancer and the bystander are shown separated from the screen, on the floor, the man attempting to make love to the woman. In June, 1905, a similar idea was used in THE PIPE DREAM, showing a close view of a young lady who lights a cigarette, blows a puff of smoke into her hand, where a miniature man appears, kneels, and stretches out his arms to her before disappearing in her next puff of smoke. These were the only examples we found of this "nanism", which would be exploited many years later in such fantasy films as WOLF'S CLOTHING, 1928, DR. CYCLOPS, 1940, and THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN, 1957.

THE PIPE DREAM leads naturally to a discussion of another popular genre of the period, the close view. We use this term here to cover closeups, semi-closeups, or even a 3/4 shot of the people who are the subjects of these films, at a time when other films observed a stage distance from the subject. Today, we are fascinated by early examples of the close view because of the part it was to play in the development of narrative techniques, but keeping in mind our intention to look at these films with a fresh eye, we realise that the chief interest of such films, especially the one-shot films, was the ability to see facial expressions, and so we call these the "facial expression" genre. They must have offered a genuine novelty in the vaudeville program, because live performers could only come to a limited point in approaching the audience. Certain vaudeville performers, however, were noted for their skill at facial expressions. One of them, Gilbert Sarony, a celebrated female impersonator, mugs for the camera in THE OLD MAID IN THE HORSECAR, an Edison film of 1901. Other typical examples of the genre are A DULL RAZOR and THE KISS, both Edison films made in 1900 (reminding us that Edison's MAY IRWIN - JOHN C. RICE KISS was a sensation of 1896; TWO OLD CRONIES and ART STUDIES, both Biograph films made in 1900, the joke of the latter film being that two old men visibly enjoy the contents of a book which we are not able to see; BURLESQUE SUICIDE, Edison, 1902, in which a man teases us by pretending to be about to commit suicide and then laughs at us for expecting it; Biograph's 1903 film, CAT'S CRADLE, a provocative kissing film; and Biograph's A WELSH RABBIT, 1903, a trick film in which Kathryn Osterman demonstrates the cooking of the dish, only to have a live rabbit hop out. There are enough such films that it cannot be considered at all unusual to place the camera very close to its subject in this period, even though most films were shot at stage distance.

A minor sub-genre of the facial expression film was the one which we came to call the "fly film" genre. In such films, enormous insects prove an annoyance to people, sometimes even carrying them off into the air. Biograph made a speciality of it. In 1900, they made THE TROUBLESOME FLY, A JERSEY SKEETER, and SHOO FLY, and in 1903, they joined the fly film to the erotic genre with a film shorter than its title, POOR GIRL, IT WAS A HOT NIGHT AND THE MOSQUITOS WERE THICK. It shows only a girl's bare feet and legs being disturbed by a huge bug. In fact, Biograph's erotic films often required a closer positioning of the camera, designed to involve the spectator as voyeur

(TEASING, 1905), or to permit young women to look suggestively at the camera. (THE WINE OPENER, 1905)

A rather startling development in facial expression films appeared in a film Bitzer photographed in September 1903, HOOLIGAN IN JAIL. The tramp character Happy Hooligan is seen sitting in a jail cell, and the jailer brings him his dinner. In order that the spectator may share Hooligan's delight in eating it, the camera moves up in a slow and continuous dolly shot to a close view. Photographer A.E. Weed used this idea again for a pair of Biograph films made in January 1904, A SUBJECT FOR THE ROGUE'S GALLERYand PHOTOGRAPHING A FEMALE CROOK. These were the only use of dolly shots that we found. However, at about this time, Porter began to cut directly into close views. The earliest example we found of inserting a closeup in the midst of long shots was his famous THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, but the purpose was not, of course, to show facial expressions or to give a closer view of a long shot, but merely to make it possible to see clearly that a hand pulled a fire alarm. That film appeared at the very beginning of 1903. In August of this year, Porter made RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND, a long film, about sixteen shots, not really a narrative, in which a pair of country bumpkins enjoy the delights of the entertainment park. At the end of the film, Rube and Mandy stop at a refreshment stand, and the final shot is a close view, showing their facial expressions as they enjoy eating hot dogs. This remains to be the most common use of close views for the whole period. In Biograph's CAUGHT IN THE UNDERTOW, copyrighted November 1902, which may be an actuality, not a narrative, there is a move to a closer view at the end. In Porter's celebrated THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY at the end of 1903, exhibitors were given the choice as to whether they wanted to use the close view at the beginning or the end. More often, the films which followed use the close view as a kind of establishing shot, or introduction of the character, or emblematic shot which gave the theme of the film, at the beginning. It does not belong to the narrative as such, since it does not match the shot which follows. Examples of this are in HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN GOT A WIFE THROUGH THE NEW YORK HERALD PERSONAL COLUMNS, Edison, 1904; (RAID ON A COINER'S DEN), a British film copyrighted under this title in the United States in June 1904; THE FIRE-BUG, Biograph, 1905 (but this film also has a cut from long view to a closer view of a gun battle at the end); THE PAYMASTER, Biograph, 1906. There are many of these from 1904 on. The introduction shot of Edison's STOLEN BY GYPSIES, July 1905, appears to have an additional purpose. By showing a close view of the baby at the beginning, the film-maker lets the audience know that there is a birthmark on his shoulder, which plays a part in the plot to follow.

However, there were some earlier indications of the role of the close view within the narrative. In Biograph's THE STORY THE BIOGRAPH TOLD, November 1903, a mischievous office boy films the flirtations of the boss and his "typewriter", and later the film turns up in the vaudeville house attended by the boss and his wife. The film is shown from the reverse angle of the boy who filmed it, from behind the subjects, in a close view. While this has the effect of a close view inserted in the narrative, it stems from a literal interpretation of what the boy had seen earlier. THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN, made by Biograph in August 1904, cuts from long view to close view and back to long view again, to show us a lady enjoying the flowers she has received, but not precisely matched in the action. However, in

October 1904, Biograph made THE LOST CHILD, which intercuts a close shot into a long shot that seems very well-matched. Edison's THE STRENUOUS LIFE, OR ANTI-RACE SUICIDE, December 1904, intercuts a close shot into a long shot of a father and the nurse weighing a new-born baby on the scales, which enables us to see the scales and enjoy the baby's charms, but it seems to contain a repeat of the action of the long shot. In Palay and Steiner's TRAVELS OF A LOST TRUNK, April 1905, a close view is intercut as part of the narrative, as well as in two Biographs of 1906, THE SILVER WEDDING and THE LONE HIGHWAYMAN. In THE SILVER WEDDING, especially, a close view of the thieves stealing the wedding gifts, cut into a long shot, appears very well-integrated into the action. All these examples will need closer analysis before we can understand just how film-makers of the day intended to use the close view, but it does seem evident that the way in which it is used grew out of the concept of the early novelty, the facial expression film, and perhaps did not after all move very far from this during 1900-1906.

Almost all the fiction films of the period were comedies, which was also the most popular genre of the vaudeville act. A very large number of them consisted of practical jokes, usually played by mischievous boys. Probably all of the slapstick jokes of the golden age of the slapstick comedy short were worked out in these sketches. Titles such as MAUDE'S NAUGHTY LITTLE BROTHER, A WRINGING GOOD JOKE, GRANDMA AND THE BAD BOYS, A JOKE ON GRANDMA, THE BAD BOY'S JOKE, indicate their genre. The victims of these jokes are lovers, cops, cooks, tramps, Chinese laundrymen, grocery store proprietors. In LOVE IN A HAMMOCK, Edison 1901, and THE HOOP AND THE LOVERS, Biograph 1904, loving couples are turned out of hammocks on the ground by bad boys. In THE TRAMP'S UNEXPECTED SKATE, Edison, 1901, and HOOLIGAN'S ROLLER SKATES, Biograph, 1903, the boys fasten skates on the sleeping tramp, Happy Hooligan. Biograph's Foxy Grandpa series in 1902, based on the musical success of that year, were trists in the mischievous boys genre, in which Grandpa outwits every attempt at a practical joke. Even the later multi-shot films continued to use the well-established genre: the hero of Biograph's THE VILLAGE CUT-UP in 1906 is a practical joker, and in THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY, made a few days later, a young boy and his sister play jokes on the adults.

As we have already noted, there were pies in the face (FAMILY TROUBLES, September 1900, Biograph; LADY BOUNTIFUL VISITS THE MURPHYS ON WASHDAY, August 1903, Biograph; THE COAL STRIKE, December 1905, Biograph); coal dust placed in the closed umbrellas of unsuspecting victims, or in their top hats (A BLACK STORM, 1900, Biograph; A BOARDING SCHOOL PRANK, 1903, Biograph; LET UNCLE REUBEN SHOW YOU HOW, 1904, Biograph); coal is delivered on top of an illicit lover (LOVERS, COAL BOX AND FIREPLACE, October 1901, Edison, and UNLUCKY LOVERS, May 1901, Biograph); there are numerous Murphy bed jokes (in SHUT UP!, Biograph, August 1902, a man gets rid of his jabbering wife by enclosing her in the bed which swings up into the wall); flour is dropped on people's heads (A BLESSING FROM ABOVE, Biograph, January 1904; A TRICK ON THE COP, Biograph, February 1904; DINAH'S DEFEAT, Biograph, February 1904 - an example of the popular racial joke, since Dinah is black until the flour is thrown on her).

Another large group of comedies depended on the humour of couples interrupted in illicit love. This could be adulterous love, the love of cooks, nursery

maids and cops, or young love not approved by parents. If one judged by these films, everyone was doing it. The earliest Biographs and Edisons we saw depended on this stereotype. In I HAD TO LEAVE A HAPPY HOME FOR YOU, Biograph, January 1900, the husband who kissed the maid is caught by his wife because his shaving soap remains on the girl's face. The titles of the Edison films of January 1900, WHY JONES DISCHARGED HIS CLERK and WHY MRS. JONES GOT A DIVORCE, or Biograph's film of the same month, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE THE ICEMAN!, are indicative of their contents. There are so many of these, it is difficult to know whether Biograph's early multiple-shot films, DIVORCE and THE UNFAITHFUL WIFE, in July 1903, are intended as comedies or serious melodramas. The same might be true of A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE, made in the same month, an elaborate multiple-shot film, in which a woman looks through the keyholes of hotel rooms, seeing several different scenes, until she finds the room in which her husband is carrying on an illicit affair. This genre is related to the little erotic films which were made in great numbers by Biograph, especially but as another report from the Brighton project historians will describe them in detail, we will not try to enumerate their delights here. We would only like to note that the market for these usually one-shot films was big enough that Biograph continued to make them right through 1905 and 1906, at a time when Edison was making only longer and more ambitious films.

A number of comedies showed a cynical acceptance of corruption. In HOW THEY ROB MEN IN CHICAGO, Biograph, April 1900, a man is mugged, and when the cop arrives, he lifts whatever the thief has left to the victim; in A LEGAL HOLDUP, Biograph, June 1901, a cop robs the tramp sleeping on a bench. In THE DANGER OF DINING IN PRIVATE DINING ROOMS, Biograph, June 1903, a waiter drugs and robs his customers. In Edison's HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY, October 1902, a woman picks up a country "rube", and in league with a waiter, drugs him and robs him; when the cops arrive, they toss the victim out in the street. Edison's THE KLEPTOMANIAC, in 1905, is presumably intended seriously, not as comedy, but it too shows with ironic contrast the difference in justice meted out to the rich woman kleptomaniac and the poor woman thief.

There were a few novelties that might be thought of as attempts to be artistic (if we consider, as I think we should, that the idea of the art of the film as we know it did not yet exist at all). These seem to express the spirit of the tableau, or "living pictures", of the vaudeville program. Edison's CONGRESS OF NATIONS, 1900, was a trick film, in which people wearing the costumes of different nations are made to magically appear, and there is then a dissolve to a second shot showing the American flag, the spirit of Columbia, John Bull, etc. This appears to be a topical film, which makes a political statement: China is not wanted among the nations. At the end of 1900, Armitage of Biograph produced a series of superimpositions (the same as those sold in dissolving slide sets) which thriftily united two or more older films: A NYMPH OF THE WAVES (a dancer superimposed on real ocean scenes), NEPTUNE'S DAUGHTERS (a ship, ghosts, and a group of dancers), THE GHOST TRAIN (combination of a negative version of the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS and a moon scene); and ROCK OF AGES (ocean waves, a cross, and a young lady in flowing robes). Edison's elaborate production of JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, appearing in June 1902, with dissolves between each shot, should also probably be considered as part of this "artistic" impulse. In January 1904, Bitzer

photographed THE FOUR SEASONS, a silhouette film in four shots, symbolizing the seasons of the year. There were other silhouette films made at Biograph, which had their stage forerunners in shadowgraphy, but these do not exactly show an artistic tendency of the type we are discussing here, they are erotic films, women undressing behind window blinds, etc. The artistic motivation appears to underly some of the Edison novelties of 1905, such as THE SEVEN AGES, which has seven episodes, titled "Infancy", "Playmates", "Schoolmates", "Lovers", "Soldier", "Judge", "Second Childhood", and "What Age?" (the last shows an old maid holding a cat). The chief novelty of this film, however, consists in beginning nearly every episode with a long shot and cutting to a close view, to show the participants kissing. It also includes a highly "artistic" side-lit fireplace effect. It is difficult to understand how Billy Bitzer allowed so much fuss to be made over his lighting effects achieved under D.W. Griffith at a later period, when he had himself already photographed quite remarkable examples long before. The interior of the mill in THE PAYMASTER, which he photographed in June 1906, has very dramatic and effective side-lighting effects.

THE PAYMASTER even has an art-decorated title. Original main titles and intertitles were found in most of the films of 1905 and 1906. It is not easy to draw any conclusions about the use of intertitles during the period under consideration, because we do not know if the lack of them means only that they do not exist in the surviving prints. The copyright records demonstrate that titles were assigned to each shot of the early multi-shot films, and frequently each shot was copyrighted separately under its title, but whether these were printed into titles on the film or supplied by a narrator, we do not yet know. All the films with intertitles on them followed the practice of using titles strictly as announcements of the shot or scene to follow, and never cut into mid-shot. The earliest films we found in the group examined which did have original intertitles on the prints appeared in August 1904, in THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN, from Biograph, and THE EUROPEAN REST CURE, from Edison, in September 1904. In November 1904, Edison's THE EX-CONVICT actually had a dialogue title ("That man saved my life!"), but it appeared at the beginning of the shot and long before the appearance of the child who spoke it.

Inserts (letters, telegrams, advertisements) made their appearance about this time. In Edison's THE MESSENGER BOY'S MISTAKE, October 1903, an insert is cut directly into the middle of this one-shot film. In Biograph's PERSONAL (missing from existing prints) and Edison's close copy, HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN GOT A WIFE THROUGH THE NEW YORK HERALD PERSONAL COLUMNS, in 1904, an inserted advertisement appears at the beginning of the two films. In Biograph's THE CRITIC, January 1906, the critic's entire review is used as an insert in the middle of the film (but not in mid-shot). The insert also appears as an advertisement in Biograph's WANTED - A NURSE, September 1906. This film contains another novelty, previously used by Biograph in LOOKING FOR JOHN SMITH in July of this year, in which animated cartoon balloons present dialogue within the picture itself. Edison had already experimented with animated intertitles in May of 1905, in which the letters were scrambled and unscrambled themselves to form titles. This was used in HOW JONES LOST HIS ROLL and DO YOU KNOW THIS FAMILY?

Among all these novelties, the narrative film was taking shape. Most of the longer films which began to appear in 1904-1906 were chase films. The chase is basic to film narrative, as popular today as it was in the beginnings of cinema. A real chase is not possible within the limits of stage space, and it demands more than one shot, if pursued and pursuer are to cover any ground at all. It is best filmed out-of-doors in real landscape, or city-scapes. It is all action, leading from one shot to the next. Within its form lie the possibilities of continuity devices which lead to editing. With the chase film, moving pictures really began to move.

The chase developed a particular form of its own, however, quite different from that which Griffith made so popular during his Biograph period, 1908-1913. Within the variations of the pattern in 1904-1906, there are found some ideas which might be considered to anticipate Griffith's work. During the course of our screenings, we happened to see a 1907 Biograph called THE ELOPEMENT, which had been included by mistake. The structure of this film made it evident that the next stage of a study of chase films pre-Griffith should include the chase films of 1907, to see how far the form may have come toward his ideas.

It seems that the British were the first to popularize the form. Sadoul says that Pathé Frères, the French company which made so many chase films, imported the idea from England. According to the films we viewed, the first tentative beginnings of the genre in the United States would probably include THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, but the chase did not really come into its own until 1904. However, England, according to the records, produced about a dozen of them in 1903. We hope to see at Brighton THE RUNAWAY MATCH, from November 1903, which may be a significant film for a study of chase films, since according to its descriptions, it has a car chase in which each car appears to have been filmed in turn from the viewpoint of the other.

The American chase film developed a form, beginning with Biograph's ESCAPED LUNATIC, photographed in November 1903, and closely copied by Edison's MANIAC CHASE, copyrighted in October 1904, and continued in Biograph's PERSONAL (photographed in June 1904) and Edison's copy, HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN GOT A WIFE THROUGH THE NEW YORK HERALD PERSONAL COLUMS, copyrighted in August of 1904, which went like this: a situation would be introduced which motivated the chase, and then the chase would begin with a pursuit from the far distance up to and past the camera, both pursued and pursuers exiting in turn either to the left or right of the camera. The next shot would be in a new location, but a similar line of action would be followed. Every shot, until the pursued one is captured, is the same, but in a different setting, and varied by the terrain. The pursued and pursuers may run in diagonal or curving lines, covering as much ground as possible within the field of the shot, and now and then even extending this ground by panning the camera to follow action. Further variety is obtained by changing the point of exit of the shot to left or right of the camera, and by the fact that the runners must overcome many obstacles; fences, ditches, hedges, cliffs, bridges, and bodies of water. Normally the action is not from the foreground to the background, but occas-ionally there are chases in which the run from distance to foreground is interrupted by some obstacle and reverses itself to go back over the same ground.

There is no cutting between pursued and pursuer, both parties must cross the frame and exit before we can move on to the next shot. As long as the chase is on foot, this means that individual shots are apt to be kept on the screen for a period of time that makes the modern-day viewer restless, accustomed as we are to fast cutting back and forth during chase sequences. One of the chief attractions of these chase films must have been the display of the feminine ankle, an erotic delight in this period. The pursuers are very often women, and they are obliged to climb fences and tumble down hills, revealing a good bit of leg within their voluminous skirts.

The use of horses, trains, cars and cycles in the chase film led to a more dynamic chase, if for no other reason than the vehicle crossed the camera's field in much shorter time. It also seems possible that it led to the idea of cutting back and forth between pursued and pursuer. There is a hint of this in Biograph's THE GENTLEMAN HIGHWAYMAN, January 1905, in which there is a chase in cars. In the fourth shot, the pursuer's car breaks down, as the first car continues out of the shot. In the fifth shot, the first car continues on alone. In the sixth shot, we return to the stalled car, and the first car comes back, from the point where it exited previously, loaded with policemen to arrest the highwayman. In the usual style of the chase film in this period, it would not have been necessary to show the first car continuing on alone in the fifth shot, and yet the narrative is easier to understand because this shot has been included. Perhaps it is not a very significant addition to the chase formula, but it it interesting to speculate on what led film-makers to change from the formula to the idea of parallel editing which seems to us now to be the basic structure of the chase. The chase was the most frequent among the narrative forms of 1905 and 1906, and for the most part, it followed the structure established by such films as Biograph's ESCAPED LUNATIC and PERSONAL.

The chase film, as we have noted, brought the film-makers out-of-doors and into the real world. It seems strange that audiences accepted for some years the artificiality of the stage set and painted backdrops, when in the same vaudeville program they might have seen actualities. The explanation may lie in the acceptance of fiction film as a kind of "canned" vaudeville act, the same kind of act they would have seen performed before the stage curtain ("front acts" were performed while stage sets were changed) or on the stage set. About the only films we saw from the year 1900 which were filmed out-of-doors in part were LOVE IN THE SUBURBS, photographed by Bitzer for Biograph in September, and the various faked news events, such as Edison's Boer War films. In 1901, there were no Biograph films filmed out-of-doors (except, of course, the many actualities) as far as I remember, whereas Edison did make about seven of them: TERRIBLE TEDDY, THE GRIZZLY KING, LOVE IN A HAMMOCK, THE TRAMP'S MIRACULOUS ESCAPE, THE BAD BOY'S JOKE ON THE NURSE, PHOTOGRAPHING A COUNTRY COUPLE, THE TRAMP AND THE NURSING BOTTLE, and THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S MISHAP. In 1902, Biograph filmed out-of-doors ALPHONSE AND GASTON HELPING IRISHMEN, MILKING TIME, LOVER'S KNOT, and A PIPE STORY OF THE FOURTH; Edison made TWENTIETH CENTURY TRAMP, APPOINTMENT BY TELEPHONE, THE BULL AND THE PICNICKERS, THE INTERRUPTED BATHERS and THE INTERRUPTED PICNIC. In 1903, the only venture outside for Biograph* (again, of course, excluding actualities), was Wallace McCutcheon's trip to the Adirondacks in September, where he made

(* ESCAPED LUNATIC, November 1903, was inadvertently omitted here)

three fiction films (all of them very clumsily, in our opinion), KIT CARSON, THE PIONEERS, and THE CAMERA FIEND. But Porter and Edison went further, beginning with some scenes for THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, and continuing with RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND, TURNING THE TABLES, RUBE AND FENDER, and, of course, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY. In 1904, however, as the chase film grew in importance, the camera moved out-of-doors and into reality. For interiors, the film-makers gradually began to set up realistically furnished sets, and gradually abandoned the painted backdrop, although it was not to disappear altogether for some time to come.

The serious drama, or melodrama, was comparatively rare for the whole period. Set in the context of all these comedies, it is even difficult to know at this point of time whether audiences regarded the moralistic and sentimental dramas, such as THE DOWNWARD PATH and A CAREER IN CRIME, Biograph 1900, in a serious manner. Given the rowdy nature of most of the films, as well as the frequent comedies at the expense of the unsophisticated country "rube", we wonder whether big city "sophisticates" didn't find these amusing also. Three other Biograph films of that same year, while not story films, might be considered as having a serious approach to their subject: THE ARREST OF A SHOPLIFTER, THE EXECUTION OF A SPY, and A CONVICT'S PUNISHMENT. In 1901, Biograph filmed the melodrama TEN NIGHTS IN A BARROOM, which was also available in slide shows. However, I haven't been able to identify any Edison fiction films as serious dramas or melodramas, until THE LIFE OF THE AMERICAN FIREMAN at the beginning of 1903. Later in the year, Edison added UNCLE TOM'S CABIN to the line of melodramas. Biograph's KIT CARSON and THE PIONEERS, in the fall of 1903, ineptly filmed as they were, are serious narratives, and then Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY at the end of the year was, of course, sensationally successful. Biograph's LOVE AND JEALOUSY BEHIND THE SCENES, filmed in December 1903, is a strange film, but surely a tragedy. In 1904, Porter's THE EX-CONVICT was a significant contribution to the moralistic melodrama, and THE ROUNDUP OF THE YEGG BANK BURGLARS, also in this year, followed the type established by THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY. Both Biograph and Edison made faked newsreels in 1904, BATTLE OF THE YALU and THE BATTLE OF CHEMULPO BAY, and we began to see some British dramas in this year, but the majority of the longer narrative films were comedy chases. In 1905, however, Biograph made notable contributions to the serious drama with THE NIHILISTS, THE FIRE-BUG, and THE GREAT JEWEL MYSTERY, and, less successfully, with THE RIVER PIRATES, THE HORSE THIEF and A KENTUCKY FEUD. Edison made the moralistic drama, THE KLEPTOMANIAC, and STOLEN BY GYPSIES and THE WHITE CAPS. In this year, too, we class Zecca's sociological study, AU BAGNE (SCENES OF CONVICT LIFE). For 1906, we have few Edison films surviving, but from Biograph we have some excellent serious dramas and melodramas; THE SILVER WEDDING, THE BLACK HAND, THE HOLDUP OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN EXPRESS, THE PAYMASTER, THE LONE HIGHWAYMAN, THE TUNNEL WORKERS, THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, which is not to name every one they made, but only the outstanding ones. By now nearly half of the Biograph fiction film had turned to the serious dramatic film, that is, if one does not count the little one-shot films, especially erotic films, that Biograph continued to produce.

To conclude this very general survey of the kinds of films we saw from 1900-06, I append my notes for a draft outline of the multi-shot film. These notes are inadequate, in part because the films were viewed only once, but I think I have

missed no film that was longer than one shot. Not counted as multi-shot are the trick films involving stop motion while the sets are rearranged, although technically they might be considered as more than one shot. There is, of course, room for error in the number of shots listed for each film, and for some no count was kept. Nevertheless, it is my hope that this outline will be of use to others who wish to study the growth of the narrative, and editing concepts, as they developed in the period. At least they may be able to save themselves the work of looking at all 690 films which we have examined. And perhaps it will serve to point to some specific films which would be worth close studying and analysis. As another participant in the Brighton project is writing about the use of pans in this period, particularly in the Edison films, I will only note here that camera pans, while not common, were not unusual in outdoor filming, and sometimes were used in ways that substituted for cuts. That is, the camera would pan to follow action to an entirely new location, having a similar purpose in continuity as cutting between two shots. However, the outline which follows is restricted to actual cuts between shots.

A DRAFT OUTLINE OF THE MULTI-SHOT FILM ("FICTION") 1900-1906

1900: Approximately 87 films viewed, all of them American, including 64 Biographs and 23 Edisons. Of these, the following were more than one shot:

1. THE DOWNWARD PATH, Biograph, filmed 16 May; five shots, a serious narrative, with interior/exterior editing but apparently without continuous action.
2. A CAREER IN CRIME, Biograph, filmed 21 June; five shots, a serious narrative. Print viewed had only three shots, but according to Kemp Niver's description, there is a long time lapse between all shots.
3. CONGRESS OF NATIONS, Edison, copyright 16 November; two shots, not a narrative.

1901: Approximately 55 films viewed, all of them American, including 18 Biographs and 37 Edisons. They included the following multi-shot films:

1. TERRIBLE TEDDY THE GRIZZLY KING, Edison, copyright 23 February; two shots, not a narrative.
2. THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MCKEEN, Edison, copyright 1 March; two shots, with a cause and effect relationship.
3. THE TRAMP'S DREAM, Edison, copyright 6 May; three shots, a circular structure, the second shot is the dream episode.
4. ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER, Edison, copyright 15 May; two shots.
5. TEN NIGHTS IN A BARROOM, Biograph, filmed 19 June; five shots, narrative unclear without a lecture; there were slide sets of this subject also.
6. ALGY'S GLORIOUS FOURTH OF JULY, Biograph, filmed 7 July; three shots, this is an extended narrative of the explosion film genre.
7. SAMPSON-SCHLEY CONTROVERSY, Edison, copyright 15 August; two shots with a change of camera viewpoint implied (re-created news event, with models).
8. EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ, WITH PANORAMA OF AUBURN PRISON, Edison, copyright 9 November; four shots (re-created news event).

(also viewed, LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, Edison, copyright 16 September, with three shots, a documentary film)

1902: Approximately 76 films viewed, including one French film (Pathé), two English films (Williamson), 13 Edison films, and 60 Biographs. However, 37 of the Biographs were dated only by copyright and probably include many films from earlier years. The following were multi-shot films:

1. THE SOLDIER'S RETURN, England, Williamson, released June; five shots, circular structure, real exteriors.
2. APPOINTMENT BY TELEPHONE, Edison, copyright 15 May; three shots, with exterior to interior editing.
3. A PIPE STORY OF THE FOURTH, Biograph, filmed 7 July; three shots and a pan to link third shot back to the second shot; real exteriors.
4. JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, Edison, copyright 20 June; my notes do not show number of shots; a superproduction, with dissolves between shots.
5. HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY, Edison, copyright 31 October; two shots.
6. CAUGHT IN THE UNDERTOW, Biograph, copyright 11 November (date of filming not known), five shots, including pans to follow action and a change of camera position at end for closer view. Filmed in real exteriors, and may be a documentary rather than a fiction film (see LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, above).
7. LES SEPT CHATEAUX DU DIABLE, France, Pathé Fréres, Ferdinand Zecca (we do not know why this is dated 1902, it may be later - appears in American edition of Pathé catalogue of April 1906); nine shots, an international version with titles in three languages. Catalogues "sins", is not a narrative.

1903: Approximately 186 films viewed, including eight British films, one French film (Méliès), 22 Edisons and 155 Biographs. However, 47 of the Biographs were dated by copyright and may have been filmed in earlier years. The following were multi-shot films:

1. THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, Edison, copyright 21 January; number of shots depends on which version one accepts, but LOC version has nine shots; has insertion of extreme closeup.
2. THE DANGER OF DINING IN PRIVATE DINING ROOMS, Biograph, filmed 3 June; two shots, action moves to an adjoining room.
3. A DISCORDANT NOTE, Biograph, filmed 26 June; two shots, reverse cut, to show man thrown out window, has repeated action.
4. A NIGHT AT THE HAYMARKET, Biograph, copyrighted 29 June; six shots with interior/exterior editing.
5. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, Edison, copyright 30 July; fourteen scenes and a prologue (number of shots?), with titles at head of each scene. A long film for this time, 1,100' in release length, according to catalogue.
6. DIVORCE, Biograph, filmed 2 July; three shots.
7. AN AMERICAN SOLDIER IN LOVE AND WAR, Biograph, filmed 9 July; three shots in film viewed, but Biograph Bulletins (page 90) advised that these may be used in connection with two war views to make a complete story in one film.

8. THE UNFAITHFUL WIFE, Biograph, filmed 17 July; three shots.

9. A SEARCH FOR THE EVIDENCE, Biograph, filmed 20 July; my notes do not show number of shots, but this is an elaborate and long film, showing hotel corridor and keyhole views of interiors of rooms; reverse angle editing at the last shot, change of camera viewpoint to inside of room looking out. (see British film, INQUISITIVE BOOTS, 1905, which is similar).

10. THE KIDNAPPER, Biograph, filmed 28 July; three shots.

11. THE WAGES OF SIN, filmed 30 July; two shots according to Kemp Niver's description, but print viewed had only one of them.

12. RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND, Edison, copyright 1-3 August; sixteen shots, an episode film rather than a narrative, and includes a cut from long shot to close view at the end.

13. THE GAY SHOE CLERK, Edison, copyright 12 August; three shots, including as second shot an insertion of close view of long shot, and return to long shot at the end.

14. THE BURGLAR, Biograph, filmed 13 August; two shots, action moves into the adjoining room.

15. KIT CARSON, Biograph, filmed 8 September; eleven shots (?), all filmed in real exteriors in the Adirondack mountains.

16. THE PIONEERS, Biograph, filmed 10 September; five shots, similar to above.

17. THE FATE OF THE ARTIST'S MODEL, Biograph, filmed 7-9 October; five shots.

18. MURPHY'S WAKE, British, Gaumont, directed by Alf Collins, released in October (Per BFC); two shots.

19. OFF HIS BEAT, Biograph, filmed 29 October; two shots, with reverse angle cut (to other side of a wall).

20. NEXT!, Biograph, filmed 4 November; two shots, reverse angle, two men are thrown out window (repeated action).

21. WHAT HAPPENED IN THE TUNNEL, Edison, copyright 6 November; really one shot, but interrupted by black leader to show that train passed through tunnel.

22. HOOLIGAN'S CHRISTMAS DREAM, Biograph, filmed 5 November; six shots, with circular structure, dream sequence.

23. THE STORY THE BIOGRAPH TOLD, Biograph, filmed 30 November; five shots; uses a close view which is in a sense the reverse angle of an earlier scene but is not adjacent to it (represents a film taken of the earlier scene).

24. THE ESCAPED LUNATIC, Biograph, filmed November; fourteen shots, a chase film, circular structure, filmed in real exteriors except first and last shots; chase reverses direction twice to return over same path.

25. THE PICKPOCKET - A CHASE THROUGH LONDON, British, Gaumont, released in November (per BFC); twelve shots, a chase film made on real locations, action close to camera at times; may include a cut from pursued to pursuer (for further study).

26. SOMNAMBULIST, British, Gaumont, directed by Alf Collins, released November (per BFC); six shots, circular structure, dream sequence, uses real exteriors, including extensive pans of skyline; fall of sleepwalker is parallel to fall from bed, when waking from dream.

27. THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, Edison, copyright 1 December; fourteen shots including the alternate closeup to be used at beginning or end.

28. LOVE AND JEALOUSY BEHIND THE SCENES, Biograph, filmed 4 December; five shots, a tragedy.

29. HOW OLD IS ANN? Edison, copyright 15 December; two shots.

30. THE HEATHEN CHINEE AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, Biograph, filmed 17 December; four shots.

31. COWBOY JUSTICE, Biograph, filmed 30 December; two shots.

32. SAVED!, Biograph, filmed 30 December; two shots.

33. SATURDAY SHOPPING, British, Hepworth, directed by Cecil Hepworth; copyrighted in U.S. November 1903, although BFC gives British release as December 1903. Six shots, uses real exteriors.

1904: Approximately 184 films viewed, including seventeen British films, two French films, two Seligs, five Paley & Steiners, 31 Edisons and 68 Biographs. Of these, the following were multi-shot films:

1. THE FOUR SEASONS, Biograph, filmed 12 January; four shots, not a narrative.

2. THE KENTUCKY SQUIRE, Biograph, filmed 29 January; two shots.

3. THE BOLD SOGER BOY, Biograph, filmed 11 February; four shots.

4. CASEY'S FRIGHTFUL DREAM, Edison, copyright 16 February; three shots.

5. HOW THE COOK MADE HER MARK, Biograph, filmed 24 February; two shots.

6. BATTLE OF THE YALU, Biograph, filmed 16-18 March; five shots, faked newsreel, shot in real exteriors.

7. THE TRAMP ON THE ROOF, Biograph, filmed 18 March; three shots.

8. A NIGGER IN THE WOODPILE, Biograph, filmed 29 March; two shots.

9. THE BATTLE OF CHEMULPO BAY, Edison, copyright 12 April; three shots, the second shot an insert of telescopic view of flag being shot down; made with models, a faked newsreel.

10. THE COP FOOLS THE SERGEANT, Edison, copyright 22 April; three shots.

11. THE EVICTION, British, Gaumont, directed by Alf Collins, released in May (per BFC); four shots plus insert of eviction warrant which begins the film; real exteriors.

12. WEARY WILLIE KIDNAPS A CHILD, Edison, copyright 7 June; four shots.

13. PERSONAL, Biograph, filmed 8 & 13 June; ten shots in existing print, but assume beginning shot and insert missing according to contemporary description. A chase film.

14. WILFUL MURDER, Biograph, copyright 23 June (production date not yet determined); eight shots, including a chase, in which action reverses and goes foreground to background over same path (shot six).

15. (RAID ON A COINER'S DEN), British, Gaumont, title not listed in BFC, copyrighted under this title in U.S. June 1904; ten shots, including an emblematic introductory shot with closeups of hands, guns, pound notes, etc.; uses real exteriors. Last shot, prison gates opening toward camera as men enter.

16. (THE CHILD STEALERS), British, title not listed in BFC, copyrighted in U.S. 9 June 1904 (possible identification THE KIDNAPPED CHILD, Autoscope, released April 1904 in England, but does not match description well); seven shots, real exteriors; may be a significant change of camera position, last shot.

17. THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN, Biograph, filmed 11 August; thirteen shots, using real exteriors; includes a cut to closer view and then back again to long view.

18. HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN GOT A WIFE THROUGH THE NEW YORK HERALD PERSONAL COLUMNS, Edison, copyright 26 August; nine shots plus beginning insert of advertisement; next shot an introductory shot close view of hero. See PERSONAL (15), Biograph, of which this film is a close copy.

19. THE CONVICT AND THE CURATE, British, Clarendon, directed by Percy Stow, released August (per BFC), copyrighted in U.S. as THE CONVICT'S ESCAPE; six shots, chase film.

20. NIGHT DUTY, British, Gaumont, directed by Alf Collins; released August (per BFC); three shots.

21. THE EUROPEAN REST CURE, Edison, copyright 1 September; thirteen shots, with intertitles; mixture of reality and sets; cut from real exterior of ship's bow plunging high seas to set interior of cabin, rocking. More an episode film than a narrative.

22. THE ROUNDUP OF THE YEGG BANK BURGLARS, Edison, copyright 16 September; fifteen shots; fade in and out after explosion; a train wreck; moves to closer view of wreck at the end.

23. THE CAPTURE OF THE YEGG BANK BURGLARS, Edison, copyright 16 September; four shots; could conceivably belong to above, but copyrighted separately.

24. NERVY NAT KISSES THE BRIDE, Edison, copyright 30 September; three shots.

25. THE JONAH MAN: OR THE TRAVELLER BEWITCHED, British, Hepworth, released September (per BFC) (copyrighted in U.S. as THE BEWITCHED TRAVELLER); seven shots, a trick film; real exteriors.

26. A RAILWAY TRAGEDY, British, Gaumont, released September (per BFC); six shots, real exteriors.

27. REVENGE! British, Gaumont, released September (Per BFC); seven shots; real exteriors, plot difficult to follow.

28. LE VOYAGE A TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE, French, Georges Méliès, copyrighted in U.S. 12 October as AN IMPOSSIBLE VOYAGE; forty scenes plus three scenes supplementary section, according to Star Film catalogue, print viewed may not contain all the shots; original length per catalogue, 1,233' 1,414' with new finish; original running time about 25 minutes without new finish.

29. MANIAC CHASE, Edison, copyright 7 October; approximately 15 shots, circular structure, extensive pans to follow action, very close copy of Biograph's THE ESCAPED LUNATIC, see 24, page 14.

30. THE SUBURBANITE, Biograph, filmed 21, 22 October; fifteen shots, with intertitles.

31. THE LOST CHILD, Biograph, filmed October; eleven shots, real exteriors, pans to follow action; a chase, in one shot the chase reverses to go front to back; intercuts a close view of a long shot, well-matched; final shot has lengthy pan that shows careful planning of entire shot.

32. CITY HALL TO HARLEM IN FIFTEEN SECONDS VIA THE SUBWAY ROUTE, Edison, copyright 24 October, six shots, includes iris effect, a moving shot, split screen effect.

33. TRAMP ON A FARM, Paley & Steiner, copyright 27 October; seven shots, a comedy, real exteriors; in copyright print, scenes too short to tell much about film.

34. (DECOYED), British, title not listed in BFC, copyrighted in U.S. October (slight possibility this could be LOST, STRAYED OR STOLEN, February 1905, Hepworth, but doubtful); six shots, real exteriors.

35. A TRIP TO PARIS, British, Hepworth, released October (per BFC); fourteen shots (or more); more a series of episodes than a narrative, but follows a character; real exteriors. (U.S. release title, AN ENGLISHMAN'S TRIP FROM LONDON TO PARIS).

36. THE EX-CONVICT, Edison, copyright 19 November; eight shots, with intertitles; has one dialogue title (before it is spoken); pans to follow action; ambitious story film for this period; real exteriors.

37. PARSIFAL, Edison, copyright 13 October; eight scenes, reproduction of opera.

38. WILLIE'S VACATION, Paley & Steiner, copyright 8 November; approximately nine shots, including one close view; real exteriors; print submitted for copyright only a few frames each shot.

39. AVENGING A CRIME, OR BURNED AT THE STAKE, Paley & Steiner, copyright 19 November; approximately eleven shots; appears

to be a complex story for period; print submitted for copyright only a few frames each shot; real exteriors.

40. AN INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON, British, copyrighted November (several films of this title in BFC, but none seem to match description). Five shots, plot rather difficult to follow.

41. THE BROKEN BROOM, British, Clarendon, directed by Percy Stow, released November (per BFC); U.S. title A KISS AND A TUMBLE; three shots, direct action to second shot (a fall), returns to first shot.

42. THE STRENUOUS LIFE, Edison, copyright 19 December; five shots, including a cut to close view and back within the same scene.

43. THE STOLEN PIG, British, Clarendon, released December (per BFC); U.S. title, THE PIG THAT CAME TO LIFE; three shots, all shot in real exteriors.

44. FAUST, French, Pathé, a Film D'Art, directed by Georges Fagot and Andreani; we do not know why this is dated 1904, but one print is a reissue with sound and introduction which gives this year. Length of print, 1,569'. Date doubtful. Number of shots not noted.

1905: Approximately 120 films viewed, including one Italian, three British, thirteen French; and among the American films, one Lubin, eleven Edison, six Paley & Steiner, two Seligs, and 87 Biograph films.

1. THE GENTLEMAN HIGHWAYMAN, Biograph, filmed 14 January; seven shots; a chase film, with a kind of cut between pursued and pursuer.

2. FISHERMAN, EELS OR SNAKES, Paley and Steiner, copyright 20 January; three shots, a comedy, filmed out-of-doors.

3. AROUND NEW YORK IN 15 MINUTES, Paley and Steiner, copyright 31 January; seven or eight shots, in real exteriors, street scenes, ice skating, looks to be an interesting film, but print submitted for copyright has only a few frames each shot.

4. THE KLEPTOMANIAC, Edison, copyright 4 February; eleven shots, including a tableau showing the figure of Justice.

5. TOM, TOM THE PIPER'S SON, Biograph, filmed 12 February; eight shots, a chase film.

6. THE SEVEN AGES, Edison, copyright 27 February; there are eight episodes, most of them consisting of two shots each, in almost every case cutting from a long shot to a close view of the same scene, to show the participants kissing; also has interesting side-lighting fireplace effects. Not a story film, a series of related episodes.

7. THE NIHILISTS, Biograph, filmed 28 February; eleven shots, with original intertitles, a serious dramatic film.

8. WANTED, A DOG, Biograph, filmed 28 March; eleven shots, a classic chase film.

9. THE BIGAMIST, Paley and Steiner, copyright 25 April; about seven or eight shots, all a few frames each in this print submitted for copyright, a chase film, which ends with a close view.

10. TRAVELS OF A LOST TRUNK, Paley and Steiner, copyright 4 April; about seven shots, real exteriors, with intercutting of close views. Like the other Paley & Steiner prints submitted for copyright, shots are very short. These films will need close examination on a viewing table.

11. THE NON-UNION BILL POSTER, Paley and Steiner, copyright 17 March; two shots.

12. HOW JONES LOST HIS ROLL, Edison, copyright 27 March; seven shots, with animated letters forming titles; comedy.

13. THE BURGLAR'S SLIDE FOR LIFE, Edison, copyright 28 April; six shots, comedy.

14. THE WEDDING, Biograph, filmed in May; six shots, comedy.

15. ON A GOOD OLD 5¢ TROLLEY RIDE, Edison, copyright 16 May; six shots; a sing-a-long with music score at beginning of film; a chase film.

16. DO YOU KNOW THIS FAMILY? Edison, copyright 31 May; nine shots, with animated letters forming titles; little narrative; most shots are close views.

17. LIFTING THE LID, Biograph, filmed 19,20,27 June; six shots, circular structure; a tour of low-life New York.

18. RAFFLES, THE DOG, Edison, copyright 30 June; twelve shots; a chase film, with a dog for a hero.

19. RESCUED BY ROVER, British, released July 1905, Hepworth (copyrighted in U.S. 19 August by Biograph); twenty shots; begins with close view of dog and baby; at end, cuts from long shot to close view of same; direction of movement carefully observed as pursuit goes and returns over same ground; interesting side-lighting effects.

20. LUCKY WISHBONE, Paley and Steiner, copyright 12 July; about ten shots, like the other P & S films submitted for copyright, each shot only a few frames; a comedy, shot outdoors, has a comic cop.

21. STOLEN BY GYPSIES, Edison, copyright 15 July; fourteen shots, beginning with a close view of baby to show birthmark, then cut to long shot of same; has a time-lapse title, "one year later".

22. THE FIRE-BUG, Biograph, filmed 24 July; eight shots, beginning with a close view introducing the fire-bug character; interior/exterior editing with repeated action; at end, cuts from long shot to mid-shot for a closer view.

23. THE RIVER PIRATES, Biograph, filmed 24 July; eight shots.

24. (FINE FEATHERS MAKE FIND BIRDS (or FRIENDS)), British, title not in BFC, copyrighted in U.S. 25 August; seven shots, a chase,

which may include a cut from pursued to pursuer (possible identification, THE MOTOR HOOLIGANS, R.W. Paul, released in May, or WILLIE AND TIM IN THE MOTOR CAR, Clarendon, released in July).

25. THE HORSE THIEF, Biograph, filmed 31 August; eleven shots, a chase film, with length pans to follow action, back and forth across the field of action.

26. THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY, Edison, copyright 1 September; fourteen shots, a chase, lengthy pans back and forth to follow action. A parody.

27. BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS, Edison, copyright 1 September; number of shots not recorded, pans to follow action; a chase film, at Coney Island.

28. THE WHITE CAPS, Edison, copyright 14 September; fourteen shots, a chase.

29. THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE, Biograph, filmed 13-15 September; nine shots, uses real exteriors; a cut from extreme long shot to closer view of the same.

30. THE DREAM OF THE RACE-TRACK FIEND, Biograph, released 14 October per Biograph Bulletin; nine shots, circular structure, the central portion is a dream sequence (shot in real exteriors and without tricks).

31. COUNTRY COURTSHIP, Biograph, filmed 17 October; six shots, a chase.

32. THE GREAT JEWEL MYSTERY, Biograph, filmed in October; seven shots; introductory shot is extreme closeup of jewel casket and hand; original titles; entrances close by camera in real exteriors; some similarities to THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY; original title on film is THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING JEWEL CASKET.

33. WATERMELON PATCH, Edison, copyright 20 October; nine shots; a chase film, racial humour; a close view; film is out of order or missing intertitles(?).

34. A KENTUCKY FEUD, Biograph, filmed 26 October; six shots (very clumsy).

35. THE BARNSTORMERS, Biograph, filmed 2-3 November; six shots. Has performance of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" within the film.

36. CLIMBING THE AMERICAN ALPS, Biograph, filmed 20-21 November; nine shots, using reverse motion to help the characters climb mountain.

37. THE 13 CLUB, Biograph, filmed 16-18 November; five shots, with intertitles to indicate time lapses.

38. INQUISITIVE BOOTS, British, Hepworth, released in July; number of shots not noted; similar to A SEARCH FOR THE EVIDENCE, Biograph 1903, it is a keyhole film, with the same cut to reverse angle at the end.

39. THE JOLLY MONKS OF MALABAR, Biograph, filmed 29 December; five shots.

(The films below are not precisely dated, and may or may not be 1905 films):

40. FUN ON THE FARM, Lubin; number of shots not noted; a chase film, ending with a close view.

41. LA PRESA DI ROMA, Italy; number of shots not noted; a spectacle film, partly filmed in real exteriors; uses depth of space, has tableau at end.

42. (BEWITCHED LOVER), France, Pathé; two shots, a trick film.

43. (ARABS FANTASIA), France, Pathé; two shots, a pageant (actuality, probably).

44. PALAIS DE MILLE ET UNE NUITS, France, Méliès; number of shots not noted.

45. AU BAGNE, France, Pathé, Zecca (SCENES OF CONVICT LIFE); number of shots not noted; uses painted sets in part, part real exteriors. Social content.

46. HONNEUR D'UN PERE, France, Pathé, Zecca; number of shots not noted; a chase film, with pans to follow action.

47. TOUR D'UN MONDE D'UN POLICIER (DETECTIVE'S TOUR OF THE WORLD), France, Pathé; about eighteen to twenty shots; mixture of documentary with staged material with attempts at matching; telescopic view; travelling shot; tableau at end. Has U.S. release titles.

(numbers 45, 46 and 47 are listed in Pathé's American catalogue of April 1906)

1906: Approximately 41 films viewed, including five Edisons, thirty-five Biographs, and one Vitagraph. Of these, the following were multi-shot:

1. THE CRITIC, Biograph, filmed 10-11 January; five shots plus insert (the critic's review); close views inserted in mid-film.

2. THE INSURANCE SOLICITOR, Biograph, filmed 19-21 January; six shots plus an introductory insert; original titles; very slight narrative.

3. A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED, Biograph, filmed 24, 27 January; nine shots, a chase, ending with close view; original titles; a dog is the hero.

4. MR. BUTT-IN, Biograph, filmed 1, 2 February; five shots; original titles; more a series of episodes than a narrative.

5. THE SILVER WEDDING, Biograph, filmed in March; six shots, including, in mid-film, a cut from long shot to close view and back to long shot; ends with a dramatic flight in a sewer, in which action approaches the camera.

6. THE BLACK HAND, Biograph, released 29 March (per Bulletins); seven shots plus insert; begins with close view; recreation of a real event.

7. WINTER STRAW RIDE, Edison, copyright 7 April; eleven shots; a chase film, with pans to follow action.

8. THE HOLDUP OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN EXPRESS, Biograph, filmed in April; six shots; camera mounted on train for lengthy travel shots in the manner of Hale's Tours, but it is a narrative film; chase between train, a handcar, and a horse-drawn vehicle.

9. THE SUBPOENA SERVER, Biograph, filmed in April; eight shots; begins with close view; a chase film, real exteriors, racial humour.

10. THE TERRIBLE KIDS, Edison, copyright 1 May; eleven shots; a chase film.

11. ANOTHER NAME WAS MAUDE, Biograph, copyright 2 May; about nine shots. This was submitted for copyright, but perhaps not released. All shots show the struggle of various characters to ride a donkey. One shot contains unusual lens distortions, difficult to tell whether they are deliberate or accidental; at one point camera appears to roll over completely.

12. "23", THE STORY OF THE SKIDOO BROTHERS EXPERIENCE IN SOCIETY, Biograph, filmed 23-25 May; eight shots; original titles; introductory shot is close view, followed by a long shot of the same which repeats the action.

13. THE VILLAGE CUT-UP, Biograph, filmed 1,6,8 June; seven shots; begins with close view as introductory shot; a chase.

14. THE PAYMASTER, Biograph, filmed 12 June; nine shots; original titles; first shot is a close view, in mid-action; use of dramatic lighting effects and picturesque locations.

15. ATTACK ON FORT BOONESBORO, Biograph, filmed 15 June, in Louisville, Kentucky; three shots with length panoramas, restless pans, probably an actuality, record of an historical celebration with pageant.

16. THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY, Biograph, filmed 19 June; six shots; special lighting effects.

17. THE MASQUERADERS, Biograph, filmed 26-29 June; seven shots plus two letter inserts.

18. NO WEDDING BELLS FOR HIM, Biograph, filmed 18, 19 July; seven shots, circular structure, begins with introductory close view; pans.

19. WAITING AT THE CHURCH, Edison, copyright 21 July; eight shots, appears to be incomplete (a ninth shot does not belong to film); a chase; includes a close view, but unsure if film in right order.

20. LOOKING FOR JOHN SMITH, Biograph, filmed in July; nine shots plus insert; has dialogue occur within picture in cartoon balloons; an animated title; a chase film.

21. THE CRUISE OF THE GLADYS, Biograph, filmed 10, 11 August; eight shots; all action very far from camera; circular structure; night shooting(?).

22. THE LONE HIGHWAYMAN, Biograph, filmed 16, 17, 20 August; eleven shots; a cut into close view from long shot; action comes near camera; reverse angle cutting (man enters window).

23. WANTED - A NURSE, Biograph, filmed September; sixteen shots, original intertitles, titles of dialogue within picture in cartoon balloons;a chase; insert; variety of angles on same house.

24. THE FOX HUNT, Biograph, filmed 23 August and 29 September; thirteen shots; begins with introductory close view; a chase; original titles.

25. DR. DIPPY'S SANITARIUM, Biograph, filmed 3,4,10 September; twelve shots; chase.

26. THE TUNNEL WORKERS, Biograph, filmed 19, 24, 26 September; ten shots; direct reverse cut; remarkable for use of reality, construction of tunnel.

27. COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER, Biograph, filmed in September; twelve shots; original titles; a drama.

28. GETTING EVIDENCE, Edison, copyright 8 October; eighteen shots; chase film.

29. THE HONEYMOON AT NIAGARA FALLS, Edison, copyright 16 October; thirteen shots; not fully assembled; original titles; follows one couple but is more a travelogue than a narrative.

30. THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, Biograph, filmed 8, 14, 18 November; eleven shots, original titles, pans; a narrative, remarkable for use of reality, thrilling panoramas from building under construction.

31. MARRIED FOR MILLIONS, Biograph, filmed 27 November; six shots; curious exits near camera, actors leave lighted area for dark.

32. MR. HURRY-UP OF NEW YORK, Biograph, filmed 10 and 12 December; nine shots; trick film.

33. A MIDWINTER NIGHT'S DREAM, Vitagraph, copyright 15 December; number of shots not noted.

34. TRIAL MARRIAGE, Biograph, filmed 19-29 December; ten shots plus insert; begins with introductory close view; ends with close view.

35. REVOLUTION EN RUSSIE, France, Pathé, ca 1906; eight shots; includes view through a telescope.

NOTES

(1) Robert C. Allen, "Vaudeville and Film 1895 - 1915: A study in media interaction"

(2) G.W. Bitzer's unpublished notes in the Bitzer Collection, The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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SYMPOSIUM: CINEMA 1900-1906, SESSION 1

Barry Salt - GREAT BRITAIN

For those who are particularly interested, there is a paper prepared for delegates already which gives the background to some aspects of this period, but for any other people that are present, they will be able to get this paper in essence in next month's Sight and Sound, and this might make things rather clearer than it looks as though it's possible to make them today, and convey a lot more information that I won't have time for. The way I'm going to proceed is to say a bit about one or two or three films. They'll be shown as a group and then it'll be open to any comments that anyone on the floor wishes to make about what I've said about them or the films themselves, but I would ask you to only make very pertinent points because of the unfortunate compression which is going to result. Now, my view of this period is principally concerned with the stylistic evolution which took place between 1900 and 1906. The period is particularly interesting because during these years the developments in the form of film, the forms, the style if you like of films, was probably more rapid than it ever was either before, or for that matter after the next, let us say, ten years. One finds that the stylistic evolution up to say 1915 is still quite fast, and there's a lot to be said about that too, because I don't think people fully realise what happened in the next ten years yet. Nevertheless, let's stick to 1900 to 1906. And because the films are so short in the main, it's possible to see quite a large number of them together and it's fairly easy in a way that's not possible as the years go by, to get an idea of the interaction between films made at different places during the years 1900/1906. The inter-connections between the films makers are quite strong in this period. It's impossible to treat one country separately and I will give you an example just shortly, but first of all let me show you one film made in 1900 and present in the G.A. Smith catalogue of that year, which shows the beginning of scene dissections. This is the very beginning of the breaking down of one filmed scene into a number of shots; as far as anyone knows there is nothing before this. There are films made before 1900 that have more than one shot in them but in that case each shot represents as far as we know a different scene taking place in a different time or a different place. So let's look at GRANDMA'S READING GLASS. This film shows the appearance of the 'point-of-view' shot; that is you have a scene shot by a camera in front of it and then into the middle of this scene is cut a shot taken with the camera put in the position of the eye of one of the people or roughly in the position of one of the participants in the scene. The point-of-view shot. Right, roll it. Right, the first shot may be missing from that, one would expect nowadays at any rate that there should be a general shot of the scene before the first point-of-view shot. But, on the other hand things don't always come out as we might expect them, from a present day point of view. In the next pair of films the first, LET ME DREAM AGAIN, was also a G.A. Smith production. LET ME DREAM AGAIN also dates from 1900. In this period there is a great deal of either outright plagiarism or copying of one film by another film-maker with slight alterations, or sometimes with extensive alterations, and this is a case in point, so let's have a look at LET ME DREAM AGAIN (GB, 1900)

and immediately following it REVE ET REALITE (France 1901). You'll notice that in Zecca's copy instead of using a focus pull, instead of adjusting the focus of the camera so that the first scene goes out of focus and then bringing the focus in again to the second scene to represent the transition from dream to reality, Zecca just uses a brief dissolve. This is one of the points which one can see in many other films around these years, that some of the British film-makers, such as G.A. Smith and Williamson, who had been professional still photographers, had a much greater technical command than the French film-makers. This is my interpretation of the situation, at any rate. Nevertheless, the way of making a transition between dream and reality standardised on the Zecca model, the second film, and you'll find from 1901 onwards that it has become quite standard to make a transition into what is a dream by a dissolve and then come out of it again, perhaps by dissolve or perhaps by a cut with a number of scenes in between. A true dream sequence (in our terms) becomes a standardised part of film-making by let's say 1904/5, something like that. I would like to make one much more important point about dissolves between scenes before I have a break for comments, and this revolves round George Méliès use of the dissolve. In 1898 Méliès, it would appear, made his first multi-scened films, films which have more than one scene in them, and hence more than one shot. One of the first of these, if not the first, was LA LUNE A UN METRE of 1898, which has four scenes. This is based on one of Méliès' stage productions of several years before at his Théâtre Robert-Houdin in Paris, and in this particular film it would seem from the surviving copy that he just spliced the shots straight together. It produces to our eye and apparently to his eye too a very discontinuous effect, because each shot takes place on something very like a stage set, with curtains down each side; it looks very like a stage set and there's some change in the backdrop and so on, but the same characters stay there and between each shot they suddenly change position. The effect is to our eyes very discontinuous and I say it would apparently have been so to Méliès too, because from 1899 to 1904 (and you'll see a number of Méliès' films from these years) in all of his films all the shots are joined together by dissolves, regardless of whether there is any time lapse between the shots, and you'll be able to see this in just one second in BARBE BLEUE (BLUEBEARD), the film of Méliès of 1901 that I'm going to show to you. People have taken it, I regret to say, that the dissolve in Méliès' films represents a time lapse as it came to towards the end of the Twenties, but in fact before that there was no established convention. Contrary to received opinion there's no established convention of the dissolve representing a time lapse. One of the things it was used for was flashbacks, and that's later. Another thing it was used for was sometimes a transition to a closer shot, from a long shot to a close-up, around the time of the First World War. But this will become apparent to you when you see BARBE BLEUE in just a second. A slightly confusing point is that sometimes through the process of time the dissolve has been lost between shots, because of course many of these films are somewhat damaged. Most of the ones you will see are in pretty good condition on the whole, but they've been copied many times and broken down, and quite often they have been broken between shots and titles have been put in and taken out, and all sorts of things, but if I remember rightly the film you are about

to see has dissolves between every shot even though the action moves continuously from one shot and another. And this feature proved to be very influential for a few years only. It was taken up by Edwin Porter in his films from 1901 and I'll show you one of those later. But let's run BARBE BLEUE - Méliès' 1901. The magic still works. Before asking for any comments I should make it quite clear about this matter of dissolves. You may say that some of these are time lapses - and they are indeed. But on the other hand some of them are not. When Judith, the wife, opens the door and goes in, there is a dissolve; there's no time lapse and later on when she comes down the stairs from the top of the tower, dissolve, in other words it seems to me unarguable that the dissolve is just a way, as far as Méliès is concerned, of making a smooth transition between absolutely any shot whatsoever, and this is observably the case in films influenced by Méliès in this. Because Méliès in this period probably still had the greatest prestige of any film-maker and although after 1900 he didn't really do anything much in developing new techniques, his move to longer and longer films from 1900 to 1902/3 influenced other people's move towards longer films. But as far as the other matter is concerned, if anyone has anything to say on this I would be pleased to hear from them.

Question: Noel Burch (text of question unclear)

Answer: Barry Salt

Yes, I agree, evolution of use of the dissolve around the late Twenties and Thirties includes the elements you mentioned, but there are also other elements entering into it which would be very interesting but which are outside this, our concern, at the moment, but otherwise I pretty well agree with what Noel said. There was somebody else up there who put their hand up. Could you speak, oh ... (interruption) ... lots of people turned up. Yes, I will, we'll pick up on this question as soon as the delegates get in.

Question: (about LET ME DREAM AGAIN and REVE ET REALITE)
The reactions of the women in bed are fundamentally different, in the English version the advances or the supposed advances of the husbands are rejected, whereas in the French version they are very much welcomed and in fact rejected by the husband.

Answer: Barry Salt: Yes. Charles Musser had something to say.

Question: Musser (not clear)

Answer: Barry Salt

I mostly agree with that. There's a great deal of influence which we are not in a position unfortunately to bring out in the relation between slide shows and these films, and there's probably little question that the idea of connecting scenes together by dissolves as Méliès did it derives from the convention, well it's not a convention but it's used

in some slide shows; because some slide shows didn't use dissolves between every slide. Some simpler ones I am pretty certain used straight - push one slide in, take the other one out and so on, but as a matter of fact the influence of slide shows also includes the subject matter and we have films which are pretty well shot by shot transcriptions of a pre-existing slide narrative sequence into a film - with the shots corresponding to the slides in the slide sequence. This indeed is another matter of great interest. I would like to proceed to a demonstration of the way film evolution worked in this period, indeed in other periods, which as I've said earlier comes out very clearly indeed in this period, partly because it's easier to demonstrate because of the shortness of the films. I'll show three films in succession. A film which would seem to be, although we're not absolutely certain yet, which seems to be the film in G.A. Smith's catalogue of 1901 described as AS SEEN THROUGH A TELESCOPE, and following that another film which isn't actually in that catalogue called THE SICK KITTEN, which was made in 1903 and seems to be a perfect duplication of a previous film called THE LITTLE DOCTORS, and is another step on the way of the development of the dissection of a scene into separate shots joined together, because it includes, as far as we know, the first use of the close-up, (strictly an insert in present day terminology) cut into the middle of a scene. That is I should say a non-point of view close-up of what one could loosely call for the sake of speedy convenience an objective close-up which doesn't correspond to anybody's view point, which is conceptually a rather different thing. And thirdly, you'll see that these two films provided a model for a film made by Edwin S. Porter in 1903. It seems to me that quite often Porter worked in this manner. Porter represented a very curious case because his films are so various in their nature and a simplified explanation of this situation is that it seems to me that Porter may have been rather at sea unless he had models. I don't know whether he exactly copied films, because he didn't mostly, he always made variations on them when he was using a pre-existing film as a model. There's probably only one film of his which is very close to being a copy, and that is MANIAC CHASE, which seems to be a pretty well literal copy according to the information I have of a previous Biograph called ESCAPED LUNATIC CHASE. I'm not certain if anyone is showing MANIAC CHASE later on, perhaps it might be in one of the later programmes. Anyway, in this particular case it seems to me quite clear that you have these two models because the production is still fairly small and the circulation from country to country is quite rapid. These two models are combined to produce the film GAY SHOE CLERK of 1903. I think the three films will perhaps speak for themselves, so let's run them straight away. As far as I'm concerned at any rate there is a different matter connected with these films and that is the further development of cinematic continuity. We're still in 1901. There was an alternative model from 1901 and one that eventually triumphed as far as joining shots together, and this was provided by the English film maker James Williamson. His films are rather better known perhaps, but nevertheless I think it's important to make the point. His films would seem to represent the first instance of real movement continuity from scene to scene by straight cuts between the shots. We're going back to a point here where there are no

cuts within the scene, just one shot-one scene as far as James Williamson was concerned. Despite Méliès having made all his multi-shot films by using dissolves from 1899 to 1904 and indeed after 1904 as you shall see on future days; despite that powerful example Williamson apparently considered it sufficient to join the scenes together by straight cuts, and in the case of the first film that you'll see, FIRE!, there is a not completely perfect, but nevertheless fairly good cut on movement continuity between inside and outside, as a person goes through the window when he's rescued by the fireman. There is not, in our terms of course, perfect continuity here but nevertheless the idea would seem to exist of achieving some sort of movement continuity because you can see that the man's waiting for the "Action!", the command so to speak, at the beginning of the second shot when he's poised at the top of the fireman's ladder. The other film that I'm showing immediately afterwards also made by Williamson in 1901 is STOP THIEF!, and this film is the beginning of the long line of chase films of which you'll also see many subsequent examples on other days at this conference. A most popular way of overall construction - you have a person moving from one shot out of the frame and then into the next shot, out of it, and into the final shot. The idea of having a chase, that is a physical chase, apart from the chase construction arrived at rather earlier in THE MILLER AND THE SWEEP of G.A. Smith of 1898, I think it's 1898, anyway it's been shown last night and it's been shown on television and so on. Although it's only made up of just one shot, after the miller and the sweep fight, a whole crowd of people rush across the frame from right to left for no particular reason, and this decision to get a chase into a film somehow or other I think stems from the theatrical usage - the chase before the curtain, the chase across the stage in front of the curtain which happens in pantomimes and so on. I think it probably did in the nineteenth century even. So let's run FIRE! and STOP THIEF!, both 1901. Yes, there we have what would prove two important models for future films. In FIRE! you can already see as far as the large-scale construction is concerned that it's the movement from an established scene to another scene and then back to the established scene, and this proved quite an important model. We'll see another example of it in a British film of 1903. I don't think it was picked up very quickly or instantaneously elsewhere. I think it took a couple of years to establish itself; that involves another matter which I don't think I'll get to. Anyway, as far as STOP THIEF! is concerned, it's a minor point. The conventions of frame exit and entrance, or rather, out that way and in this way (gestures) and so on which we have now of course, are not established, although they did, it would seem to me, become established in a few years' time. I'm not certain whether you'll see any examples in future programmes, but the convention of exit from frame left and entrance into the next shot from frame right appears in some of Méliès films such as JOURNEY ACROSS THE IMPOSSIBLE of 1904 (despite their being joined by dissolves), and also in some Pathé films such as LA RUCHE MERVEILLEUSE, 1904. So I was going to show you an example of an Edison film presumably made by Porter which includes dissolves and made in 1901. LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, but I think I'm a bit pressed for time so I'd better leave you to take it on trust. Incidentally, LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH was copied by Biograph the next year, but when they remade it they did not use dissolves, they used straight cuts. Perhaps I'd better show it to you actually. Could we run LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, please? No,

No, THE SOLDIER'S RETURN is next. This film I found a bit puzzling when I first saw it, perhaps because part of, or most of the first shot is missing. The point is that the soldier comes home from the wars or whatever, and finds that his mother or his grandmother is no longer the old house, she's been taken to the workhouse, and he goes and gets her and brings her back to the family home. The interesting point about this film is the naturalism of the acting, and perhaps even more importantly the consciousness of its producers of this feature; it was specifically advertised, in a way that is not usually the case with other films, as having the most naturalistic acting in the Williamson catalogue at the time, and indeed that is what is delivered, it seems to me. I'd like to press on with a short example that illustrates the way that what would seem to us to be an obvious improvement in film construction was not taken up at the time, not recognised. It's a case of in evolutionary terms a mutation, a new occurrence which didn't become the beginning of a line of development in a way that all the examples which I've presented to you did become the beginning of a line of development of film form immediately. This is a British film of 1902, again of unknown maker and of unknown title, which for the sake of convenience we have called INTERFERING LOVERS. Would you run that please? Well, there are lots of other things about these films that I don't need to tell you about, which I see you appreciate, which is a very good thing. They are not all as entertaining as that - a lot of them are, but not all of them. You notice that with the cut the camera position has changed from three-quarters to front, and it is moved in at the same time, and this covers the mis-match of actors' positions because there is indeed, as there is in all the other examples I've shown you, when there is a cut within a scene there is a mis-match in the actor's position in one, (demonstrates) and then a cut, on the other side of the cut it's there, but you don't notice it particularly - it looks quite smooth because of the change of angle and the change of scale to a different view of the scene and if you look closely you can see it (but I think most people don't), and that has become a standard way of course of joing scenes together. But despite this particular example, this is a unique example, for a number of years as far as I know, certainly amongst the several hundred films that we've viewed, it's unique before 1903, I'd say. And even after 1905 the idea of producing a smooth transition in our terms quite clearly didn't exist. All cuts to closer shots (and that is indeed a cut to a closer shot, the camer's moved closer as well as around) are done in the way that you saw them done in GAY SHOE CLERK and THE SICK KITTEN by moving the camera to the new position for the second shot straight down the camera axis. The idea of changing to different camera angles within a scene (not different camera positions) didn't become well established until after 1912 or so; even then it was rather show in being established. By 1914 it was becoming well established. But the idea of cutting into a closer shot was very well established indeed by the end of the period we are considering, 1906. So, any comments on this point? Yes?

Question: Denis Gifford (not clear) Denis Gifford says that the actor in INTERFERING LOVERS is Alf Collins, and hence that he probably directed the film.

Answer: Barry Salt

Ah, excellent, superb! Looks like him, yes. If you could tell one of our cataloguers, Roger Holman or someone, he'll probably know about it, it would be most helpful. It sounds very encouraging indeed, thanks very much. Possible positive identification, yes. Noel?

Question: Noel Burch

... to link shots together in some way or another, to link the stronger and more successive shots which are the mode of construction of films at that time from let us say the first Passion film, which are successive quite autonomous tableaux linked together simply by the knowledge which the audience has of the story historian of the Passion, for example. The chase obviously does provide an element of successiveness and continuity, so that even without the existence or consciousness of, for example, the fact that people are chasing out of one shot calls for the appearance of another shot in another place which will continue this pursuit and at the same time which I will talk about on Wednesday, has a certain historical structure which you find on the symbolic on these films extremely important that we go into that on Wednesday.

Barry Salt

That's a good point about the security of continuity that the chase gives, very good point indeed. So ...

Question:

Could you just repeat what you said about entrances and exits and the screen, I didn't understand.

Barry Salt

I'm sorry, I was rather rushing. The point is that in STOP THIEF! (I may not get this exactly right, but I'll get it sufficiently right to make the point), in the first shot the thief runs out right of the frame, then, no sorry, he runs out of the frame left in the first shot, and then in the second shot he runs in from the left and then he runs out right, and in the third shot he runs in that way if I remember rightly. The convention gradually developed that when you run out of frame right to a shot representing another scene the smooth continuity is given by appearing from frame left. In a way this method of entrance and exit of frame differs from the theatrical convention in successive scenes in a play. There, if someone exits right, curtain comes down, new scene - he'll enter from the same side, but this is a rather tricky point. Nevertheless, the convention I've no doubt whatsoever exists, and if you look at the films on successive days for this I think you'll see some examples of it. The fact that around 1904 the convention of exiting right and entering left into the next scene establishes itself, is evident in Méliès films around 1904, and it's also visible in a film that I'm going to show you, with any luck, of 1905

(interruption) It begins to establish itself as a convention that not everybody got into. In fact, large numbers of people didn't get on to it for several years. You can still see a lot of Griffith's films that this convention is not formulated. I think they began to formulate it as far as Griffith and Biograph are concerned probably around 1911/12, somewhere around there, but that again is another matter. But the convention begins to establish itself in sufficient films in which it appears around 1904/1905 at least with some film-makers if not all; some had got this idea otherwise the entrance to exit would be random, sometimes they did it rightly, sometimes wrongly, speaking in our present day terms. Does that make it clear? Right, let's proceed to another film based on the mode of overall construction already established, or not established I should say, but used in FIRE!, that is of going from a person appearing in one place and then in another place and back to the other place, the first place. This is a British film of 1903 from the Sheffield Photo Company called A DARING DAYLIGHT BURGLARY; it was made early in 1903 and it was distributed in America by Edison, that is Edwin S. Porter's company, several months before Porter made THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY which also uses some of these features that appear in this film. Well, let's run the film. A particular feature which has some more general relevance to films of this period is that it's not fully intelligible. What happens in the last couple of shots is not intelligible without a commentary. If I remember rightly, the catalogue description says that when the burglar leaps on the train the police telegraph ahead to the next station, which of course you don't see them doing, and I think the film is more or less complete. This suggests that as was probably the case in Britain at any rate, earlier than this that some of these films, longer films, were presented with a commentary, just as the earlier slide shows were presented with a commentary by a speaker. But we're entering a period now in 1903 where films seem meant to be intelligible without any commentary, although this again is a complex matter. It certainly is a point worth consideration. Returning to any possible influence of this film on Porter and the American einema - the point is that before this I think that Porter had not made any films with cuts of this general sort certainly; he was still using dissolves in 1902 to join all the shots together in his films, whereas with THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY he changed over to using cuts and of course, JACK AND THE BEANSTALK by Porter (what year was that Charles, 1902?), which is again joined together with dissolves, has a pretty continuous story - is quite true, but I don't think Porter produced anything quite of this nature, but this is something the Americans might like to or might not like to speak about ... tomorrow, the session tomorrow. Before I proceed, any comments? That chap behind Charles ...

Question: (not heard)

Answer: Barry Salt:

I can't quite follow you, could you elaborate that point slightly?

Question:

The first shot of this film we've just seen opens with seeing the burglar

going through the window and in the interim the boy has gone for the police, the boy who had seen him going through, so there was a kind of ...

Barry Salt:

Yes ...

Question:

... It looks as though they just shot the scene straight through and then just cut, made a physical cut in the shot at that point, them moved the two parts apart then put in the scene of the boy going to the police station, that's what you're getting at.

Barry Salt:

Yes.

Question:

It's interesting to observe that ... (Yes, it is indeed) ...

Barry Salt:

Off-hand, I would say that is the likeliest thing, but it could do with some closer examination of the film to get this point out, certainly. I think Charles had his hand up next, actually.

Question: Charles Musser

... to say that in Porter's films well he did use dissolves throughout this period, 1901 very beginning of 1903. There are just as many films in which he did not use dissolves, and it's really hard to say that he ... had something to do with the genre he was working with. When he was working in the genre that had its traditional magic moments slides, he tended to use dissolves and other circumstances he used straight cuts, and there are two films, from the years 1901 and 1902, where this can be shown. (What were some of the examples actually?) A film like BY TELEPHONE, which was early 1902, and THE TRAMP'S DREAM, roughly early 1901, THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MACKEEN, also 1901, they are the three that come to mind.

Barry Salt:

Yes, most of those are pretty short films, not THE TRAMP'S DREAM, but BRIDGET MACKEEN, is two shots, the other one has three shots. Yes, I would think, you know, because there is an English film of 1903 which unfortunately we can't show you called ALICE IN WONDERLAND which is again entirely executed with dissolves, that there is possibly some idea that if you are making a fairy-tale type film, like in the case of Porter's JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, you follow Méliès' model - yes, is that what you are saying really? Actually, I hadn't forgotten you, but I think that chap there had his hand up first.

Question:

I am puzzled by your suggestion that a commentary may have been spoken or intended to have been delivered when the film was shown just because of what there might be a missing shot, indicating the telegraph. This comment of yours, is it based on other evidence or just looking at films?

Barry Salt:

I'll let Noel speak on that after the chap behind him who's been jumping up and down to get his word in ...

Question:

I was also puzzled by that comment of yours - it may be true but on the other hand a lot of films of that kind would probably be based on fairly well-known crime stories or things of that kind. In this particular case the thing about the use of the telegraph is that there was probably a piece of very popular folklore, but after all the first application of the telegraph along the Slough to London railway line in the 1840's, the first publicity it had was precisely by such an event of the capture of a criminal, so that it is quite possible that that kind of knowledge would have been in the audience's mind, but similarly, you are getting something like the LIFE OF CHARLES PEACE film, which the one in the Archive is made by Haggar the following year, but * also made a version. You'll get things in there which can, it seems to me, clearly depend on an audience's knowledge because characters which won't be explained though which can be assumed to be known by an audience because they already know the story. They are watching a film of a story they already know.

* Sheffield Photo Company

Barry Salt:

Just before Noel speaks on this, I should say the reason for me suggesting that this is the case is that I think that we know that the slide sequences which preceded this film, particularly in England, were presented with commentators; this is so, isn't it David? Yes, and we know that a lot of these films are based on slide sequences. Williamson and Smith were professional presenters of slide sequences before they became film-makers. The Sheffield Photo Company made slide sequences I think, or Bamforth certainly did it up there. Do you know whether Sheffield made slide sequences? (As far as I know they didn't) Anyway, that's my reason for it, now Noel has something to say about this.

(The following was very difficult to decipher - only snatches understood)

Question: Noel Burch

... of the lecturer as it is called in America ... felt it was extremely important dimension of this whole period. In France we know that the conferencier here was a very, very general phenomena. He was the barker outside the cinema, in the foreign situation ... and he then went on inside to do a running commentary of the film, and up until 1912 in the

U.S. they were luxuries. We have evidence of this. They were pretty well much out of work by then because the whole development of film language, so called, was moving away from this procedure. Now what he ... was the sheer knowledge of the audience concerning stories, I mean plays and films which obviously show that the ... are based upon this sheer noise; it's absolutely true. ... two phenomena are related and I always feel that the lecturer is largely to shake the audience's memory in a way, ... more respect and to add elements. He is ... towards continuity or the development of continuity in problems like this I think that also in situations where ... have evidence of the first Passion film in America, what's it called? ... necessary document ... presumably the whole audience it necessary to move toward - but of course what is fascinating is that both of these elements are in a sense in the direction of, are moving away from certain ... let's call it illusionism until perhaps we find something better ... gradually illumination came from the confliction, the conflict that arose between ... of a certain kind of establishment, certain kind of relationship to ... and the screen, his presence ... in a sense the same thing was true of the outside knowledge, there was a film that closed object of that time was indeed was opened to all kinds of things indeed pre-knowledge. These things are absolutely related. (interruption) ... it's not that ... but ... I don't think it's something we can really go into here, but it seems to me that it always seems to me that the ... of the lecturer is partly related to the ability of movies to take over a narrative function because the development of film, of film music to the point where it is actually closely related to what's going on on the screen doesn't occur until about that time 1910, somewhere around there, and a little bit later the issue of the first music cue sheets.

Answer: Barry Salt

Except that we're getting pretty smooth continuity in a large number of films which are intelligible without titles and so on, as you'll see as the days go on. Around 1904/1905 there are getting to be a large number of films which are quite intelligible without titles, or sometimes they have titles, but they're becoming a form in itself, I think, perhaps even before the music came to support it. G.A. Smith didn't go on making films long enough in any case to perhaps cope with the problem fully, although there is a very interesting film of his of 1903 called MARY-JANE'S MISHAP which somebody else is going to show you, which is quite intelligible in itself and has a number of very interesting features which I think were quite obvious to you. Also in 1903, made in 1903 which was the great year I think of British cinema, and the last great year for a long time; after that you get a gradual decline (interruption). You don't have to take my word for it, I think you should see enough examples, but what happened of course was that the British film-makers remained considerably amateur, they used performers who were not, and set designers and so on, perhaps I had better not go on, but perhaps this next film might give an example in one kind of way. One of the not detailed imitations, but a follow-up in the trick films genre that Méliès had established, made at Pathé and developing the cutting in to a closer shot of the kind that I've already demonstrated to you, which became very common indeed in Pathé films from 1904, 1905, 1906. The other point about this film is that it would appear

to be one of the first Pathe stencil-tint films; from the series number on it, it would seem to have been made towards the end of 1904. The books usually have it that Pathe stencil tinting came in 1905, but in any case this looks to me like a stencil tinted film. (The film in question was actually made around 1908, when stencil tinting truly started. Apart from this, all the other points made here are still correct) I haven't shown you any hand-painted films, of which you'll see quite a number in the subsequent sessions. In those of course the colour wobbles all over the place. In stencil-tinted films the registration of the colours to the appropriate area of the frame when people move and so on is very good. It would also seem that stencil-tinted films are usually recognisable by their paler colours. I'm not clear about this point; it may be that they were always pale, or it may be that the dyes were used for stencil-tinting, as opposed to hand-painting, and were less fast. Anyway, this presumably Gaston Velle film from Pathé in 1904 is very precisely shot in a way that Méliès' weren't, and also of course it's shot much closer in as the Pathé trick films were, and it's really quite smoothly put together and they got even better than this in the next year or two. (Clapping) I just have a message for the projectionist actually. Would it be possible to take off the next 35mm reel, which you have on the other projector presumably by this time, and put on the following reel ... oh, no, sorry, it's 16mm. I want to drop the next reel, I want to drop RESCUE FROM A SHIPWRECK and CENDRILLON, and then I want to leave out SEVEN AGES off the end of this reel and go straight on now to REVE A LA LUNE on 16mm, OK? I think we've got it now. Yes, there are a lot of films like this. The perfection of the trick work is quite remarkable. It's in this particular case all done by super-imposition but the feature of the Pathé trick films from 1904, roughly 1904 onwards is the very good registration of the super-imposed shots, presumably just with what became the famous standard Pathé studio camera, but you'll see some other slightly later examples of the next two years and the registration between the background shot and the super-imposed shot is really remarkably steady; it's not quite, but it's almost as good as, pin registration. And they had in general an elegance which is lacking in Méliès, although that may not be considered an advantage. Anyway, taking up the Pathé story, because one of the revelations of the work that we've done in preparation for the viewing of all these films, has been the importance and interest of the films made at Pathé from 1904 to well outside this period, to 1907/8/9, which it would seem, I think most people who've been here and looking at these films beforehand are agreed as being remarkably under-valued in the history books. The one I want to show next is another more elaborate trick film, REVE A LA LUNE. Probably again made by Zecca, it's certainly in this trick style and there are many interesting features about this - one of the lesser ones is that it's the model for Porter's famous DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND, although in using this model Porter made some interesting changes, incorporating features that he developed earlier. For instance the horizontally split screen and so on, which is a point that may come up, but more importantly the replacing of a rather conventional scene in which the drunk sees a rocking lamp-post, by the beautiful shot in DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND where, by super-impositions you can see the drunk and the lamp-post all rocking with the panning scenes super-imposed. Anyway, that'll be obvious enough to people who have seen

DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND. Returning to REVE A LA LUNE - very important about this film is the smoothness of precision matching in some of the scenes in which the drunk climbs up over the house. The position matching from shot to shot - cutting to and from not exactly a different angle, but one slightly changed in place as he climbs over the parapet of the house for instance, the remarkable perfection that would seem to have been developed in a large number of films like the one we've just seen in the preceding two years. There are a number of other features about REVE A LA LUNE, but I think I'll just run it straight off, because they are probably obvious enough to you. There are a number of obvious motifs taken over from previous Méliès films as I'm sure you can see. But apart from the development in continuity to which I've already referred, another I find quite interesting is the way that the lightning flashes are done by cutting in single frames, they are not as in other films of this period that you'll see done by scratching on the frame or super-imposition in the middle of the shot. They are actually a quite different frame which has nothing but black and the lightning flash on it - cut into the middle of the shot. I don't know that this point had any immediate influence, but it's there. Now, is there any comment anyone wants to make at this point?

Question: (refers to JAPONAISERIE)

... and when the bricks are building up with the picture of the child that seems to have been done with each brick having the face of Noah, is there ...?

Answer: Barry Salt

No, no, I'm afraid it's a simple super-imposition. They are just black bricks with a simple super-imposition. You can see after the thing's knocked down, you can see for a couple of frames (interruption) ... the girl's face is still there. I'm quite definitely convinced of that, (although I thought it might have been done by having a mirror on each brick, and as you put up the bricks the whole reflection of the child sitting behind out of view was reflected) But you can see the super-imposition after the bricks have gone for a couple of frames I think, some of the other people can see ... (I didn't notice that). An interesting thing about these Pathé films is what they managed to do with straight super-imposition. Things which you think would have been done with all sorts of maskings, you know, super-impositions certainly, but were done with all sorts of masking, just simple super-impositions with the second shot on a black ground. You have to look at them quite closely, it's true particularly - you have to put them on a machine to be quite certain of this, or look at them repeatedly, and it's done by very simple means but just precise control of the exact frame that everything happens - that's all, and also precise positioning of the camera ... and it's quite remarkable what they achieved. It looks very good to me in this very limited technical respect. Yes, was somebody else going to say something? ...

Question:

... of men being eaten by monsters, the men being swallowed by the moon. It seems to be a common theme in a lot of these films, and is more developed in the later DANTE'S INFERNO, where the figure eats the people.

Answer: Barry Salt

Yes, but that's taken straight from the poem itself surely? - from the illustrations of the poem, but certainly it's very common in these films, but there could be various reasons for this, amongst which I regret to say one is purely lack of imagination as far as I am concerned, but I don't know if it would help terribly to get into that because it is possibly a contentious point. I would like to show finally a British film from 1905 which has, despite the retarded qualities to which I already referred, a number of interesting things about it. Amongst others is the use of artificial lighting which became quite common in 1904/1905. In this particular case, the use of a practical arc light in a lantern, and it also shows the continuation in some British films at any rate of the use of cut in shots, although rather curiously already in a perhaps retarded way, with use of a mask when it's an objective cut in close up in our terms. So this is a Hepworth film of 1905, FALSELY ACCUSED, and I think the contrast between the product of a very small industry, the producers of which were still working on a very small scale, in contrast to the work of the now very large Pathé studio which you have just seen, illustrates the point I was making earlier about what happened to the British industry. So, FALSELY ACCUSED, if that's O.K., right. Well, there are so many other interesting films, you'll have a chance to see a large number of them in succeeding sessions which won't all take the same form as this session. Some of them will be a large number of films shown continuously, and in those other sessions various other views of the period will be presented, some of them or perhaps many of them complimentary to what I have had to say. Thank you. (Clapping)

SYMPOSIUM: CINEMA 1900-1906, SESSION 2

Tom Gunning - UNITED STATES

I'm actually here today with this symposium; I'll be doing kind of two things. One is that I'll be illustrating and kind of summarising a paper which I've written which is available to the delegates and which I've called "The Non-Continuous Style of Early Film". I'll be showing some films that worked in with that and kind of going over the basic ideas of that paper. At the same time I'm also here as being representative of the American group who did screenings this year in preparation for this Brighton Symposium, which includes and from which there will be three people who will be briefly speaking to you today - John Gartenberg, Tutorial Assistant, Museum of Modern Art; Charlie Musser, Cinema Student at NYU; and David Levy from Canada (I can't remember your university). As well as representing and referring to some of the work of the people whose papers are also available, as are papers by David and Charlie and John, Eileen Bowser of course who led us mainly through the screenings and Paul Spehr and the people who weren't able to make it here, such as John Hagen and John Fell, who have papers also available. We saw some six hundred and ninety films by Eileen's count, most of them American films, a few of them European, and today I'm going to show you mainly American films from this period, with I think two European examples to show similar things going on in France at that time. Now most of our films were from the Library of Congress Paper Print Collection, which just for those of you who possibly don't know exactly what that is, it is a film record which was made of films which were preserved on paper for copyright purposes at the Library of Congress. Consequently, the print quality is not always that good and also the prints of those that we have, I think there could have been some improvement on, so some of the print quality that you're going to see today will not be quite up to, sometimes, the very nice prints that we saw yesterday. I just want to warn you about that. The other thing that I want to kind of report on is just the sense which I got which is somewhat different from the kind of focus of Barry's talk yesterday, although in some ways very complementary of the almost alien landscape that early film presents. Immediately just the sense of difference, of a different attitude, the different kind of basis for combining shots, a different attitude towards film narrative which these films, which we've seen so many of in the last few weeks in the panels immediately impressed us with, and I have to say that would be the kind of focus of my remarks today. Whereas Barry's talk yesterday I think very skilfully showed some of the ways that this period leads into what we consider modern practice in most fictional films. To some extent what I'm going to be showing is ways that elements of these early films seem to resist a movement towards modern practice. Now this is very hard to describe correctly. It's very often tempting of course to look at all of film history as a progress towards a correct way of matching shots, the correct way of telling a story, things like that. To some extent I may be sailing in the opposite direction by showing ways that these films deviate from later practice; ways which I think very strongly we should not look at

as clumsiness but exactly as a different conception of film form. It's been pointed out to me in criticism of my paper, and I think it is very correct, that it is something of an error to isolate these elements and develop them into a totally different style - a non-continuous style as I have in my paper, and I think that is true. I think they should be seen in a kind of dialectical relation with to a large extent the movement towards continuity that Barry Salt was talking about yesterday. But since we had the two talks one after another, I think that it will be easier for you to do than if you had just read my paper in isolation. Now to begin with, one of the facts about this early period of film that I find most interesting and this is particularly true of the American films - it seems to me to be possibly less true of the European - is a fact that was mentioned in Barry's paper also, which is that almost the majority of films, certainly the vast majority for say the first three years of this period until about 1903, are single shot films; they are films that compose themselves within one shot and that tell whatever narrative they have without editing with a single view presented. Now as Barry mentioned in his paper, in a way those films do not add anything, they are not a contribution towards the development of film editing and film language. However, I think a very important aspect of early film was this tendency to go towards single shot films. There are of course technical reasons for it, length of shots and cameras, projectors, some of the films you will be seeing were made from scopes, all these things had something to do with this format, but at the same time it seems to me that there is a tendency in early film against combining shots to make a longer narrative. For instance, an interesting example of this kind of resistance to moving towards multi-shot films is the fact that a lot of the early multi-shot films from say around 1900 or so, particularly at Biograph, were actually issued and copy-righted, I'm not sure exactly how they were shown, as separate films, each shot having a separate title. For instance, a film like THE DOWNWARD PATH made by Biograph, would have five shots and each shot not only would be a separate tableau but would also have a separate title. The first one would be "The Fresh Book Agent". The second one might be "The New Soubrette", and you'd move through the various titles until finally the suicide, the final part. This sense of a kind of preservation of shots as discreet units rather than a tendency to combine them into a flowing narrative which of course is the practice of later cinema, is part of what I've called the non-continuous style of early film, and what I'm going to do today is to show you several examples, sometimes from different periods within the six year period, some from earlier practice, some from later, which I think immediately strike us as kind of anomalies in terms of later practice, and which I think indicate this kind of non-continuous style in early film, this kind of resistance to a flow of continuity. Now as an example of this, I'm going to show you first of all a film which Biograph made in 1901 from the famous Temperance Drama, TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR ROOM. Now this film I believe we have three shots from; we'll look at it now. These sequences have a separate title, and what you will notice is as you see them that they do not tell a continuous narrative. Rather what they are are highlights from the play. Now this was perhaps

the most famous Temperance play, and one of the most famous plays of the nineteenth century in America and early twentieth century. So to some extent the Biograph company could count on the audience knowing the story and recognising the highlights, but the fact that they would be interested in doing this from sequences, discreet units from a continual narrative, that even when put end to end do not tell a story; in fact I'm not even sure of the correct narrative order here. Here's an example of this resistance to a kind of continual flowing narrative. O.K., before I go on, what I'm now going to do is kind of go through these various anomalies which of course is the wrong phrase, I mean that's looking backwards, the various stylistic aspects of the non-continual aspects of early film, but they might just pass - see if there are any questions yet. If not, I'll go into what is one of the most interesting I think and most common aspects of early film, which is the fact that acting is a performing style. The fact that not only do you have many films, in fact perhaps the majority of comic films and, other than comedians I think this is primarily done by villains, that actors in films from this period as well as somewhat later will acknowledge the camera; they will turn away from characters within the film and actually speak or react, gesture towards the camera. Of course this is somewhat based on the aside in melodramatic theatre as well as in comedy. Not only do we have that in early film, but we also have films based on a direct relation to the camera with often no other characters. The film which I hoped to show apparently didn't get over here which is an Edison film called BURLESQUE SUICIDE, in which a man framed at the waist looks at the camera, picks up a gun and pretends he's going to commit suicide then doesn't, then points his finger at the camera and laughs because he's put a joke on the audience. Now this kind of referring to the audience is a kind of acknowledgement of the audience with something that would gradually have to be, although in fact I think it's never been totally effaced - particularly in comedy - in even modern cinema. Of course in modern cinema it's come back as a kind of alienation effect. Nonetheless it would begin to be frowned upon later because what it did was to undermine one of the means of continuity which is the glance that in later films, multi-shot films when someone glances off-screen, they are often going to get a point of view shot following which will bind the shots together. Here in early film, however, the shot where the actor within a shot looks off an acknowledged screen, is kind of destroying that complete universe around him. He is immediately calling attention to the fact that the audience is watching him. Now the example that I have here is interesting because it is a kind of erotic one, which is from a film that is not on your list and I should mention that I'm afraid the films will not be in order, as you have them on your list here. TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR ROOM which we just saw is number three on your list; generally we'll be hopping around, and the film which I am going to show now, which is a Biograph film from 1903, is not on the list at all, and it's called FROM SHOWGIRL TO BURLESQUE QUEEN. We'll look at this now. This is one of a very popular genre during this period, both sides of the Atlantic, undressing before the camera. I want to point out here what is true in most of these films, and that is the way in which

the woman looks at the camera, which of course gives an erotic thrill, at least to me, to the voyeuristic element. The non-continuous style as I've been calling it (although it occurs to me that style is possibly not the word to describe these non-continuous aspects of early life) is also exemplified in a form of film of which we've got two examples. (unfortunately the second print is incomplete) in which there are a number of shots presented; it is a multi-shot film but there is no real narrative developed. Rather what we have in a number of shots linked usually by some stylistic repetition and by theme. The first of these that we are going to see is a Biograph film from 1904 called THE FOUR SEASONS, which is a silhouette film. The second is properly titled THE SEVEN AGES, by Edison, but I think we are only going to see four films from 1905. We'll look at those now. THE FOUR AGES as you can see is a silhouette film and there's a title below, it's a little out of frame, but says SPRING. Then the second shot is another silhouette, no narrative development, merely a thematic and stylistic connection. Each shot functions as a somewhat discreet unit of the whole, of the theme. You can spot them - just a little cut off in the print. Also a common these in early film is the old maid or old woman dressing herself up, putting on a wig and falsies. Now if it's O.K., we'll go straight on to THE SEVEN AGES, then I'll pause and ask if there are any questions.

Question: Noel Burch

I didn't want to interrupt you before, but I would like to say that in your paper you don't use the word 'resistance'. Suddenly I hear the word 'resistant' coming in here. What is resisting, and who is resisting? You have the idea suddenly of some kind of conscious cultural phenomena and I think one has to be very particular and use a great deal of caution.

Answer: Tom Gunning

Yes, I think that's a good point. Yes, resistance only, certainly not a conscious resistance to a force, absolutely not.

Question: (in French)

Answer: Tom Gunning

Yes sir, I think that's quite possible in the use of the firelight lighting there is, and of course it is very interesting that later on in 1909 when such kind of lighting effects little more elaborate were used in PIPPA PASSES, the reviewer for films in the New York Times compared them with the secessionist photographers, and it's interesting that this example has not, I mean where as the PIPPA PASSES example from a later period has been very famous, very few people seem to be aware of the existence of this lighting effect here. I agree it is extremely interesting.

Question:

At what speed has this film been shown? How many frames per second, and what about the films before?

Answer: Tom Gunning

I presume eighteen, is that right? Yes, it is eighteen. Presumably they were shot slower from the records that I can find, at least from Biograph; they were shot at fourteen, so even eighteen, although we take that as silent speed, is a little fast for these.

Question:

... can you vary the speed ever, or do you show the whole programme with eighteen throughout?

Answer: Tom Gunning

We show it at eighteen throughout, I imagine, yes. Now the next two films I want to show in terms of this tendency in early film, are both films from the same year, from 1901, and both by Porter. They are ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER, or rather THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MACKEEN and ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER, which you'll find in the middle of the first group of films there, on your list. These two films may be unique. I haven't seen another example quite like them, but I find them particularly fascinating in terms of the way that they use (although both of these are of course two shot films) ellipses, a kind of gap between one shot and the next, as well as a kind of stylistic difference, to give a particular effect. Almost a kind of comic effect. We'll look at both of those now. Both of those films, you have this kind of situation; you have two films, two shots joined which develop a narrative but there is an important gap between and in fact the kind of wit of the film comes from that kind of condensation - it comes from that ellipsis, as well as I think from the difference in style between both shots. But you sense very much that transition, it isn't absorbed into, and you sense the gap, it isn't absorbed into a continuous kind of flow. In the first film of course you go from a filming of a kind of stage set to the graphics, and in the second one you go from a filming again of a kind of stage set to an exterior documentary actuality shot of hearses passing down the street. I should mention, and soon it's going to be shown in one of the symposiums, MARY-JANE'S MISHAP, an English film from a couple of years later, it works with the same jokes here of someone starting the stove with gasoline or kerosene and it exploding. However, in that film which is much more developed in terms of continuity, you have a more developed sense of the continuous flow of the narrative, but I think less of a sense, but it's moving towards a different style. Here the effect comes precisely from an enormous sense of non-continuity between the two shots. There is the development but there's also this gap which is extremely important in giving the film its effect. Noel?

Question: Noel Burch

We are dealing with a genre - we are being apparent. The genre was extremely prevalent at this period. That is to say, the film in which someone comes into a hotel and in which he ... I think Méliès is the originator of this, but in any case we must have seen ten films like this. What is interesting here of course is that Porter starts off in a sort of falsely ... I mean presumably the audience was to expect another film like that, and the hiatus, the break which is produced is also with respect to that genre but this of course in a sense does anticipate a form of humour, which is ... again the dialytic dimensions of these films are important because it is also a type of humour which is going to develop in the burlesque, you see, which is the false misleading beginning.

Answer: Tom Gunning

Yes, I think that's definitely true, and I think we find that also in some other Porter films.

Question: Noel Burch

In the various papers, talk about the relationship of some of these films to magic lantern presentations and some talk about the relationship to vaudeville, but struck me in looking at these was the relation to the pageant. That was very common at a popular level of essentially a series of tableaux - the curtain opens and we see for example the drunkard. The curtain closes, the set changes. It opens up, we see the temperance person coming in and giving the lesson and the curtain goes down, it opens again and then we see the drunkard redeemed; it seems to me that the series of discreet units with a break between were something that audiences might have been very well accustomed to in that form.

Answer: Tom Gunning

Very definitely, and in my paper I try to talk about the way that I think the inheritance from popular entertainments was very important in developing this, or in ... not developing, was a factor in the appearance of this non-continuous style. What you are talking about is most commonly referred to as living pictures in popular ... and I absolutely agree. I feel there must be more research on this, but my feeling very much is that one of the reasons that the accent of much of film history has been towards continuity even in this early period has been that it has been assumed in many ways that the models for film from its beginning were stage plays and literature, whereas of course during this early period it was much more vaudeville, burlesque, magic lantern shows, living pictures, melodrama, all of which I think one could say, although more research needs to be done on it, had these non-continuous aspects in them. So, yes, I agree that what we are seeing here is not a form that the audiences would be unfamiliar with. We are seeing a form which would be exactly that of popular entertainments of this time. Yes ... ?

Question:

Another thing I thought from the realm of the other arts reflected particularly in these last two films is the comic strip (yes, definitely) In England, the comic strip around 1860/1870 in its very primitive stage was just a two panel strip which might be described as a before and after and it would be a scene A, for example, putting on the kerosene, scene B, a tombstone. There would be a time lapse - it's a payoff. The second picture is a payoff of the first or a comparison to the first, and it seemed to me that probably that might have been quite a popular continuing style of cartoon into panels and this may be a literal filmic interpretation of an actual existing cartoon.

Answer: Tom Gunning

Yes, I would agree. I think that's extremely important, and I would also feel that's one of the researches that would be interesting, particularly with BRIDGET MACKEEN; I think the fact that graphics is used for that second shot may be a tip off that there is an actual prototype in the comic strip and the comic strip's relation to this period is extremely strong. Again, as I say, more research has to be done, but one thing that is very clear is that many of the films include comic strip characters, The Happy Hooligan, Foxy Grandpa, Buster Brown - all of these characters who were in THE DREAM OF THE RAREBIT FIEND, of course who were in comic strips, appeared in films as well. It's a very strong symbolic relation, or at least I don't know if the comic strip was influenced by film, but at least in that direction. One of the most fascinating aspects, I think, of non-continuous aspects of early film is a certain style of editing that has been noticed before which I have called the repeated action edit, in which (and of course in continuity editing it develops later on) a strict continuity of time is generally preserved in a cut other than a flashback, or when it's going to lead to a later time cut in action. We find often in early film that one shot will present say an action from one angle; the next shot will present it from a different angle, but in the second shot the action will be repeated instead of the continuity of time. Now to give a very quick example we'll look at a Biograph film from 1903 called A DISCORDANT NOTE, and the fact that exists in both films of Edison and Biograph, as well as to a somewhat lesser extent in some European films, it seems to me, is that it seems to be done under certain circumstances. In other words it isn't as though this was the only way to edit, and I'd like to show another film from Biograph from 1903, in fact made five days after A DISCORDANT NOTE, which is called OFF HIS BEAT, in which this isn't done, and I believe they are both by the same photographer, a man named Weed. Perhaps the most famous example of this type of editing, and in some ways the most controversial, is in Porter's famous film for Edison from 1902, THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, and because he has done much more work on this film than I have, I'm going to at this point introduce Charlie Musser whose paper on Porter is available I believe, and was sent to the delegates, and he's going to show the film and discuss briefly some of its points and the various copies of it, some of the history of its prints. OK Charlie ...

SYMPOSIUM: CINEMA 1900-1906, SESSION 3

Charles Musser - United States

The print of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN which we are about to see may be a different version to the one with which many of you are familiar. The major difference involves the last two shots of the film. In this copyright version the same rescue is shown twice from two distinct points of view, while in the copy at the Museum of Modern Art, these shots are intercut. Although there was considerable controversy over the authenticity of these two versions in the past, a consensus has been reached, both at the Museum and among American scholars, particularly those involved in this early cinema project, that the version we shall see today accurately represents the film as it was first released. Actually, this consensus did not come a moment too soon; I've just learned from Larry Carr of the AFI that a 1903/4 copy of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has been found in northern Maine, and it corresponds to the copyright version, although it does not contain the dissolves listed in the catalogue or in the print we will see today. So the authenticity of this print has now been firmly established. I think it is significant to point out that the modernisation or the adulteration of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has not been an isolated phenomenon; that similar situations confront archivists all over the world when dealing with this early period. Porter/Edison films from other sources have also been modernized including UNCLE TOM'S CABIN and BURGLAR'S SLIDE FOR LIFE. The BFI copy of Méliès' TRIP TO THE MOON, for example, does away with the overlapping action in which the rocket lands on the moon, conforming to modern notions of linear continuity. Film historians have tended to read film history backwards, starting from the classic model of linear continuity, and in doing so have validated films which we now realise are not in keeping with their original construction. In fact, a self-validating system has been created that is just now beginning to be questioned. LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN is, I think, an extremely elaborate and coherent manifestation of a style that is very different from what we have learned to expect by reading George Sadoul or Lewis Jacobs. I hesitate to call it 'a non-continuous style', to use Tom Gunning's phrase, at least when dealing with this particular film since Porter was very much concerned here with the problem of continuity; in fact, he seemed to have consciously posed this problem for himself in making the film. The continuity that is expressed, however, is not that of a match cut as we find in later Griffith and Pathé films on a fairly consistent basis, but on the contrary involves overlapping action. I think if we understand what is happening in this film we will be able to look at other films of this period from a new perspective. There are many films that we have seen yesterday and that we will see in the days ahead, where the relationships between shots are not as obvious as they may first appear. We have certain built-in prejudices that assume a kind of continuity that in fact does not exist. If we look at the most extreme examples, we can begin to get outside of this retrospective frame of reference and avoid making unjustified assumptions. It can change our understanding of the whole period. So why don't we look at the film, and I'll make a few comments as we go along.

Porter seems to have pursued this style of film-making in the United States before others, before anyone at Biograph for instance, and to have used it for a longer period of time. As late as 1907 he continued to use not only the narrative repetition but the overlap from shot to shot which I think shows that this mode of representation continued longer than we sometimes are willing to admit. LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN culminated, at least for Porter, in the canabalisation of magic lantern traditions - its imagery, its narrative and the use of certain techniques. I'd also like to go a little bit further and suggest that it may be a mistake to talk about a history of film as we now do, that it may be more fruitful to talk about the history of the projected image. In this history there are obviously several technological revolutions;, for instance, the introduction of photography to the projected image in the 1850's gave this form of entertainment a range of subject matter and significance it previously lacked. The introduction of moving photographic images in the 1890's again led to a transformation which can be felt most intensely around this time of 1903 as the limitations of the magic lantern show were felt and exceeded. The same analysis could be applied to the perfection of sound and the commercialisation of video. So that what we are dealing with is not a single form of entertainment or discourse that's consistent through time with its own natural language, but one that has undergone continual transformation and growth. It may be a mistake to talk about a pre-cinematic and a cinematic period: what we are dealing with may be a much longer and more continuous phenomenon. ..

Question:

... the point you've just brought up. I think there's a lot in that idea which I haven't heard ... exactly that way before. At the same time, one has to be a little careful because the introduction of movement did represent a kind of crystallisation, I would say an illogical crystallisation which gave or in a sense touched off a very strong movement towards let us say an ideal of realism. I'll talk about that a little more tomorrow, which I think does constitute a kind of break in that movement, and also the introduction of movement I should say that cinematograph also touched off the possibility for the convergency in the projected image of a number, in fact a great number of other forms of representation of all kinds, some of which were already present in the magic lantern, but others which moved in with it so that in a sense there is a privileged moment there. I mean, one can't flatten that out entirely I think, though it is important to look at it the way you're doing.

Answer:

I agree. The introduction of photographic movement should not be minimalised at all. It was a major transformation. Two things might be said about that. First, the magic lantern show never had a consistent imagery. It varied from a highly stylized spectacle like BOB THE FIREMAN to the kind of travel lectures done by John Stoddard and Burton Holmes. (Incidentally,

I have some xerox copies of BOB THE FIREMAN slides which you could look at after this if you are interested.) Vaudeville acts like HIS FIRST CIGAR seemed to have been turned into magic lantern shows before they were placed on film. Of course the range of subject matter and style of treatment rapidly expanded with the arrival of cinema.

Question:

Did you say that the two points of view of the rescue were separate endings or were they both shown at the same time?

Answer:

The way you have seen it today is the way it was projected in 1903/04.

Question:

It fits more closely with these other films we've seen, NEXT and A DISCORDANT NOTE in terms of seeing the same action from a different point of view.

Answer:

Exactly.

Question:

I remember an article I think it was by Seymour Stern, or maybe an interview with Seymour Stern, in an issue of Film Culture about fifteen years ago, where he made a specific accusation concerning Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, that it had been radically modernised in terms of inter-cutting between sequences by I think his term was, a group of people associated with the Museum of Modern Art in the 1940's. Now I don't know what the justification for that accusation was, but I did wonder whether this activity which he suggests took place in the 1940's might have some relation to the existence of variant prints of THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, and I do know that when I was in the States there were two different prints of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY available. I'm not sure from which particular distribution.

Answer:

The Edison films at the Museum of Modern Art present the historian and archivist with many problems. As far as I can tell, they arrived at the Museum mostly out-of-order, often incomplete, and sometimes in a previously 'modernised' form. With inadequate documentation, it was sometimes difficult to realise the extent of these problems or to find clear-cut answers. As far as I know, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERT may have been shortened slightly before it arrived at the Museum of Modern Art; certainly it arrived out

of sequence. It was put in order in accordance with the catalogue description. I don't know if LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN had to be put in order after its acquisition by the Museum, but none of these inter-cuttings took place there. I think that's obvious.

Question:

It's interesting to compare the overlapping sequences and the overlapping cutting of Eisenstein in BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN and OCTOBER, in which he has used it to an extraordinary effect, and I never realised the earlier use of it in a much more primitive form.

Answer:

Two things can be said about that. One is that this overlap continued much later than we normally believe. That is, you can see it in the Griffith film ORPHANS OF THE STORM, of 1922. However, I think that, as you said, Eisenstein used it in a very different spirit and with a different purpose in mind. The match cut of linear continuity became so strong that to introduce it as Eisenstein did, was to jar the viewer into taking notice in a way that Porter never intended. Porter, I think, used it to further continuity, that is as a device to strengthen continuity. Eisenstein used it to disrupt continuity and that gives us some idea how rapidly the history of cinematic style developed during the silent period.

Tom Gunning:

O.K., we'll turn to discussing more of these non-continuous aspects of early film with a format that is later beginning really with pretty much 1903, at least in the United States, which is founded on the idea of definitely a multi-shot film - a film of several shots and a film with a continual narrative but which I call the anthology format film, because what interestingly was in it and could be somewhat related to the film we saw, THE SEVEN AGES, is that although it has a continual narrative thread, each shot tends to have also a kind of discreet identity. The first film of this format that I want to show is a film from Biograph, of 1903, called THE SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE. Now before we look at it, I want to point out that I was somewhat aware, from looking at the American films but much more strongly aware from the European films, that this is an example of a genre, of key-hole films, films of one character looking through a key-hole at a series of scenes, and this was quite common during the period, although occasionally it isn't through a key-hole. Occasionally as we see in another film, it was through a transom or some such thing. Now what this film does and what this genre does is present a kind of continuous narrative - there's usually one character going from door to door but within each key-hole or whatever viewing device he uses he sees a series of separate shots which are usually not joined until occasionally the very last shot, there's some inter action between the

boy there and the scene he's watching, as you'll see in this scene. It's very interesting to me, we saw a film which I believe is going to be screened at a later session, by Pathé from about 1905 which uses this format, called SCENES AT EVERY FLOOR, in which the scenes that are actually seen within the room were actually sold as separate films. So the film actually consists of a kind of anthology of brief one shot films that had been popular films at Pathé which in this film had been combined by this device of having someone look through a key-hole. It's obvious to me that probably, particularly with the Biograph films since a lot of the Biograph films that we've been looking at were designed both for production and for microscope viewing, a kind of peep-hole device that in some way the film recapitulates the experience of looking into a peep-show and probably this was part of its popularity as well as going down a line of peep-shows to get a series of different views. So if we can, we'll look at A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE, and then immediately after that one of the few European films we are going to look at, a Pathé film, LA FILLE DE BAIN INDISCRETE from 1902. I hope we get a chance to see it later on. What it consists of is a woman with a detective looking for her husband and going from key-hole to key-hole and seeing various scenes with the various rooms. All of those scenes are presented within a key-hole mask and there are a number of films that do this. There's an English film called INQUISITIVE BOOTS from about 1905 as well as a French film, PEEPING TOM by Pathé, as well as films such as this that do it without the key-hole mask. Now, as we're moving chronologically here and getting later, we find the multi-shot continuous narrative film getting more strength, appearing more frequently in the number of films being produced, but at the same time within those continual narrative films something of this anthology format which gives a kind of non-continuous aspect to it, and we're going to take a break in just a few minutes but before we do I want to show a Pathé film which we believe is from 1906, although some viewers last week believed it may be later, called TOUR DE MONDE D'UN POLICIER (POLICEMAN'S TOUR OF THE WORLD), which preserves even within a continuous detective format something of this anthology format, this sense of the shots being separate little bits, discreet units within a continuous narrative. OK, we'll look at that now. Apparently from the projectionist's point of view it's better if we see one more film before we take the break. It's a good one, so ... Now this film of course raises another issue, or one that is combined with the anthology format which is the way that the actuality footage, the on location, rather documentary footage of the trip is inter-cut often with the staged footage. For instance, very strong contrast at least we modern audiences feel between the shots of the streets there of Calcutta actuality to the then staged shot with the Pathé ballet company executing Indian dances. Now I don't want to get involved in a discussion of audience psychology, but of course it's hard to know whether that caused such a strong jolt for contemporary audiences, but even if it didn't I think it's an example of a type of joining material from which from modern perspective we feel a lapse in continuity that was permissible during this period, and that was part of this non-continuous aspect. The film that I'm going to show now is a

Biograph film, to show you that this kind of tendency was international, made in 1906 photographed by a man named Dobson called THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK which combines in an interesting way this actuality footage within a staged narrative footage. After we come back we'll be seeing another film by the same photographer with a similar type of format. After THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, I guess maybe we should take questions when we come back, it's the best time to pause, probably everybody's ready for a break, so we'll look now at THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, Biograph 1906. The sessions tomorrow have been somewhat rearranged. They will be from 9.30 to noon - Noel Burch's presentation; from 1 o'clock to 3.15 - Mr. Stabler's presentation, and from 3.45 til 6 o'clock - Mr. Verdone. OK now we'll have a pause for questions. Yes, Noel?

Question: Noel Burch

Yes, of course I was extremely interested in your presentation thesis you're developing. I do feel with regard particularly to the last two films I must somewhat disagree with the reading you are giving of them, and I think this disagreement does concern to some extent the whole view, as I've already explained to you privately. Both of these films have to be seen I think in terms of this general contradictory nature of this period. We are dealing in both cases with films which are indeed part of this movement toward the integration of the various pro-filmic elements. Now the fact that we see obviously a very strong dis-continuity between the linear model, we are seeing shots which are following the linear model, the plan (?) We are seeing shots indeed which are completely ready to Méliès and the popular origins of that and so on, gives the first film obviously a civic place in this movement towards the integration and edification of the various elements; but the second film, the American film, seems to me to have a very different place. It seems to me to be, if one follows this linear approach, much further along the line because we are dealing with elements with "documentary" elements at the beginning which are already very strongly integrated into mode representation which is developing within the fiction film. We have for example, we move in on the second or third shot of the film, we isolate these workers, their gesture is essentially centered in the frame, we are not dealing with this continual non-centred frame of the typical documentary presentation of that period; these are all words in quotes of course. The shot of the workers being pushed out on the crane ... these actors are all in a way acting for the camera. Now it is true that the look ... glance before the camera is beginning to be superior but it is still part of a kind of fiction code and in general I feel that this film is a much more well we would say sophisticated one from the point of view of the institution, ... this seems very clear. We are dealing with a very definite step in the direction of a kind of illusionist combination of documentary elements with fiction elements. It doesn't seem to me here that even from a contemporary point of view that the element of discontinuity is dominant. What is dominant here is the movement for continuity, for the integration of the materials, and I think it is slightly dangerous to isolate a

characteristic which we would call discontinuity as you see from the dialytic process which is going on here because I think it seems to me that you are creating a privileged association between these two films, whereas in a sense the association is not that privileged. In point of fact the association of the skyscrapers film for example, well we know what's going to happen later on, which stock shots are indicated totally in an illusionistic way, Eisenstein, the English fleet representing the Russian fleet in 1905 and things like that. I mean there is this kind of ... moving very strongly in that direction. The other is also a kind of ... in that direction, but it is not obviously still on the other side of the slope so to speak, it is still very ... indeed to the discontinuous procedures of the early film.

Answer: Tom Gunning

Yes, well partly in reply - I mean I would say to a large extent I don't think there is any disagreement there. I think you're very right about the fact that there is a difference between the two films with TOUR OF THE WORLD being much more of an anthology film and the skyscrapers in the film I'm going to show now, TUNNEL WORKERS, moving in another direction and as I point out in my paper, in fact you can find something that is obviously the ancestor, very frequently in narrative films, of a much later period in which a film will often begin with a kind of documentary prologue. I gave as examples Phil Carson's PHOENIX CITY STORY, and as I remember Elia Kazan's WILD RIVER both begin with kind of documentary expositions of the story that will then be treated in a fictional mode. Yes, I would agree that the way this comes as a prologue rather than rupturing the dramatic narrative as in TOUR OF THE WORLD indicates a difference there. However, I would still say that there is something going on here that has to do with a kind of non-continual aspect. Yes, as I tried to point out it is definitely a much later film. This is definitely a film that works dialectically towards continuity as well. THE TUNNEL WORKERS which we'll look at now, which was made in the same year by Biograph and by the same photographer, Dobson, is pretty much the same situation, but slightly different. I'm not sure how much to stress the difference which has to do actually with the position of the documentary footage. We'll look at it now. This is THE TUNNEL WORKERS, from Biograph, 1906. Since we're a little pressed for time and since the prints aren't that good, we won't be showing THE FIRE BUG or UNCLE TOM'S CABIN on the 35mm reel. Both of these films I discuss in my paper in terms of talking about the introductory shot and the tableau, but since the prints that we got are not in the correct order, it would take a lot of explaining to make clear what I meant but you may look at that in my paper. To go on then, to another film that is in fact earlier, much earlier than the last two that we've seen, we've generally been moving chronologically but here reversing an Edison film called THE EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ which I think is how it's pronounced, who is the assassin of McKinley from 1901 which is an early example of a kind of culmination of actuality and staged footage which also would be inter-

related here I think, particularly as models in the magic lantern, as generally I think there is in a magic lantern show a programme which would be made up of actual photographs as well as staged photographs - slides. OK, so we'll look now at the EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ from 1901, Edison. Now of course there has been a tendency to isolate these films from the general context, and this I think is somewhat balanced, hopefully, by your memory of Barrie Salt's presentation yesterday, But I did just want to show one of the most influential chase films - the chase film genre being the dominant genre after about 1903/1904 of most early film that I've seen, and which of course is a genre that was going to go a very far way towards building up a sense of the continuity of space through the movements and exits from frames and joining together of a narrative by the chase - joining together the very shots of the narrative by the actual physical chase. This film PERSONAL from 1904 had some antecedents ... (interruption - please note that the beginning scenes are missing if one goes by the catalogue description of this film which are supposed to be duplicated by a French nobleman etc.) right ... this film was directly imitated by Edison, HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN ADVERTISED FOR A WIFE, or whatever the exact title is, - a Pathé version. The opening scenes would be an insert I believe of that advertisement and a shot of the nobleman. OK, so this is from 1903, thank you for the correction. PERSONAL by Biograph is one of the most influential of the early chase films, and an indication of a different style to that which we've mainly been following. Now, these have been the main examples from which my paper was based and the main ideas,as I say there are a couple of other aspects we don't really have good films to illustrate. What I want to do now, and since we are a little pressed for time I'll probably go right into it, is show a selection of films, all American,from the Library of Congress, which don't necessarily fit in with my thesis, so what we're going to do now is show these (not the 35mm stuff, just the 16 mm). The first film we're going to look at is JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, an Edison film,going back in chronological order again from 1902 by Edwin S. Porter and while the film is on Charlie Musser will give some commentary.

INTERVENTION DE M. NOEL BURCH, AU SYMPOSIUM DE BRIGHTON - JUIN 1978, SESSION 4

Je dois dire que j'ai un trac monstre et, pour détendre l'atmosphère, je vous dirai que ce matin en me réveillant et en mettant cela j'ai pensé au grand écrivain René Crevel qui, il y a une quarantaine d'années, s'est suicidé en épinglant sur le revers de son veston un petit carton où étaient inscrits let mots: René Crevel.

J'ai beaucoup pensé à lui ce matin.

Je voudrais dédier cette présentation ... Non, je veux d'abord dire pourquoi elle risque d'etre incomplète.

J'ai vu avec d'autres chercheurs quelques 450 films la semaine dernière. Ces films ont fait sur moi une très forte impression, et je tiens absolument à vous montrer en tous cas l'ensemble des films que j'ai choisis et je ne supprimerai aucun film de cette liste que vous voyez, parce que je trouve qu'il est important que vous les voyez.

J'ai remarqué une certaine défiance, notamment des archivistes vis-à-vis de cette époque; une tendance dirait qu'il s'agit d'une époque pas très intéressante et peut-être d'ailleurs, en raison des idées très importantes développées par mes collègues jusqu'ici, cela a aidé un peu à reconduire cette image un peu chiante.

Or, je crois que ce n'est pas le cas, c'est une époque extrêmement excitante. Elle m'a beaucoup excité, stimulé et j'ai beaucoup trop de choses à en dire pour le temps qui m'est imparti. Je vais devoir probablement donc écourter mon exposé. Mais je tiens à ce que vous voyez tous les films.

Avant de commencer, il y a Eileen qui voudrait dire un mot rapide d'explication historiographique.

E. BOWSER:

I just found it necessary to make a correction. I had a lapse of memory yesterday and I so firmly and authoritatively announced that PERSONAL ... was November 1903, and I must confess I was thinking of another pair of similar films in the Edison Biograph - ESCAPED LUNATIC and MANIAC CHASE, so please correct your notes. PERSONAL is 1904. I am very sorry.

Après cette précision importante, je voudrais commencer à dédier cet exposé que je vais faire à mon camarade Georges Sadoul. C'est le premier à avoir réellement compris cette époque dans les limites idéologiques et historiques où il écrivait. Mais il a réellement compris et cela, je crois, était pour nous, JORGE DANA et moi-même qui avons vu ces films cette semaine, c'était devenu très clair. On a sousestimé Sadoul par rapport à cela.

Ceci étant dit, Sadoul, comme l'ensemble des historiens de l'époque classique de l'histoire du cinéma, était limité dans ses démarches par l'époque où il écrivait. On connaissait à peine le cinéma japonais, on ne connaissait pas encore toute une époque d'avant-garde occidentale qui, par son caractère autoréflexif, a permis une réflexion sur l'institution cinématographique. On dit "cinématografic institution."

Ils ne pourront donc pas avoir des points de comparaison. C'est un peu cela qui fait que la vision de l'histoire du cinéma, et qui malheuresement est reconduite encore aujourd'hui, est totalement d'hier et scientifiquement inacceptable aujourd'hui.

Je vais schematiser, caricaturer cette vision en ce qui concerne les premières ou trente années du cinéma. On voyait dans l'histoire classique, après une centaine d'années de recherches diverses que nous connaissons tous j'espère, l'apparition d'un ensemble de machines, le cinématographe et d'autres qui permettaient d'enregistrer et de projeter les images. Mais au début, selon cette vision classique, et idéologiquement surdéterminée, nous voyons donc cette machine apparaître, mais on ne sait pas que cette machine contient en puissance une sorte de latence qui est la langage du cinéma, je dirais un langage naturel, soi-disant.

Et alors il y a eu une période de tatonnement où le cinéma est soumis au théâtre, à la théâtralité.

Cette théâtralité qui est déjà tout le péché original du cinéma dont il faut qu'il s'affranchisse. Cette théâtralité qui est un peu une gangue dont il faut qu'il se débarrasse. Petit à petit, à travers les anglais, (nous avons vu: Barry Salt sait très bien retracer cette réalité qui est effectivement la graduelle progression vers le langage du cinéma, appellation que je conteste et j'expliquerai pourquoi). Petit à petit, à travers Porter, Griffith et les autres, on est arrivé à dégager la véritable essence qui était contenue dans cette machine mais qu'il fallait dégager par tout un travail, etc ...

On est donc arrivé à un langage naturel selon lequel aucun autre n'aurait été concevable. ?

Or, pour ne citer que cet example là, je viens de passer cinq années à étudier de très près le cinéma japonais et j'en arrive à la constatation que, dans un pays qui justement n'a jamais été soumis à la colonisation de l'occident et qui est resté enfermé sur lui-même notamment par rapport au cinéma, il s'est développé pendant 50 ans un mode de répresentation totalement différent de celui qui est devenu celui de l'institution cinématographique occidentale, maintenent mondiale, mais occidentale d'abord. Ce soi-disant langage est, en fait, un mode de représentation historiquement déterminé, idéologiquement, culturellement déterminé. Il a été forgé dans un lieu précis, l'occident gréco-chrétien; il a été en un moment précis celui du capitalisme monopoliste.

Il faut donc absolument pour comprendre la nature de ce mode de représentation institutionnelle (c'est comme cela que j'appelle le langage cinématographique. Cela résume en gros la façon dont on fait massivement les films aujourd'hui encore), pour essayer de définir cette institution, ce mode de représentation de cette institution, il faut le situer dans son contexte, comprendre comment il a été formé, constitué. Je m'attache en ce moment avec Jorge Dana avec qui j'écris un livre sur cette question, à définir les traits principaux, durables de ce mode de représentation.

On vous en a parlé bien sûr, Barry Salt vous a parlé des principaux; il y a d'une part un phénomène qui est la linéarisation du signifiant. Ce sont des phénomènes qui se voient à travers toute cette époque que nous étudions et après. La linéarisation du signifiant est, ce que Barry a appelé la dissection de l'image, c'est le gros plan, c'est le fait de fragmenter l'image panoramique, vaste, non centrée, en des détails qui prennent un ordre qui correspond au modèle de la chaîne linguistique. Je vais très vite ici, parce que ce n'est pas l'essentiel, mais en même temps il faut le rappeler.

Il y a la constitution de l'espace non-diégétique enveloppant, c'est-à-dire qu'il s'agit que le spectateur entre dans cette image, dont au départ il est exclu, on ne sait pas encore l'y faire entrer, et on va le faire entrer, on va faire que cela l'entoure dans l'imaginaire bien sûr. C'est un des éléments essentiels de cela mais il y a d'autres éléments aussi.

Il y a création de l'espace pictural que j'appelle habitable. C'est la reconduction dans le cinéma du système de représentation du théâtre à l'italienne et de reproduction de perspective de la peinture de la Renaissance.

Il y a la constitution du personnage à travers le gros-plan, le star-system, etc. ... La linearisation comporte aussi la linearisation du signifiant narratif aussi bien que visuel. C'est la construction du récit et c'est la clôture de ce récit: le fait de faire du film un objet fermé sur lui-même qui commence ici et qui finit là.

Pendant longtemps, (et on arrive à des choses que j'ai découvertes cette semaine et qui me paraissent absolument fondamentales), il y a le mode de représentation institutionnel. On sait ce que c'est en entrant dans les écoles de cinéma, et sur les plateaux et partout. Je crois que l'on peut arriver à le définir.

Avant il y avait le mode de représentation primitif; il y avait "le mode" ou "les modes". Ce pluriel, ce singulier posaient vraiment un problème. Cette semaine, je crois que j'ai trouvé quel est le problème. C'est qu'on ne peut pas opposer terme à terme ces deux modes de représentation. Il y a effectivement un mode de représentation primitif, mais celu-ci est par essence contradictoire. Si j'arrive à faire comprendre cela, j'aurai fait l'essential de mon travail ici parce que c'est là que je m'inscris en faux contre (malgré le grand respect que j'ai pour les travaux qui ont été

présentés ici à la fois par Barry Salt et par Tom Gunning et d'autres américains) contre cette approche parce que je crois qu'ils ne tiennent, comme nous disons dans le jargon marxiste, qu'un bout de la chaîne.

Et on ne peut comprendre l'époque primitive que si on tient les deux ou même les trois bouts de la chaîne. Si on comprend qu'il s'agit là d'un mode de représentation spécifique, oui je crois, mais en même temps dont la spécificité est justement d'être contradictoire,d'être "instable". Il n'y a pas du tout l'unité organique du mode de représentation institutionnel et donc ne relève pas du même ordre conceptuel que le mode de représentation institutionnel.

Il faut que j'essaie d'esquisser assez cursivement, je m'en excuse, ce qui me paraissent les éléments qui entrent en conflit pendant cette période. Je ne suis pas du tout convaincu d'avoir réellement défini ces éléments ni exhaustivement, ni complètement, mais je vais faire une tentative et je vous la livre pour votre réflexion.

Il y a d'abord ce que j'appelle (c'est un peu un gag mais je crois que c'est profondément juste): le syndrome de Frankenstein, ou le mythe de Frankenstein.

Ceux d'entre vous qui ont étudié un peu les textes ayant trait à ce que nous appelons l'archéologie du cinéma (c'est la préhistoire du cinéma), vous avez peut-être remarqué combien de fois revient de Daguerre à Demeny, si on prend cette série là (il y a l'autre série Plateau où on retrouve aussi cela, mais surtout à la jonction en '70 à peu près). Ce terme du triomphe sur la mort c'est un thème absolument récurrent. Je cite un exemple: en 1870, il y a quelqu'un qui a inventé, je ne sais pas si cela a vraiment fonctioné, le biophotoscope, je crois. Il combine le stéreoscope, le phénakitoscope, et la photographie stéréoscopique. Il va donner l'illusion de la vie et un commentaire là-dessus, dit que enfin la mort ne sera plus définitive. C'est cet extraordinaire fantasme bourgeois, particulièrement caractéristique de la bourgeoisie du triomphe sur la mort qui est lié bien entendu à l'idéologie de représentation naturaliste que combattait Baudelaire notamment. Vous pouvez retrouver les écrits de Baudelaire à ce sujet, ils sont très intéressants. C'est profondément lié au naturalisme et au developpement de l'ensemble de l'idéologie d'une représentation réaliste. On retrouve un emblème dans ce célèbre roman de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam "L'Eve future" où il met en scène Edison, et pas par hasard, dans le rôle d'un savant qui invente une sorte de femme synthétique, préfigurant METROPOLIS.

Ce thème va traverser tout le début du cinéma. Il est significatif et fascinant de voir que les <u>deux seuls</u> textes parus dans la presse parisienne lors de la première présentation au Grand Café des films de Lumière (dans des petits canards d'ailleurs on ne s'intéressait pas beaucoup), concluaient leur article en disant: "enfin la mort est vaincue, la mort n'est plus définitive. Nous pouvons enfin voir nos êtres chers aprés la mort, les voir bouger, parler, etc."

C'est significatif, je crois. Mais dans le cinéma lui-même, dès le depart, Edison lui rêve de filmer l'opéra; c'est assez intéressant par rapport à l'idéologie du Gesamtkunstwerk; idéologie wagnérienne de la représentation totale.

Vous avez le kineto-phonographe d'Edison, où c'est déjà une chose qui n' aboutit pas vraiment, mais c'est un geste et un effort vers le cinéma parlant où il y a les écouteurs et oeuilletons, tout cela très fermé, cet isolement sensoriel qui préfigure celui de l'institution.

Vous avez plein de choses, mais je n'en citerai que quelques-unes. Vous avez "Hale's Tours", c'est génial. C'est un train, un faux train où on projetait les films de voyage pour vous donner l'impression que vous passiez dans les paysages. On cherchait par tous les moyens à intégrer le spectateur dans l'espace diégétique imaginaire.

Il y a aussi une dernière chose fascinante par sa contradiction c'est le cinéorama: c'est 12 projecteurs placés en rond qui projettaient des images tout autour et vous étiez sensés vous croire dans ces paysages. Il y a là une contradiction fondamentale, car ce n'est pas comme cela qu'on pouvait créer cette impression. On ne savait pas où regarder. Si vous avez vu des projections comme celles-la aujourd'hui, vous avez dû constater cela.

Cà, c'est un courant fondamental et c'est celui-ci qui va finalement l'emporter, mais après être entré en conflit direct et durable avec d'autres courants tout à fait différents.

Le deuxième élément qui entre en conflit ici, je l'appelle (et encore cette terminologie est très provisoire) un courant scientiste (ne pas traduire par scientific) c'est plutôt une idéologie de la science, le scientisme. On pourrait parler de matérialisme vulgaire et encore cela ne rend pas compte de l'ensemble du phénomène. C'est une chose qui remonte très loin, il faut remonter à Descartes, à tout un aspect du développement de l'idéologie bourgeoise, mais je ne peux pas le faire.

Cela dit, on trouve des repaires essentiels et décisifs au niveau de Muybridge et Marey. Je voudrais m'arrêter là-dessus quelques instants. Marey est un chercheur et un scientifique de l'époque avec toutes les limites de la science de l'époque, mais c'est un chercheur sérieux. Muybridge, ou plutôt l'équipe Muybridge-Stanford, sont plutôt des chercheurs dilletants, mais ils participent aussi de cette idéologie scientiste, de ce matérialisme vulgaire. Ils cherchent la vérité d'une façon qui était typique de l'époque. Muybridge, à ce que je sache moi, est le premier à avoir projeté les images photographiques animées, mais ce n'était pas son but essentiel; son but essentiel était de décomposer le mouvement, d'analyser le mouvement. Et si on en est venu à projeter, à recomposer le mouvement par la projection de ces chevaux, et tout ça, c'est parce que on contestait que ces images là correspondaient à la réalité.

Qui contestait celà? C'est notamment Meissonier, le peintre académique bien connu, qui constitue un sommet du naturalisme bourgeois. C'est lui qui paignait les chevaux en les suivant pas à pas et qui estimait prendre d'une façon réaliste les chevaux. Et on voyait les images de Muybridge, et on disait "C'est laid et c'est pas vrai".

On disait cela parce qu'on était convaincu que les codes de la représentation du cheval en mouvement de la peinture réaliste, dite naturaliste, étaient la réalité

Donc, il fallait que Muybridge projette ses trucs. Donc, il y avait déjà avant un conflit qui existe entre la recherche scientifique de l'époque, par la photographie instantanée, progrès rendu possible par le progrès technologique, les émulsions plus sensibles, etc. ... il y a là un premier conflit intéressant.

On trouve alors à l'autre niveau: Marey dont les travaux s'inspirent un peu de Muybridge, qui va plus loin; mais ce qui est intéressant c'est qu'il s'est inscrit en faux contre le cinéma, la projection des images animées. Il s'en foutait complètement et même il trouvait que cela n'avait aucun intérêt. Il le disait encore en '99. Il est vrai qu'il a essayé à Londres, aiguillonné par Edison, par le kinétoscope, de faire une machine pour projeter les images. Mais son système n'était pas valable du tout, il n'y est pas arrivé, et la raison est que cela ne le concernait pas du tout. Il croyait au ralenti parce que le ralenti a dû avoir pour lui autre chose que le réel.

Pour lui, le ciéma était redondant, parce qu'il reproduisait le réel dans son esprit, parce qu'il participait bien entendu à l'idéologie de sa classe. Mais en même temps, il y avait cette annulation de ce syndrome Frankenstein par cette idéologie scientiste, par ce matérialisme vulgaire.

Il ne faut pas oublier que Marey comme on dit c'était la machine animale. Le corps humain est considéré comme un mécanisme, c'est le matérialisme vulgaire de Descartes.

Troisième élément: je n'ai pas beaucoup à présenter là-dessus parce que beaucoup de gens en ont parlé, et je vais l'illustrer, celui-là. C'est l'impact sur le cinéma des arts populaires, des modes de représentations-populaires. La liste en est énorme, mais pas seulement ceux qui ralliaient les couches populaires, mais aussi des gens que j'appelle marginaux bourgeois. Cela vaut dire la gravure galante, les tableaux vivants dans les cabarets bourgeois, les aspects de la lanterne magique. Ils ont tous comme caractéristique, à mon sens, de différer par leur essence représentationnelle des grands arts bourgeois, du roman balzacien, de la peinture naturaliste de fin du siècle (Meissonier étant un symbole) et du théâtre bourgeois naturaliste ou même Feydeau.

A propos de ce dernier élément, je veux dire une chose qui me paraît importante; il y en a qui diront que je délire peut-être un peu. Nous avons vu un film qui s'appelle "Le photographe maladroit". On y voit un photographe en train de photographier des gens dans la rue, de faire des portraits, on ne sait pas ce qu'il fait car on ne voit pas le résultat. Mais on voit qu'il veut photographier des gens et il s'addresse d'une part à des bourgeois et d'autre-part à des petites gens, des gens du peuple. Ce qui est fascinant, c'est que le ressort des gags (bien sûr, c'est une succession de gags, c'est un film comique) dans les plans où il veut photographier des bourgeois, c'est que les bourgeois l'attaquent. Ils ne veulent pas qu'on les photographie. Lorsqu'il prend des photographies du peuple, les ouvriers posent, les gags viennent du photographe lui-meme, il tombe du toit, etc ...

Pour moi, il y a là un sens très important. Je ne sais pas si vous connaissez l'ouvrage de BERNARD EDELMAN qui s'appelle "Le droit saisi par la photographie". Il montre que, pendant une très longue période, l'image photographique n'appartenait à personne, il n'y avait pas de loi pour dire à qui cela appartenait. Cela à changé à différentes époques.

Il y a une législation qui a introduit la notion de propriété et qui exclut cependant la photographie pendant très longtemps. C'est très curieux. Ni le personne qui photographie, ni la personne photographiée n'étaient propriétaires de cette image. Au cinéma, ce fut tout un temps la même situation. D'où le plagiat. Je trouve ce mot plagiat tout à fait inacceptable par rapport à ce premier cinéma. Il s'agit de circulation de signes d'une intertextualité comparable à celle qui existait au 18è siècle pour le musique, par exemple, où Bach recomposait les oeuvres de Vivaldi, etc ... Il s'agirait d'une intertextualité qui peut se traduire en anglais "intertextuality" qui est un des signes majeurs de ce piratage des copies, de ce fait que le cinéma, l'image cinématographique, n'appartenait encore à personne. Le cinéma récapitule un peu, c'est Georges Sadoul qui l'a dit à très juste titre, un peu d'histoire du capitalisme par voie de propriété. La fixation des lois, la codification de la propriété est une chose progressive dans la capitalisme, comme il le sera dans le cinéma. Le cinéma récapitule d'ailleurs l'histoire du capitalisme d'une façon tout à fait remarquable, sur le plan économique surtout bien sûr.

Or, les masses objectivement se sont appropriées le cinéma pendant une certaine période. Ce film que l'on voit c'est un peu l'emblème de cette appropriation objective. Je ne suis pas en train de dire qu'il n'y avait pas des gens qui se faisaient de l'argent avec, bien sûr. Mais en même temps il y a toute cette appropriation symbolique qui se traduit à travers les intentions (? 260) d'une façon très intéressante.

Maintenant on va passer à quelques films. Il y a un chercheur français qui s'appelle Anne Bosvelle (??) qui a écrit sur le mélodrame. Dans cette étude, elle décrit le mélodrame comme étant à la fois un véhicule massif de l'idéologie dominante de la bourgeoisie et comme étant en prise directe,

avec l'inconscient collectif. C'est évident et je citerai l'exemple dans le mélodrame américain du thème combien classique de la femme ou de l'homme qu'on va scier avec une scie électrique sur une bûche. Vous connaissez très bien ce thème, en tous cas les américains le connaissent très bien.Thème d'agressions érotiques absolument évident.

Or, ce qui nous a beaucoup frappé, c'est cela. Quelqu'un l'autre jour a voulu soulever cette question en parlant du REVE A LA LUNE de Zecca. Il y a une chose curieuse, c'est ce thème qu'on retrouve souvent dans le cinéma, le bonhomme mangé par une bouche, généralement par une bouche de femme. Quelqu'un d'autre a dit que c'était un manque d'imagination. Je crois que c'est un peu rapide et il faut reconnaître qu'il y a dans cette époque, tout à fait à la surface de l'ensemble presque de la production, surtout française, américaine un peu moins, anglaise beaucoup moins, pour des raisons que je dirai tout à l'heure, réellement une symbolique sexuelle de l'agression sexuelle et de tout autre thème de l'infantilisme sexuel. Vous avez ce thème du vagin édenté, il faut l'appeler comme c'est, ce thème parcourt tout ce cinéma: le nombre de fois que vous voyez une bouche de femme en train de dévorer un homme, c'est extraordinaire, une grande bouche comme cela; vous avez une quantité de thèmes comme cela, je ne veux pas les répertorier.

Vous allez voir deux exemples de cela: un film appelé en anglais BROWN'S DUEL (1906) mais c'est un film français, absolument typique où l'on voit une espèce de répétition hystérique, on joue explicitement l'hystérie; on n'est pas du tout arrivé au stade du refoulement de tout cela. Je vais en parler tout à l'heure. Il y a ensuite un das plus grands films et peut-être des plus méconnus de Méliès qui s'appelle LES NOUVELLES LUTTES EXTRAVANGANTES. Vous avez là une série, une anthologie des symboles de l'agression sexuelle, de changement de sexe, etc. ... On va projeter ces deux films.

Evidemment, il y a ceux qui ne veulent pas y lire autre chose que ce qui semble y être, mais moi je trouve cela deux films qui demandent, avec plain d'autres, qu'une étude thématique de cette époque à la lumière de la psychanalyse est indispensable.

Je vous signale et je vous fais remarquer que je passe tous les films à 24 images/secondes. Ce qui nécessite un mot d'explication. Je suis pressé et j'ai beaucoup de films à vous montrer. Mais je vous fais remarquer que pendant toute cette époque on ne voit pas de films, sauf deux examples (et à mon avis ils sont hors époque) utilisant le ralenti ou l'accéléré à des fins expressives. La raison est toute simple, c'est Barry Saltqui m'a mis le doigt dessus. J'avoue que je n'y avais pas réfléchi du tout. C'est qu'à cette époque là il n'y a pas de standardisation de la vitesse de projection, on tourne à la main et on tourne à des vitesses qui variaient et le projectionniste aussi. Alors je vous demande de faire semblant que vous êtes à une projection en 1906 où le projectionniste est pressé de rentrer chez lui.

Nous allons passer maintenant une deuxième série de films qui représentent divers modes de représentations populaires ou marginaux bourgeois, comme je l'ai dit, qui ont été introduits dans le cinéma très tôt, que l'on traite souvent de non-spécifiques, mais que pour ma part je trouve intéressants dans la mesure où ils nous permettent de nous livrer à une étude sur les transformations qu'ont subies ces modes de répresentation. Je ne veux pas approfondir cette question, je la laisse à vos réflexions.

Voici un film français de 1900 "CINQ DAMES. C'est un exemple de film plus érotique que nous ayons pu trouver. Ce sont des nus. C'est un film qui est manifestement inspiré des tableaux vivants de cabarets et de cartes-postales galantes. Les scènes de bain, de voyeurisme, etc ...

Le deuxième film qui a ce titre bizarre qui n'est pas français, qui s'appelle IN FLAGRANTI, film conservé, je crois, à Varsovie, de 1902. Ce film est la reproduction de la couverture du Petit Parisien (à la fin du sciècle, en France, on y voyait sur la couverture un moment spectaculaire d'un fait divers). Il y a un autre exemple de ce type d'imagerie, c'est l'affiche du film de Smith LITTLE WITNESS. C'est tout à fait cela: le moment où Alan pousse sa femme du haut d'une falaise, cela aurait pu être repris sur une couverture d'un certain type de presse populaire à l'époque.

Ce que l'on voit ici, c'est ce qui est derrière cela. C'est l'histoire qui est derrière. Il faut faire attention car le film est un peu tronqué à la fin. Mais la dernière image que vous verrez avec la femme qui sort du placard, dos à la camera, est splendide et tout le monde est un peu figé, c'est tout à fait une couverture de la presse à scandale de la fin du siècle dernier.

Troisième genre: LADIES' QUARREL. Egalement un film français qui reprend un thème très courant dans les gravures galantes du 19è siècle: les duels de femmes, poitrines nues, etc ... Certains d'entre vous reconnaîtront cette imagerie qui est très connue.

Quatrièmement, LE VALISE DE BARNUM. C'est un film qui reprend à mon sens les dessinateurs de music-hall. Il y avait un mec qui se prèsentait sur scène et qui dessinait, faisait des croquis, comiques ou autres. Il y a un peu de cela, il y a l'affiche du cirque, il y a aussi une autre problèmatique de surface, mais j'y reviendrai une autre fois. Je trouve ce film remarquable pour le trucage.

Il y a enfin un premier chef-d'oeuvre, c'est Dévalisateur nocturne. C'est un film français de 1904, très symptomatique des contradictions de l'époque, car les autres films se sont les représentations d'autres, empruntées mais transformées par le cinéma d'une façon très significative, mais existant à l'état pur. Ici nous avons déjà l'esquisse de la vulgarisation du signifiant narratif. Nous avons une succession de plans, montage alterné, contignité, un changement de plan de contignité, etc. ...

Donc nous avons déjà un développement de la vulgarisation et du mode de représentation institutionnelle. Mais en même temps, il y a incorporation de l'ombre chinoise telle que cela se pratiquait au cabaret du Chat Noir, et bien entendu ailleurs qu'en occident.

Ces ombres chinoises sont codées, c'est l'extérieur par rapport à l'intérieur En même temps, nous avons là un élèment de contradiction par rapport au sens général de l'évolution du cinéma. Ce film me parâit être un exemple intéressant de l'altérité de ce cinéma à travers les contradictions qui sont en cause et non pas à travers un quelconque concept du paradis perdu qui serait celui du cinéma primitif.

Je vais vous montrer des exemples plus radicaux, moins directement attachés aux arts populaires, mais qui sont très frappants pour moi. Je voudrais d'abord vous parler d'une chose que j'ai un peu oubliée tout à l'heure mais qui est importante pour moi: Les Lumière, ou Louis Lumière parce que c'est lui qui a fait le travail. Il participe réellement à cette idéologie scientiste de Marey et Muybridge. Il est trés important de comprendre cela. Le modèle Lumière a fait le tour du monde en quelques années et il a déterminé pour une grande part la représentation en extérieur dans le cinéma tant documentaire que de fiction pendant très longtemps. Ce modèle Lumière est issu pour moi, (je sais qu'on le conteste) de ce premier film LA SORTIE DES USINES, non pas la version que nous avons vue là hier, encore qu'elle soit presque identique, mais la première,celle qui a été tournée avant que l'appareil soit au point.

Est-ce que nous savons tous comment ce film a été fait? On avait placé le caméra dans un bureau, elle n'est pas visible de ceux qui sortent. Il y avait un souci exprimé par Lumière et ses collègues pour que la présence de la caméra ne perturbe pas le comportement desgens qui sortent de la fabrique.

C'est déjà un geste double, à la fois vers l'illusionisme, et à la fois d'un savant qui expérimente son appareil dans des conditions réellement ... On met en place l'appareil, on sait que les gens vont arriver, on met en marche l'appareil. Et cela est évidemment illogique et est par la suite devenu l'idéologie documentaire, la fameuse opposition Méliès - Lumière, ce qui est aussi idiot que tout le reste des choses que l'on dit sur cette époque. Il faut lire Mesguich là-dessus, l'opérateur de Lumière. Il dit des choses géniales. C'est le fondateur, lui, de l'idéologie documentariste. Mais ce modèle d'image panoramique, pas centrée, où cela se passe partout, où il faut regarder partout, les gens devaient apprendre à lire cette image. Pendant 10 ans, ils se sont exercés à lire cette image, les dissections d'images étaient très exceptionnelles.

On avait une image panoramique qu'il fallait apprendre à lire et tout à l'heure on verra un film qui est, à mon avis, le résultat de cet apprentissage de la lecture de l'image Lumière. C'est très important ce truc là, mais je ne peux pas aller plus loin.

Nous allons voir quelques films où la narration émerge à peine de cela: le centrement; mais elle émerge quand même du cinématographe Lumière, l'image du modèle Lumière. On verra deux films: ACCIDENT WITH A SYPHON (France 1902), et WHAT HAPPENED ON 23RD STREET IN NEW YORK CITY (US 1901) film de je ne sais plus quelle compagnie.

Vous verrez l'inscription d'une dimension d'un mouvement, de la dynamique de l'histoire du cinéma dans ce film. C'est là qu'il faut lier ces films d'une façon dialectique pour en comprendre l'intérêt, la spécificité, mais aussi pour les incrire dans l'histoire puisqu'ils s'y inscrivent eux-mêmes.

Je vais commencer par un film énigmatique, c'est un film parmi 10 que nous avons vus, tous comme cela, très étranges. Personnellement, je n'ai pas une lecture géniale à donner de ces films. Ce sont des films où on voit des gens en train de lire des histoires drôles, ou peut-être salaces, peut-être les deux, et qui rient; ils ne donnent rien au public, ils gardent cela pour eux sauf la manifestation de leur plaisir.

C'est assez étrange. Manifestement, il y a beaucoup de films comme cela, cela s'appelle A FUNNY STORY. J'avoue que s'il y a des gens qui ont des idées géniales sur ce genre, j'aimerais les entendre parce que moi je n'en ai point. Mais je trouve que c'est un des symptômes les plus radicaux de cette altérité dont je parle, et je sens qu'il y a contradiction là quelque part.

Ensuite deux films qui utilisent la marche arrière, l'image retournée. C'est très important au début du cinéma. Vous savez tous que ceux qui projetaient des films Lumière, avaient l'habitude de montrer un film qui s'appelle DEMOLITION D'UN MUR, à l'envers. C'est un truc qui va avoir beaucoup d'importance à cette époque. Mais ce qui est très intéressant pour nous, c'est que, étant donné que nous sommes dans une époque où un certain type d'illusionisme au sens non pas de prestidigitation, mais disons réalisme, (je n'aime ni l'un ni l'autre de ces deux mots), nous sommes dans cette époque où justement le fait que les trucs soient pris pour du réel, n'est pas encore une chose intéressante, une chose acquise. Cela a trait à toute cette dimension présentationnelle du théâtre populaire, de la prestidigitation, du Grand-Guignol, etc ... Je ne veux pas entrer dans ce problème là. Je crois que vous connaissez bien cette problèmatique.

Mais ce sur quoi je veux insister quand même, c'est dit dans un film dans lequel il y a d'abord l'action à l'endroit et puis à l'envers, THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT, entre les deux un titre qui, à mon avis, est d'époque (Barry me contradira peut-être), et qui dit, "Reversed", c'est-à-dire "ce que vous allez voir est inversé". C'est-à-dire vraiment l'inscription dans le film du procédé de production. On en est encore là. Il faut bien comprendre que ce ne sont pas des avant-gardistes avant la lettre. Cà j'y tiens absolument. C'est à cause de l'interaction complexe du phénomène

que j'essaie de décrire ici, que cela a pu être possible. C'est très frappant pour nous, c'est encore un signe de l'altérité de cette époque.

Ensuite nous avons un autre film sur la marche arrière, où c'est encore plus sophistiqué. C'est la même image que l'on revoit. Il y a un mec qui va se baigner et puis il sort de l'eau. Quand il sort de l'eau, c'est la même image à l'envers. En fait, c'est un film qui dure trente secondes, mais qui en dure soixante par inversion. C'est une autre forme d'inscription dans la linéarité d'un élément non linéaire. Contradiction évidente, n'est-ce pas, d'une importance théorique capitale, à mon avis.

THE CHESS DISPUTE: C'est un film qui illustre l'approche positive du cadre. Nous ne sommes pas encore arrivés à cet élément essential du mode de représentation institutionnel qui sera le centrement, c'est-à-dire où tout doit se passer au centre de l'image et dans le cadre. Je ne sais pas si vous avez lu les mémoires de Billy Bitzer, mais c'est extrêmement intéressant. Il était caméraman de Griffith. Il explique à un moment donné comment il a par accident technique produit une vignette autour du cadre. Il trouvait cela embêtant et voulait l'éliminer. Les producteurs, The Front Office Boys, je crois, expliquaient qu'ils trouvaient cela fantastique, il faut essayer de trouver un moyen de le faire car nous éliminons ce côté gênant du cadre si net, cela estompe le bord de l'image. D'abord par des procédés comme celui-là et ensuite par des éclairages et différentes méthodes, et finalement, dans l'éclairage moderne, on a trouvé le moyen de centrer l'image, de faire en sorte que ce truc géométrique qui contredit la nature réaliste organique de l'image, soit éliminé.

Ici il y a un film au contraire qui met en évidence les bords de l'image d'une façon spectaculaire.

Enfin, il y a "Auf der Radrennbahn in Friedenau". Je ne sais pas comment cela se prononce, mais cela veut dire: <u>Au champ de course de Friedenau</u>. C'est un film exceptionnel, je n'ai jamais rien vu de pareil. Nous avons là une sorte d'anophore de l'espace enveloppant du cinéma. Seulement il n'y a que la moitié, et de ce fait vous avez l'inscription extraordinaire d'abord de la platitude de l'image, de l'image panoramique, et en même temps une espèce d'anophore vers l'espace courant. Il y a une hypothèse qui a été avancée que ce serait peut-être un film sonorisé par cylindre ou par disque. C'est un film Allemand qui a été fait par Messter. Je n'ai aucune idée si on le sait, il y a peut-être des amis d'Allemagne qui le savant. Mais je pense que de toute façon cela n'enlève rien de l'intérêt de ce film. Ceux qui voudraient me poser quelques questions ...

<u>VERDONE</u>:

A mon avis, soit les premiers films montrés, soit peut-être aussi les derniers, sont des développements des premiers films anglais. Comme vous le savez, à Brighton, on réalisait FUNNY FACE, facial expression, comic face, etc ... Alors, je crois que FUNNY STORY est le développement

de ces films. On cherche d'arriver à une expression mimique, à des grimaces. Sur cet argument, je pourrais revenir quand je ferai mon exposé.

N. BURCH:

Ce que j'ai à expliquer maintenant est extrêmement complexe et j'espère que je vais arriver à me faire comprendre. C'est le problème le plus difficile que l'on peut aborder à propos de cette époque. Cela concerne justement le frayage à travers toute cette époque des aspects les plus essentiels du mode de représentation de l'institution. Il s'agit de la constitution de l'espace - temps diégétique enveloppant, c'est-à-dire la possibilité de situer symboliquement le spectateur à l'intérieur du monde représentationnel de ce qu'on appelle le référent imaginaire du film. C'est un processus qui ve aboutir notamment avec la généralisation du véritable champ - contrechamp, c'est-à-dire Betty Grable qui regarde presque le caméra et Clark Gable, ou je ne sais plus qui, qui regarde presque la caméra, ce regard, ces paroles qui traversent l'espace imaginaire qui entoure le spectateur. Celui-ci se trouve dans une situation prise entre deux personnages. Pour moi, c'est le champ - contrechamp pleinement abouti dont le symbolique est complétement accompli. L'autre aspect de cela est ce que j'appelle l'ubiquité de la caméra, la possibilité pour que le spectateur lui-même se déplace, se ballade dans l'espace diégétique, puisse voir les choses sous différents angles. C'est une équivalence du code du relief dans la peinture de la Renaissance. On commence à ouvrir l'espace ...

Ce sont deux aspects seulement de ce phénomène qui est beaucoup plus complexe. Je vais vous en parler maintanant.

Nous sommes à une époque en 1900 où est dominante la conscience chez le spectateur de sa place par rapport à l'écran. Je, spectateur, suis assis dans une salle, devant moi il y a un écran vertical ... je suis ici et l'écran est là. C'est ce rapport qui domine complètement la perception cinématographique à cette époque là. Je vais vous montrer d'ailleurs dans cette série de films, un film qui s'appelle L'INGENIEUSE SOUBRETTE, qui produit bien ce phénomène. On utilise une caméra verticale, on appelle cela une plongée verticale, comme trucage. On rabat cette image prise verticalement sur le plan vertical de l'écran. Cela explique parfaitement cette dominance de ce type de rapport. Il y a tout un mouvement du cinéma pendant cette époque là qui va essayer de modifier ce rapport, d'introduire un rapport imaginaire d'ubiquité et d'environnement. Vous allez voir deux frayages de cela.

D'abord, ce qui est intéressant aussi, c'est que cette histoire de champ - contrechamp, cette histoire de pouvoir se ballader à sa guise, à la guise du réalisateur dans un espace imaginaire, c'est que ce personnage que nous allons devenir dans l'histoire du cinéma, invisible, présent partout où il faut être en principe, c'est un peu la position du voyeur. C'est à la fois absent et présent. C'est la place de celui qui est pris dans

le champ - contrechamp. Tout passe par lui, c'est la situation fantasmatique par excellence et en même temps il n'est pas là. Cette problèmatique est présente dans le cinéma primitif, mais comme représentation. Vous avez déjà vu d'ailleurs un film où il y a un voyeur qui regarde une femme se déshabiller. Le thème du voyeurest très fréquent dans le cinéma primitif.

J'ai vu deux formes spécifiques de cela. L'une d'abord ici: vous allez voir le coucher de la mariée; la mariée se couche, le marié épie derrière le paravant. Vous avez donc sur l'écran représenté ce rapport de voyeurisme. Et en plus, dans certains de ces films (je ne crois pas que cela soit le cas de celui qu'on va voir), celle qui se déshabille regarde le spectateur; donc la place de voyeur du spectateur est devinée, il y a une espèce de complicité.

Tout cela va disparaître, et à mon sens, il s'agit là d'un exemple ... (c'est une chose que j'ai entrevue cette semaine, donc j'avance cela avec les plus grandes précautions), mais il me semble qu'on peut peut-être voir que dans le développement futur du mode de représentation cinématographique institutionnel, il va y avoir à un certain moment refoulement de cette thématique du voyeur et il va être refoulé, mais non pas évacué, au milieu de la représentation elle-même, cela va devenir le champ-contrechamp quelque part. C'est un peu cursif mais j'en suis assez convaincu. Et je crois que si on analyse attentivement la symbolique de ce cinéma, d'un point de vue psychanalytique, on peut repérer un ensemble de thèmes, par exemple le corps morcelé, Steven Heath a démontré d'une façon remarquable que le corps morcelé est un thème qu'on retourne à vue. On coupe littéralement l'écran en morceaux et après c'est le gros-plan, la dissection du cadre comme dit Barry. C'est vrai que le découpage est une sorte de dissection, il reprend symboliquement ce terme du corps morcelé que l'on retrouve copieusement à la surface des premiers films. On va voir un film: LA JOYEUSE SOUBRETTE. C'est très intéressant. Deuxièmement on va voir un film anglais: LADIES' SKIRTS NAILED TO FENCE, de 1900. Il est un merveilleux exemple de ce que j'appelle la nature contradictoire de ce cinéma. Ce film est une anaphore d'ubiquité, du 180 degrés, c'est-à-dire la caméra qui se retourne et qui regarde exactement dans l'autre sens, de derrière la scène si vous voulez. Il y a déjà la poussée vers cela, mais il y a en même temps le poids dominant de la centralité (ou frontalité?) c'est-à-dire cette conscience de la position et du rapport spectateur - écran est telle qu'on ne change pas la caméra de position, on met les personnages de l'autre côté d'une barrière. C'est très marrant comme effet. C'est un faux 180^{o} mais qui est dans ce sens possible conceptuellement à cette époque à cause de cette prédominance de la frontalité.

Ensuite, nous avons un film anglais de 1905. Etonnant que moi je ne sois pas en train de chercher à voir là un développement linéaire. Mais je m'en fiche complètement. Ce qui m'importe ce sont les étapes conceptuelles. Nous avons ensuite un film où la caméra passe derrière, il y a là un vrai

180°, et ce qui est intéressant est de voir que finalement lorsque un certain nombre de ces figures sont introduites, le gros-plan par exemple dans LITTLE DOCTEUR de Smith, ce geste symboliquement fondamental devient le sujet du film. C'est pour cela qu'on a fait le film, ce n'est pas pour l'histoire. C'est réellement pour l'inscription de ce moment du cinéma de ce geste.

SCENES AT EVERY FLOOR: C'est un film de voyeurisme comme il y en a une centaine, mais vous voyez un autre aspect du thème du voyeur, qui inscrit entre autres choses la place du spectateur du mutoscope et du kinétoscope. Ce n'est pas un film, à ma connaissance qui était destiné à passer dans un oeuilleton, mais n'empêche qu'il y a cela, il y a mouvement vers le plan subjectif, le plan point de vue, mais en même temps il est encore inscrit dans le film lui-même. Toutes ces avancées s'inscrivent comme une étape du procédé de production. Justement nous allons voir aprés LE COUCHER DE LA MARIEE, nous allons voir un film français de 1905 qui a un titre allemand ZWILLINGE IM THEATER, parce qu'il est conservé en Allemagne, qui montre d'abord un champ-contrechamp réel, mais qui pour le faire inscrit ce champ-contrechamp, (c'est vraiment un exemple très précoce de ce type de trucage. Cela ne se généralisera que beaucoup plus tard. Il y a ... information de Griffith qui va proposer un peu la même chose trois ou quatre ans après), mais ici l'exemple est intéressant dans la mesure où, afin de pouvoir faire ce retournement, il faut produire le spectateur dans sa place au théatre et sa relation à l'écran.

A ce moment, le balancement devient possible puisqu'il renverse sa propre position mentalement, c'est le premier renversement mental qu'on vous demande de faire dans l'histoire du cinéma. Pas le premier, mais un des premiers. Celui-ci est relativement facile à faire; on suit le chemin de moindre résistance puisqu'on inscrit la projection du film.

Enfin, un film très complexe, très riche: THE STORY THE BIOGRAPH TOLD, film U.S.A. de 1904. C'est l'inscription du procédé de production qui permet de faire une anaphore du raccord à 90°. Il faut passer par toute une histoire pour y arriver. Cela n'est pas une chose qui va de soi, mais reflète cette poussée vers la représentation qui va arriver 15 ans après, mais en même temps qui reflète aussi la résistance qu'il peut y avoir, et la nécessité d'inscrire cette démarche dans le procédé de production, vous verrez exactement comment. Je vais vous passer le film.

Simultanéité corporelle ici; le femme téléphone au mari, alors qu'il est en train de peloter la secrétaire.

Je vais dire quelques mots encore concernant la couleur. Je vais vous montrer trois films en couleurs. Nous avons été très frappé par l'apport de la couleur à cette époque. Vous connaissez peut-être ce texte de Maxime Gorki qui voyant pour la première fois le cinématographe Lumière dans un bordel de Moscou, ou de Saint Petersbourg, en 1896, dit: cette horrible

chose mortuaire, c'est la mort que l'on voit, des fantômes silencieux et incolores, gris. Ce mot gris, incolore, revient comme un leitmotiv dans ce texte très important. Gorki était un névrosé du réalisme mais ce qu'il dit est intéressant parce que la couleur était ressentie comme un manque au regard de la représentation réaliste. Mais vous le constaterez, la couleur apporte aussi le relief, la surface très affirmée. Voici un film qui renvoie à un fond populaire, le chromo, les petits autocollants qu'on range dans les albums. C'est une chose de l'époque.

Vous allez voir après autre chose, je vous en parlerai pendant que cela dure.

SYMPOSIUM: CINEMA 1900-1906 SESSION 5

Mario Verdone - Italy

Je ne ferai pas de commentaire ou de présentation particulière sur tous les films que l'on va projeter.

Je préfère commencer avec un exposé très général, qui traite les problèmes qui m'intéressent le plus.

Selon mon idée, qui touche le paradoxe et aussi la provocation, l'histoire du cinéma peut se confondre avec l'historique entière des arts du spectacle, et par conséquent le cinéma, à mon avis, a toujours existé.

A partir des anciens théâtres d'ombres, qui n'étaient que du cinématographe artisanal, à la main et "animal" comme on dit, avec écran, source de lumière, cadrage, multiplication des plans et accompagnements sonores aussi.

En arrivant à la fin du 19ème siècle, lorsque le support du kinétoscope et du cinématographe est réalisé, les films obtiennent une stabilisation physique et technologique, au moins provisoire.

On peut dire que l'art du cinéma naît du cirque et de la foire. Cette affirmation ne signifie pas qu'aujourd'hui le cinéma ait des rapports étroits avec la foire et le cirque. Evidemment, les films de Bresson, de Bergman, ou Antonioni, n'y ont rien en commun.

Au début, le cinéma cherchait une identité qu'il ne pouvait pas encore avoir et il trouvait une collocation dans la place urbaine et dans la foire: là où on avait présenté jusqu'ici, comme nous le savons, les lanternes magiques, le théâtre optique, les ombres, les dioramas, les panoramas, avec leurs vues de villes, de monuments, des phénomènes naturels, d'incendies, et de batailles. Il était montré dans les pavillons dits des merveilles, qui pouvaient aussi s'appeler "Le Salon Indien", à Paris, ou la "Egyptian-Hall" à Londres.

En Italie, on projetait les premiers films à Milan, à la Foire de Porta Genova, et à Rome à Piazzo Pepe, qui étaient les lieux de rencontres des saltimbanques et des forains.

Le spectacle ne pouvait être donc que forain et il se rapprochait du cirque, du burlesque, du vaudeville, du music-hall, lesquels s'alimentent très souvent des mêmes numéros, des mêmes attractions, des mêmes artistes.

Dans cette situation, quel genre de spectacle pouvait-on donner?

Les mêmes qu'attendaient les spectateurs du cirque et de la foire, lesquels subissaient les charmes et l'attraction de tout ce qui était surprise, nouveauté, merveilleux, force, dynamisme, gags.

La surprise venait du visage même des acteurs, qui pour la première fois étaient vus comme on l'a noté aussi dans les essais présentés par les historiens américains qui participent à ce symposium qui pour la première fois étaient vus et presque examinés de très prêt.

D'ici la réalisation de la part de la production Edison, en premier lieu, et après, des pionniers de Brighton, des nombreux films sur les grimaces, les mimiques faciales, les visages extravagants et bouffons, les maquillages et les masques.

Nous avons vu, tout à l'heure, un clown qui faisait des grimaces.

Nous avons plusieurs titres de ce genre: STARNUT DE MISTER OTT ou GRIMACES DE MISTER LYMAN, réalisés pour le kinétoscope d'Edison, qui sont les premiers vrais close-up, et MASQUES AND GRIMACES, COMICS FACES, FUNNY FACES, BIG SWALLOW, que nous allons voir maintenant, tournés à Brighton.

Les interprètes de ces courts films sont des clowns, des artistes de vaudeville, et du burlesque.

On a noté, au course de ce jour même, avec les amis Barnes, qui sont ici présents, en voyant le film MOON MAN, que Mr. Moon était Percy Honri, star de music-hall à Londres en 1901.

Si les artistes étaient des clowns, ils s'habillaient très souvent en clown, visage blanc.

Nous avons vu aussi ce matin un film qui n'est pas comique, tragique, mais qui montre un visage de clown: CHARLES PEACE. Avec le visage blanc, nous rencontrons, dans plusieurs films, le costume déchiré des vagabonds, c'est-à-dire des Augustes. Le Auguste, vous le savez, c'est le clown pauvre, comme Chaplin. Et encore, des habillements grotesques, des travestis féminins de la part des hommes. Leurs gags étaient régulièrement basés sur la poudre, sur la tarte à la crême, le syphon d'eau, la cascade, l'échelle ou la perche portée sur l'épaule et immanquablement frappant la tête du prochain.

Ces gags n'ont pas été inventés par le cinéma. Ils viennent directement du cirque et, plus loin, de la comédie: Comédie Attique Grecque, farce Romaine, et surtout Comédie de l'art. Les comiques de l'art avaient leur "lazzi", actions, "Actiones et inventiones", comme ils les appellaient. Donc: gag = lazzo.

Chaplin nous le rappelle dans l'épisode de l'Arlequinade de LIMELIGHT, lorsqu'il fait ressortir un jet d'eau de l'oreille. Typique "lazzo" de la commedia dell'arte.

Le clown a toujours été en conflit avec le monde, le monde des humains et celui des objets. Il ne lutte pas seulement avec ses semblables, ses adversaires, le chef de cuisine, le contrôleur du train, la patronne ou le policier, il lutte surtout avec l'objet, selon la tradition du cirque.

Chapeau qui lui échappe, canne d'eau qui l'arrose, échelle qui tombe, valise qui ne se ferme pas, matelas ou lit, comme nous l'avons vu ce matin, qui ne lui permet pas de dormir ou de se reposer.

Evidemment, lorsque la scène du cinéma passa des décors et des accessoires habituels du théâtre et du cirque (y comprise la bicyclette) à la scène de la rue, à l'usine, au gratte-ciel, à la navigation, à l'automobile, au monde, les gags s'enrichirent de tout ce qu'ils pouvaient apporter l'ascenceur, la porte-tournante, l'auto, le tramway, la circulation routière, les trains, les ballons, l'avion, le bateau et, si vous voulez, aussi les sous-marin.

Si la première vague des acteurs appartient aux mimes, et aux grimaceurs, la seconde est celle des cascadeurs, des sauteurs et des acrobates. Mais la grande époque du film athlétique, acrobatique, arrivera en 1913 avec le Maciste de CABIRIA.

Il ne faut pas oublier, au début, la présence au cinéma des hommes de science, des opticiens, des chimistes. On avait déjà exploité les aspects curieux, surprenants, quelques fois spectaculaires de leur travail dans le Théâtre Scientifique de la foire avec les squelettes des animaux préhistoriques, le Théâtre de la Baleine, les fantasmagories de Robertson, les miroirs déformants, les trucages chimiques et optiques. Il suffira d'un microscope dans le film LE REPAS DU SAVANT pour faire devenir une prise de vue scientifique, attraction de cinéma, jusqu'au gag. Et ils interviennent aussi, quoi que avec beaucoup de prudence, s'ils ne sont pas des naïfs, les peintres et les sculpteurs.

Georges Méliès est peintre naïf et caricaturiste et lui-même, il dessinera tous les décors de ses films. Les modèles sont toujours ceux des pavillons de la foire. Dans SCULPTEUR MODERNE, que nous allons voir tout à l'heure, nous avons le sculpteur français Guyot qui crée des animations avec l'argile.

Le monde du merveilleux s'élargit donc toujours plus, jusqu'au moment où ils arriveront, en vagues toujours croissantes, les intellectuels, les écrivains, les peintres cubistes, futuristes, surrealistes et abstraits, mais à leur époque le cinéma ne sera plus celui des pionniers.

Dans les spectacles du cirque on rencontre les attraits comiques classiques, toujours très brefs, des clowns. Par exemple vous vous rappelezde certains saynètes, le "dentiste", le "bain", le "barbier", le "duel". On voit aussi les magiciens, les illusionnistes, jongleurs, prestidigitateurs, fakirs, contorsionnistes, hommes-serpent, nains, hercules, et groupes plastiques.

Ils arrivent en plus, les chiens, les singes, et pigeons. Ce sont les attractions mêmes des premiers films. Mais on sent le besoin de spectacles plus compliqués, fournis de costumes, de décors, de ballets, enrichis par les couleurs.

Ce sont les grands moments de Georges Méliès, de Gaston Velle, de Charles Lépine, qui réussissent à fondre les magies du théâtre Robert Houdin, le décor des pavillons des merveilles, de la foire, des pantomimes, du cirque et du théâtre de vaudeville avec tous les trucs nouveaux que découvre leur fantaisie prodigieuse de illusionnistes sollicités par la caméra.

Ce matin, à la fin de la séance, vous avez vu un truc extraordinaire inventé par Méliès: les prises de vue à travers l'aquarium. Voilà une invention qui est du cinéma et qui vient aussi de la foire.

Les pantomimes du cirque ont été acquises par le cinéma et le pré-cinéma, au moyen du kinétoscope.

On peut dire qu'avec L'ATTAQUE D'UNE DILIGENCE de Edison, et plus tard nous aurons L'ATTAQUE D'UN TRAIN; on peut dire qu'avec LE MASSACRE DE FORT APACHE de Edison, LA MORT DU GENERAL CUSTER de Edison, toujours au kinétoscope, numéros équestres enregistrés par les cameramen de Edison au cirque Buffalo Bill, on peut dire que le western a déjà marqué, avant le cinématographe de Lumière, sa présence à l'écran.

La pantomime équestre du Colonel Cody finissait toujours au cirque par une apothéose finale, avec la présence des cowboys, des soldats à cheval, des indiens, et des drapeaux des Etats-Unis.

Vous trouverez, et vous avez déjà trouvé dans ALADIN, maintes fois l'apothéose finale dans les films spectaculaires de Méliès et des autres, dans les reconstructions historiques de Pathé, dans les féries de ALI-BABA, ROYAUME DES FEES, CHAT BOTTE, et vous la trouverez aussi dans la finale de LA PRISE DE ROME de Filoteo Alberini, que nous allons voir d'ici peu.

Je le dis en passant, une des premières péllicules russes, LA PRISE DE SEVASTOPOL, film de reconstruction historique, possède également une espèce d'apothéose; ce sont les vrais anciens combattants qui se présentent pour saluer le public à la finale du film.

C'est dommage que nous avons manqué, dans nos projections, d'ailleurs tellement intéressantes, d'un plus grand nombre de films inspirés par les grands événements et personnages de l'histoire.

Nous aurions pu voir les films sur l'époque romaine, toujours avec des scènes de cirque, ou sur d'autres épopées, à la façon des pantomimes équestres qu'on présentait à l'Hippodrome de Paris, et il est encore plus dommage que jusqu'ici nous n'avons pu voir - du moins je ne l'ai pas vu - le NERON des productions Edison, tourné avant 1910, qui était inspiré d'une autre pantomime du cirque de Barnum, présentée les années 1880. J'en possède le scénario imprimé, orné d'illustrations en bois, avec une séquence tout à fait cinématographique:

"L'Orgie aux Palais Impériaux" avec les jeunes filles qui dansent, "La course de Chars", que nous verrons mille fois jusqu'à BEN HUR, "Les Chrétiens Jetés aux Fauves", "L'Incendie de Rome", avec Néron qui chante son poème, "l'Arrivée des esclaves libérés, guidés par Julius Vindex". En Italie on dirait "Arrivano i nostri". En effet ils arrivent et ils sont les vainqueurs. Ce sont les esclaves libérés qui sauvent les victimes des lions et qui condamnent le mauvais empereur.

Il s'agit, à mon avis, d'un vrai scénario de film, mais qui n'avait été écrit, dans les années 1880, que pour le cirque.

En faisant enregistrer cette pantomime de cirque pour l'écran, la production Edison arrive aux films de fiction, d'ambiance romaine.

A la fin du siècle passé, les théâtres présentaient des spectacles fériques et des grandes pantomimes telles que CENDRILLON, BARBE BLEUE, LES MILLE ET UNE NUITS, LE BAL EXCELSIOR, que le cinéma fit propre.

Les films de Méliès, dont nous en avons déjà vu quelques uns, sont très riches de décors mobiles, des flammes qui s'élèvent, des vagues d'eau de papier (imitées par Fellini dans son CASANOVA), des rochers qui se déplacent, des cavernes qui s'ouvrent, des squelettes qui s'agitent, des masques qui rient, des enfers qui engloutissent pendant que le diable menace. Ce sont les décors mêmes des pavillons de la foire, que nous tous avons visités dans notre enfance.

La foire, les théâtres en bois et les cirques de Londres et de Paris, montraient aussi des pantomimes de chiens. C'est un autre genre qui s'installe dans le cinéma et nous pourrons en voir l'évolution à partir d'un cirque de chiens, chez Pathé, que nous avons vu dans une édition mexicaine, heureusement arrivée le dernier jour, envoyée par notre ami Casanova.

Du cirque de chiens, je disais, jusqu'au film anglais RESCUED BY ROVER, réalisé par Cecil Hepworth, où le vrai protagoniste est le chien Rover qui sauve un bébé volé par une vieille mégère. Voilà dans Rover un ancêtre de Rintintin. C'est donc l'esprit de fantaisie, d'énergie, de dynamisme, de surprise, d'excentricité, d'exotisme, et merveilleux qui appartient à la foire et au cirque, au music-hall et à la pantomime, que nous trouvons dans les premiers films, lesquels, par conséquent, peuvent être indiqués, et surtout les entrées clownesques, en tant que fils légitimes du cirque, mais non seulement les entrées clownesques; nous avons vu aussi que les westerns, Buffalo Bill, aussi le NERON d'Edison, aussi les films acrobatiques, sont toujours des fils du spectacle du cirque.

Après, on pourrait dire contemporainement, on aura l'actualité, vraie ou reconstituée, la chronique judiciaire de L'HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME, les désastres de la guerre ou de la nature, reconstruits, avec les mêmes vulcains des panoramas, des théâtres mélodramatiques, etc., et nos metteurs en scène, nos réalisateurs ne manquent pas de fantaisie pour trouver de nouvelles inspirations dans toutes les formes de spectacles: et ainsi on arrivera à l'opérette, aux romans policiers, aux grands voyages, jusqu'à l'avant-garde, jusqu'au music-hall, jusqu'à la comédie sophistiquée, et à chaque autre forme de spectacle.

C'est l'évolution même du cinéma, devenu bientôt auto-suffisant; non plus seulement le grand théâtre de la foire, le successeur du cirque et de la pantomime, mais, bien plus désormais, le grand théâtre du monde.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Ledoux:

Je voudrais poser une question générale qui n'a pas nécessairement un rapport direct avec ce que nous venons de voir, mais pour moi ce symposium a été une révélation absolument extraordinaire; c'est une expérience vraiment, que je suis heureux d'avoir vécue, et j'espère que cela va mener d'ailleurs à d'autres symposiums ou des études plus approfondies de cette matière.

Mais j'ai une espèce de curiosité que je voudrais satisfaire, tant qu'un certain nombre de spécialistes sont présents ici, parce que lorsque la Fédération a décidé du sujet du thème de ce symposium, la question s'est posée de la limitation dans le temps. Limitation d'ailleurs qui était nécessaire aussi parce que nous n'avions pas devant nous un temps de symposium nécessaire pour aller au-delà.

Mais enfin, on a choisi arbitrairement les dates de 1900 à 1906, alors je laisse tomber en 1906, parce qu'il fallait bien se limiter et on peut toujours continuer de 1906 à plus tard, et je sais aussi que, Mr. Verdone nous l'a encore rappelé, que le cinéma n'est pas né avec le cinéma,

qu'il y a eu du cinéma avant le cinéma,
qu'il y a eu le cirque,
qu'il y a eu les pantomimes,
qu'il y a eu la "Commedia dell'arte"
qu'il y a eu des ombres chinoises,

mais enfin, tout de même, le cinéma a une certaine date de naissance qui est 1895. Alors, quand on voit certains des films de 1900 ou de 1901 et des révélations qu'ils constituent, qu'ils ont en tous cas constitués pour moi, on peut se demander si c'était vraiment sage de commencer en 1900.

Il n'est pas possible, me semble-t-il, que 1900 ait constitué une date charnière tellement importante et pour l'instant je meurs de curiosité de voir des films d'avant 1900, de 1899, 1898 ou 1897, pour voir ce qui a conduit à certaines de ces découvertes d'un langage vraiment extraordinaire.

Je voulais seulement savoir si parmi vous il y a d'autres personnes qui pensent de même et qui croient qu'il serait intéressant d'explorer les années d'avant 1900 et de faire en quelque sorte une véritable chronologie des découvertes du langage cinématographique.

Mr. Verdone:

Je voudrais, si vous le permettez, répondre pour le premier, et évidement je n'ai pas des objections, parce que comme j'ai cherché à le démontrer, nous avons déjà différents genres de films dans le kinétoscope, nous avons des athlètes, nous avons grimaces, nous avons, comme j'ai dit, des westerns jouésdans un cirque et dans les arènes par Buffalo Bill. Enfin je crois que non seulement à l'époque de Lumière, mais bien avant, le cinéma déjà s'annonçait. Nos amis Américains, qui en parlaient hier, pourraient rappeler justement le diorama, les lanternes magiques, les panoramas, et bien d'autres attractions. C'est une histoire qui ne finit jamais, et qui arrive peut-être à Platon, à la caverne de Platon, quand il montre les ombres; qui arrive à Lucrezio avec sa description des songes, semblables à des films intérieurs, qui arrive très loin. Mail il faut toujours, pour simplifier le discours, des dates de commencement: et il y a aussi une date de commencement en 1895.

Mr. Turner:

Tell me, how far would you date back the dances(?) for example. You mentioned the obvious influence of theatre, the pantomime theatre, the conjurer's theatre, variety, cabaret, etc... But in most of the apotheoses, they seem to be very amateurish. Only in the very last one there appears to be a bit of the classic training, but the rest seems very amateurish. To that, when they reconstituted scenes from cabaret or variety, did they take entirely amateur performers? Many of the leading ladies seem to be Wagnerian opera singers! Were they the sort that were in the original Moulin Rouge or Funambule or whatever?

Mr. Verdone:

Je crois que, à cette époque, nous sommes au niveau non des acteurs professionnels, mais au niveau des "guitti", du théatre de la foire, des groupes pauvres, etc... Vous voyez aussi que dans les premiers films, il n'y a pas souvent de femmes. Il y a toujours des "guitti" qui s'habillent en femme. C'est pourquoi, je crois, qu'aussi dans les films on ne pouvait pas engager, dans les premières années du cinéma, des acteurs professionnels, mais seulement des forains, des amateurs, des hommes sans culture du spectacle.

Mr. Burch:

On sait que les artistes professionnels de différentes sortes, hésitaient à venir faire du cinéma. Il ne faut pas oublier le profond mépris dans lequel se trouvait le cinéma, mépris qui a duré très longtemps et qui est lié à son origine populaire, à ses racines populaires. On trouve beaucoup de documents sur les premières arrivées d'acteurs du théâtre, de danseurs vraiment professionnels, qui voulaient gagner quelques sous mais qui n'étaient pas du tout chauds pour le cinéma. Et cela se passe vers 1905 ou 1906, en France en tous cas.

Mr. Verdone:

Je voudrais aussi ajouter un fait important, sur le mépris que vous avez justement souligné de la part des acteurs envers le cinéma. Vous êtes, je crois, spécialiste du cinéma japonais. Et bien, vous savez mieux que moi que les acteurs japonais refusaient de jouer devant la caméra parce qu'il n'y avait pas de public. C'était déshonorant. Voilà, je crois, un argument qui s'ajoute à ce que vous avez dit.

Unidentified questioner:

On the topic of professional actors in the films, we know that Méliès was a professional and that all the performers in his films were professional. He had used them in his productions for perhaps 10 years on the stage, and they just moved into films. In fact, there was a credit given on A TRIP TO THE MOON to the girls as being ballet girls from "such and such" theatre (I forget which it was).

But in England, the first film to use professional actors was a film we have just seen RESCUED BY ROVER, in which the gentleman who played the soldier was married to the girl who played the Gipsy. They were Mr. & Mrs. Sebastian Smith and they were two professionals who were brought down by the director, also a professional (Louis Fitzhamon) from the stage. But they were very minor theatre companies in fact. They were music-hall sketch companies which means they were a step below theatrical people, but they put on short, 10 minutes, mimes, dramatic sketches on the stage. The non-professional actress in RESCUED BY ROVER is in fact Cecil Hepworth's wife who plays Cecil Hepworth's wife in the film, because he also plays the hero. In fact, Louis Fitzhamon, whom I interviewed many times before he died, told me he remembered very distinctly how Mrs. Hepworth constantly looked at him directing behind the camera to see what her next instructions should be, which is why she keeps looking out all the time, and then turns and does a bit more acting! And it was only with considerable pressure on Hepworth himself that Fitzhamon was able to institute a fully professional acting cast in films from then onwards.

Mr. Verdone:

Au fond, nous nous trouvons d'accord, à ce qu'il me paraît. Il y avait à l'époque une connivence dans le cinéma entre les non-professionnels et ceux qui étaient hautement professionnels comme Méliès. Il y avait une connivence entre les clowns et les intellectuels. Je rappelle que dans certains des premiers films comiques russes, avec Giacomino, qui était un clown italien, il y avait une collaboration entre Giacomino et l'écrivain Kuprin.

Voilà donc cette merveilleuse façon de tout rassembler et mêler, qui est caractéristique du cinéma, art totale. C'est aussi ce qui fait sa force, parce qu'il n'y a pas de "nobles" et "ignobles"; il y a un grand peuple du spectacle qui cherche une identité artistique, technique, propre au cinéma.

SYMPOSIUM: CINEMA 1900-1906, SESSION 6

Zdeněk Štábla - Czechoslovakia

During the last week we have seen over five hundred films from the period 1900 to 1906. A period which has not as yet meant very much in film history. I don't think we could speak about all tendencies because we haven't seen the important German and Italian films and of course some of the French and American ones. For example, we haven't seen the production of Eclair and not very much from Gaumont, Vitagraph, Lubin, etc. But nobody in the past has had an opportunity to see so many films from this period. It is a great step for understanding this period and the first step for some serious thoughts about it. It really must not be the last word because many other films from this period exist which we have never seen and in the future will bring larger numbers, I am sure.

1900 is the year when animated photography slowly changed into a new form of dramatic movement. At first sight it is not apparent. We know that the technical tricks came from photography and animated photographs from Edison's kinetoscope, but in the integration of the tricks with animated photography we get something new. We get a new value, and a new form of visual experience. Méliès' French film THE ONE MAN ORCHESTRA is animated photography with tricks, in which the tricks are there for their own sake; but it is not without wit. The same man on the screen divides into seven men who play in an orchestra. Another kind of trick is used in the English Hepworth film EXPLOSION OF A MOTOR CAR. It is very similar to the French film. The trick is there also for its own sake, but one's lasting impression is not only of the trick but the explosion of the car. Of course there is also some influence from Méliès. The Méliès film inspired the French Zecca film MAGIC PAPER HANGING from the year 1902, where the lady appeared to walk on the wall. In another English film, Williamson's ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION of which we saw two versions, the main point is right in the story. The missionary outpost is attacked by Chinese bandits but at the last moment it is saved by British troops. This film is made in one set. The Smith film LET ME DREAM AGAIN is therefore more complicated because it has two sets. In the first we see in medium shot a man and a young girl who are drinking and having fun and then the set dissolves into another. There we see the same man in bed with his own wife. Dream contrasted with reality. The humour of this picture is in the contrast of these two sets and that is important in cinematic development.

The other films of the same year 1900 are reconstructed documents of the Boer and China wars made by the Edison company. They are projected independently as animated photographs and presented as real events. In these films there are models of roofs like in the scene of the bombardment of Taku Fort, used also in the Edison version after the eruption of Mount Pele made in 1902, produced in imitation of Méliès.

Georges Méliès, I think, was the greatest man in the first period of film development in a spectacular way. His films were mostly stylized in design, costume and also in the colours which were hand painted. In his longer films, THE FAIRY TALE, fantastic stories inspired by Jules Verne and H.G. Wells and in pictures like THE TERRIBLE TURK, MAGIC FUN, DEVIL'S GROTTO and THE FOUR HUNDRED BLOWS OF THE DEVIL - the tricks in these were more theatrical than filmic expression. Each of his tableaux was a separate affair. He didn't break away from the theatrical feeling like the English and also other French films which did not imitate Méliès. In spite of the fact that the films of Méliès are theatrical they are very individual in their expression with great flashes of imagination. They are sometimes very cruel, sometimes very tender and in their naiveté they are very lovely. In just one set, very many impressions are compressed. Therefore we are not surprised that Méliès had his admirers in France and in other countries who imitated his films. For example, we see the Zecca film THE DANCE OF THE DEVIL, made in 1904. Méliès gave the impulse for the developing of the narrative film - very spectacular films - mostly on historical themes. We shall see a good example of this in the French historical film DRAMA AT VENICE made in 1906, which is a forerunner of Film d'Art.

If the Méliès films, and their influence predominated in the early years, these films have a very artistic individuality, did not represent the most important way for the film drama of the future that lay in the sometimes naive inartistic style which developed from realistic animated photography.

Zecca's LIFE AND PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST which is dated 1901 is a big film with many tableaux but it is also influenced by the theatrical quality of the performances and it preserves the same style that Georges Hatot gave to the passion film in the year 1898 when he worked for Lumière. The so-called Lumière Passion film was not the first. The first one was made in 1897 by the American theatre producers Klaw and Erlanger in Bohemia in a little village called Hořice where the Passion play was performed. After that came Holloman, another American theatre producer with his own Passion play and then the Frenchman Pirou and after him Lumière. The Zecca film has a higher technical standard than the Lumière film but the acting and the use of set decoration were similar to those of Lumière.

More cultivated in caligraphic style and in acting is the other version of Zecca's Passion film made in about the year 1903. Both Zecca's versions are made in a conventional theatrical style with the exception of the tricks.

Zecca's film, his STORY OF A CRIME, is more important because it tries to transfer to the screen one of the themes of the so-called naturalistic theatre and the form of expression and the content is more realistic than in other Zecca films. You find here, for example, scenes in the morgue, in the jail, the execution of the criminal, which were never seen in a motion picture before, and the scene is made in a theatrical manner, although the dream sequence in which we see the whole life of the criminal, has its origin in the theatre.

Today we will also have the opportunity to see another Zecca film which develops the same naturalistic line. It is the film SCENES OF A CONVICT'S LIFE which was made in the year 1904. The story is expressed more in the film manner and it closes again without a happy ending, with the death of the convict who is buried at sea. One of the most interesting and rare films which illustrates this realistic line is the French film THE MINER made in 1905. This film describes the life of a miner, a new hero in the world of the film. Before that they showed mostly middle-class people or figures like lovers, tramps, policemen, old ladies, children or other figures which seem to have been taken from a nineteenth century comedy theatre. This film contains some scenes which later became typical in films about miners, for example the catastrophe - the arrival of rescuers, the crowd waiting for the outcome of the rescue, the death of the miner's son....etc. All the mine and pit details are realistic, but of course they are specially built for the film.
To this realistic line belongs also THE DESERTER made in France by Lucien Nonguet in 1906, which shows a soldier who had deserted, is captured, stripped of his rank and who finally chooses suicide. With this story film unity is developed further.

The films we have spoken about so far have not had happy endings, but another group of films of the realistic style are more romantic. For example, the French film THE CHILD OF THE BARRICADE made in 1902 which describes the fight of anarchists with the police which should end with the execution of the hero, but instead we see Anna, his wife, coming and praying for the life of her husband. The miracle happens. The kind police officer spares the life of the anarchist, but he executes the others.
The romantic mixture of realism is also typical of the English film BLACKSMITH'S DAUGHTER made in 1904. I thought it was made by Robert W. Paul, but Mr. Tjitte de Vries claims that it was made by A. Melbourne-Cooper.
In this film a young girl from the village is seduced by a man from the town; she runs away from home and a year later is left by the man. The woman, who now has a child, returns to her father. The story ends happily.
In the films mentioned so far the duration of the story gets longer and longer, this being expressed mostly in the inter-titles. The romantic touch we find also in most American films, for example, THE NIHILIST made by Biograph in 1905 and remade in 1906 by Pathé, with small changes. The film describes the touching story of a Russian nihilist who is killed on the way to exile in Siberia. His death is avenged by his wife who joins the nihilist organisation and tries to assassinate the Governor who had sent her husband to Siberia. In the later French version it is not a man who goes to Siberia but a young woman, and her mother kills the Governor.
At about that time there was another American film THE WHITE CAPS made by Edwin S. Porter for the Edison company, in the year 1905. It is a very impressive story in the true film manner, of a farmer who is hunted by the Ku Klux Klan, captured and lynched.

This film follows upon the tradition of the Anglo-Saxon theatre melodrama of the latter part of the last century. With this specific theatre genre we witnessed how its story-line developed - with the incessant perfecting of illusion on the set - so that the staging method necessarily had to arrive at a state of variance with the laws of theatre space, time and technology. The authors of the melodramas made up complicated stories developing in parallel and full of action and situations which needed frequent set changes. If the spectators were satisfied with flat canvas stage decorations, which were easily inter-changeable, the story could develop quite smoothly in front of their eyes, without any pauses. But as soon as the effort to achieve the even more perfect illusion of reality on-stage exchanged the flat decorations for three-dimensional ones, then these constructionally complicated sets needed a longer time to be rebuilt, they lengthened the intervals between the individual acts to an unacceptable degree, the story lost its tension and the dramatic rhythm of the performance was spoilt. As we saw in Porter's film WHITE CAPS, the film had better presuppositions as to staging, and we can therefore say that back in the depths of true theatre we had sown the seed for the later film drama. In comparison with Antoine's theatre stagings Porter's film drama was of more romantic hue. Antoine's sets, however, were anti-romantic. This anti-romantic quality, for example, is felt in the film THE MINER.

But the others have romantic moments in the story even if the form of expression is developed from realistic animated photography. This whole combination of realism with romanticism is very typical of European and American films. In the theatre we could find a combination of naturalism and romanticism, for example in America by David Belasco.

I would like to say that in the beginning the naturalistic theatre was a great inspiration for the realistic film drama. Of course, the way to it was not so easy. There were from the beginning differences between the realistic form and the romantic content but this was not the problem of the realistic film only; that, as we saw, was the problem of realistic drama itself.

The most important development of the plot of the film drama was the finding of film expression which in the future separated the film drama from the theatre and which gave the film the power to continue and to fulfil the ideas of naturalistic theatre which could go no further because it was limited to the stage. The film, with its power of expression was able to continue and develop the ideas of naturalistic theatre, whilst the latter came to a stand-still.

The genesis of film expression we find for the first time in the films of the so-called Brighton school. Some of these you will have seen at other experts' symposiums at the Brighton Film Theatre. For example, the Williamson film ARE YOU THERE? is interesting for the split screen effect. The first part is the room of a girl, the second of the man. Two parallel scenes are shown in one film set.

The French film THE DIALOGUE OF THE LEGS of 1902 influenced by the Brighton school develops the story of a woman and one of her suitors, which in the second half shows only their legs. The other English film HERE LIES MARY-JANE made by G.A. Smith in 1903 is divided into medium, close and full shots which gives the story of an unhappy maid a new dramatic value. The use of different sets was later used by David Wark Griffith who applied it in more developed form.

PIONEERS OF CINEMATOGRAPHY IN BRIGHTON - 1897

John Barnes - GB

The seaside town of Brighton seems a most unlikely place to figure in the early history of the British cinema, yet it was here, or in its immediate vicinity, that a small group of pioneers was beginning to take an active part in cinematography which was to have important consequences for the future development of the film industry. This small but influential group comprised Esme Collings, G. Albert Smith, James Williamson, and Alfred Darling.

Of the four, Esme Collings was the first to take up cinematography, and although his actual achievements in this field were inconsequential compared with the other three, he nevertheless may have had some influence in their decisions to take up the subject in the first place, for apparently all four were known to one another.

Esme Collings is an illusive figure, who has left little trace of his activities. Primarily a portrait photographer in Brighton, he turned to film production sometime during 1896, but apart from a few films to his credit for that year, little more is subsequently heard of him. I have not found a single reference to him in any of the photographic journals for the year 1897, but his name does appear twice in G. A. Smith's account book, which shows that he was still actively concerned with films, if only in a small way. What little is known of his previous activities has already been described in The Beginnings of the Cinema, volume one.

G. Albert Smith's career on the other hand, is comparatively well documented. He likewise first turned his attention to cinematography in 1896. His name first appears in connection with a patent application made in December, in association with A. S. Frazer, which is headed, 'Improvements in Apparatus for the Exhibition or Projection of Photographic Moving Objects' (Pat. No. 28152). This received provisional protection only and was not printed, so regrettably we are unable to learn the nature of the said invention, the original document having since been destroyed. It does reveal however, his inventive turn of mind which was later to lead to his discovery of the first successful colour process for cinematography, known as Kinemacolor.

By the time he entered the film business, George Albert Smith (1864-1959) was already a keen astronomer and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. He was also known for his lectures on this subject and was well acquainted with the optical or magic lantern, which he used for showing the slides that suplemented his talks. Like many other lantern lecturers of the time, his attention was inevitably directed to the projection of 'animated pictures', and like his colleague Esme Collings, he soon bacame involved in their production.

The tranquil setting of Smith's surroundings were no doubt conducive to creative and inventive pursuits, for he was the lessee of St. Ann's Well and Gardens, 'a quiet leafy retreat', comprising 'six acres of refreshing foliage

and shady walks', situated at Furze Hill, Hove, quite close to Brighton. Here afternoon teas were served under trees, with plenty of swings for the children and where the celebrated gipsy fortune-teller, Mrs. Lee, was also in attendance. The famous Chalybeate water was drawn free from the Well, and ferns, flowers and grapes, etc. were on sale in the glass houses. Admission to this Garden of Eden was 3d on weekdays, and 6d on Sundays. Here Smith established his 'film factory' as he termed it, and in 1900 was to build his first film studio.

By May 1897, Smith had already converted part of the dwelling house standing in the grounds, for use as a film laboratory. A representative from the Hove Echo, who interviewed him at this time, reported that he had already 'earned a high reputation as a producer of "animated photographs",' and had exhibited them 'with the greatest possible success in various parts of the country'. The reporter, in the course of his interview, was shown around the new laboratory, by which he seems to have been completely baffled. His interview was published on 8 May, under the heading, '"Animated Photographs". A Chat with Mr. Albert Smith', but its rather facile manner precludes it from being the ideal source of information which one might be led to expect. We can however, glean from it a few concrete facts. For instance, the rate at which Smith's films were photographed was about 20 frames per second and averaged about 75ft in length. Smith also claims to have taken the first successful football picture that had ever been exhibited, explaining that such a subject presents great difficulties as the players almost invariably get beyond the range of the camera. He also speaks of the necessity for strong sunlight for the satisfactory taking of the films and adds that for this reason they are mostly taken in spring or summer.

After reading the article, one is left wishing to be told more and one cannot but regret this lost opportunity. Those who interviewed Smith in his later life had only an old man's reminiscences to rely upon, never a very satisfactory means for getting at the facts. Unfortunately too, the few contemporary instances when Smith is mentioned in the photographic press, the notices are brief and the facts equally scarce. A report in The Optical Magic Lantern Journal for July, states:

> Mr. Albert Smith, the well-known proprietor of St. Ann's Wells and Gardens, Brighton (sic), who takes special delight in giving astronomical lectures, has gone in for animated photographs with great success, and has lately fitted up dark-rooms in connection therewith.

Of his films during this period, few are mentioned. In August he was granted permission to film the actress Ellen Terry, and it was reported in the Hove Echo that he had 'obtained a number of extremely good pictures, which will probably find their way to all quarters of the globe.' Indeed, we can be sure that he obtained at least one highly successful scene of the actress, for it was still current in 1901 and is listed in the Warwick Trading Company's catalogue for that year. At that time, Warwick had become the agent through which Smith sold his films. The catalogue entry reads:

MISS ELLEN TERRY AT HOME. A charming half-length portrait of the popular actress. She appears at the casement window of her cottage, kisses her hand, throws a flower, etc. Beautifully sharp and clear.

The cottage referred to was Tower Cottage in Winchelsea, which she had acquired in 1896 from her friends the Comyns-Carr.

G. Albert Smith was also present at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebration in London on 22 June, where he took a successful film of the procession. By October, the number of films completed by Smith was sufficient to warrant the publication of his first catalogue. This was duly received by the editor of The British Journal of Photography, who reported that 'many attractive and amusing subjects are embraced in the list'. No copy of this list is known to have survived, which is a great loss since it would provide us with the only reliable guide to his film output during the preceeding months. The list provided by Denis Gifford in his British Film Catalogue (Newton Abbot, 1973) is unreliable as far as Smith's films for 1897 are concerned. For example, THE HAUNTED CASTLE attributed to G. A. Smith for December, is in fact a film by Georges Méliès, and is listed as such in an advertisement of Philipp Wolff's, published in November, in The Magic Lantern Journal Annual 1897-8, page xcviii. Furthermore, the film had already been available in England for several months, and is mentioned as early as May.

Among the films known to have been made by Smith during 1897, are several short comedies. One in particular is worth noting here since it was probably one of the first trick films made in England. It is called TIPSY, TOPSY, TURVY. Compared with the trick films already being produced by Méliès at this time, Smith's film was very elementary indeed, and merely derived its effect from the use of reverse motion.

At that time the easiest method to accomplish this effect, without actually having to reverse the mechanism of the projector whilst the film was running, was to film the scene with the camera upside down; the positive print was then turned the other way up and all the action was seen reversed. The same effect could also be obtained by the use of a reversing prism in the camera or printer.

Reverse motion effects were then still something of a novelty. A foreign film called BATHING AT MILAN, shown at Gatti's music hall in London, at the beginning of December, showed a diver emerging backwards from the water and resuming his position on the diving board; 'the effect is indescribable', noted the reviewer. Smith's film at least showed a little more imagination and showed a drunk undressing only to find his clothes mysteriously returning to his body.

On 18 November, G. Albert Smith addressed a letter to the editor of The Optical Magic Lantern Journal, stating that all his films were now supplied with a protective covering of transparent celluloid on the emulsion side, much in the manner that an ordinary lantern slide is protected with a cover-glass. This was to prevent it from being scratched and so prolong the life of the film. It is easy to see his reason for adopting this measure at this time, for one of the defects of many early films was that the whole surface of the

film came into contact with some part of the mechanism. Too often the sprocket-wheels and film-gate were made without the necessary rebate between the edges which would prevent all but the perforated edges of the film from surface contact. How long Smith adopted this protective measure is not certain, but it is unlikely that it was for very long since in the coming months new pronector design had eliminated the defect.

The chief source of information on G. A. Smith's film activities for the year, is his account book, now preserved at the National Film Archive. The entries date from 1 January 1897 and the first few weeks are mainly taken up with accounts relating to the installation and equipping of the film laboratory and dark room. The equipment acquired for this 'film factory' as Smith terms it, included a film printer obtained from Jacob Bonn who had a business in High Holborn, and whom we have already had cause to mention in the course of this history. The accounts show that Smith had to pay Bonn's men five shillings for working overtime on the installation of the printer. Alfred Darling, who had supplied Smith with his camera, also provided a film perforator and winder. Later, Smith acquired a printer from Darling, which enabled him to sell the old Bonn printer to his neighbour James Williamson for £3.10s., Smith having originally paid £3 for it. He obtained his chemicals for the dark room from F. W. Salmon, although some were supplied by Williamson. Film stock was mainly acquired from the Blair company, but Fitch film was also occasionally used. As for Smith's film-making activities, the account book shows that his first commercially successful production was the football film already mentioned, copies of which he was able to sell to several leading London dealers, who henceforth, were willing to buy other films of his as they became available. Among his regular customers were W. Watson & Sons; J. Ottway & Son; W. C. Hughes, Philipp Wolff and David Devant. Other customers named in his accounts were W. Heath & Co.; Owen Brooks, and Wyndham of Poole. His local custom comprised Esme Collings and James Williamson.

Smith's films included topicals and actualities, but he concentrated more especially on comic subjects. The first account that might be interpreted as referring to a film of this genre, is for 27 March, when 'Whiskers and Spirit Gum' were purchased. I have been unable to trace any film, made about this date, which might conceivably call for such a make-up, so I presume the intended film was a failure. This also seems to have been the case with a film centred on a midget, for on 20 May a tip of two shillings was paid to the midget's coachman, and on the following day a similar amount is recorded in the book for 'expenses taking midget'. Another failure occurred on 24 July when Smith filmed THE MILLER AND THE SWEEP. It is obvious that something went wrong because two months later he re-made the subject. It is probably this successful second version that is now preserved in the National Film Archive. In the film, the miller is seen leaving his mill with a sack of flour when he bumps into a chimney-sweep carrying a bag of soot. In the ensuing encounter, the miller becomes covered in soot and the sweep in flour. The action takes place in a natural setting with the sails of the windmill revolving in the background.

Just prior to making this film, Smith had engaged a Mr. and Mrs. Tom Green to act in a series of little comedy sketches, the first of which was HANGING OUT THE CLOTHES, referred to several times in the account book simply as 'Clothesline'. A copy of this film has also miraculously survived (00). This simple comedy is filmed in a single camera set-up, in the open air. The master comes across the maid hanging out the clothes. Their amorous behaviour is rudely interrupted when the mistress comes on the scene and catches them kissing behind a blanket. This film was followed by COMIC SHAVING (also known as THE LADY BARBER) in which Tom Green appeared with W. Carlile. Next followed COMIC FACE, which probably showed Tom Green in close-up making grimaces. WEARY WILLIE followed, with Tom Green and his wife playing the parts. Tom Green then appeared in THE X RAYS (also known as THE X-RAY FIEND). On 2 October, a trip to Hastings resulted in a film called LOVE ON THE PIER. A reverse-action comedy, also with Tom Green, followed, which is referred to in the account book simply as 'Reversal'. This is without a doubt, the film known later as TIPSY, TOPSY, TURVY. The final comedy film of the year was probably MAKING SAUSAGES, which showed live cats and dogs being fed into a machine to emerge as sausages.

Apart from persons hired to take part in the films, Smith's film factory was essentially a one man affair, although he did employ an assistant during the initial stages. This was a man named Axel Holst, who was employed for 12 weeks at a salary of £3 per week. This was a reasonably good wage for those days, so Holst was no ordinary odd job man, but must have performed duties of some importance. We know that he was occasionally sent upon errands to London, on one occasion to fetch the Bonn printer. But it seems that once the plant was established, Smith no longer required his services and his name disappears from the records.

A close neighbour and colleague of G. Albert Smith's, was James Williamson (1855-1933), who had a photographic business at 144 Church Road, opposite the old Parish Church at the top of St. Aubyn's, Hove. Here he sold various photographic equipment and undertook 'developing, printing, enlarging, mounting, retouching, etc. etc.'. He had also acquired X-Ray equipment which was then still in its infancy and generally referred to as the Rontgen Rays. When the occasion arose, he was not averse to X-raying patients with broken bones. There can be little doubt that Williamson's X-Ray machine was the inspiration for Smith's early comedy called THE X-RAY FIEND.

Like G. Albert Smith, James Williamson also had a scientific bent, which stood him in good stead when he eventually abandoned film production to concentrate all his energies on the manufacture of cinematographic equipment, but this was still some little way in the future. In 1897 his film activities mainly consisted of giving cinematograph shows at various local functions and occasionally filming the odd subject as his fancy dictated. In this sense he was still much the amateur, although he did undertake some developing and printing of cinematographic film for his customers.

During October Williamson was interviewed by a representative of the Hove Echo, and gave a brief account of his film career: 'I purchased a machine last year', he is reported as saying, ' and I spent a lot of time and trouble in adapting it both for taking and projecting on a screen, although I utilise the machine merely as a means of obtaining subjects which I could otherwise

not get. Williamson also informed the Echo's representative that each of his films was 75ft. long. Two films, very popular with his audiences, we are told, show his own children playing 'Ring-a-ring-of-roses' and 'Fox and Geese'. Another successful picture was one he took of naval cutlass drill by the Hove Coastguards. 'The latter portion of the scene is where they march round and then come forward as though they were about to march out of the picture, but turn aside suddenly'. This little incident, which obviously pleased Williamson's innate sense of cinematic composition, is most significant for it is our first intimation of his future concern for technical innovation, of which he was one of the first exponents and for which he is now chiefly remembered, along with his confrere G. Albert Smith. Their part in the development of film technique will be examined in a future volume of this history.

On the 25 November and the following day, the Hove Camera Club held its second annual exhibition at the Town Hall, during which James Williamson demonstrated the Rontgen Rays and the cinematograph. It seems to have been his policy when giving film shows of this kind, to use films made by G.A. Smith and intersperse them with a few of his own, and perhaps supplement them with one or two from another source. This was certainly the case when he gave a show at 'A Grand Naval Entertainment' on behalf of the Royal Seamen and Mariners' Orphan Home, Portsmouth, which took place at the Town Hall on 24 November, the day before the Hove Camera Club's exhibition. We will quote the relevant part of the programme in full, since it provides a valuable means for dating some of his, and Smith's, films. After giving an account of the preceding part of the entertainment, the Hove Echo, in which the report appeared, continues:

> A series of Animated Photographs were then shown by Mr. Williamson. They were as follows:- Seamen at Cutlass Drill; Flag Drill; An excellent reproduction of a rough sea; A game of football; A game of cricket, in the course of which the batsman was run out; Bull Fight; A comic incident, representing a pretty housemaid hanging out articles on a clothes line. Her master follows and is soon discovered by his irate better half embracing the housemaid. His wife revenges herself by plucking out his hair by the roots; The Jubilee procession; The Naval Brigade, Colonials, Queen's Carriage; sailing boat coming ashore in a rough sea; The electic car at Brighton; Rough sea at Hove; Sailing boats racing (rounding the buoy); Making sausages. This scene represented the machine at work, into which live dogs were placed, re-appearing at the base as sausages; Miller and Sweep (a dusty fight); a comic effect with the "X" Rays; Tipsy, Topsy, Turvy, showing a ridiculous effect by reversing the motion of a photo; The Nelson Column on Trafalgar Day. A scene at the railway station brought this wonderful display to a termination.

The majority of the films mentioned were made by G.A. Smith, and can be identified from references to them in Smith's account book, or from a list of Smith's films published in the Warwick Trading Company's catalogue for 1898, for by that year Warwick had acquired the rights to Smith's films. Of the other films mentioned, THE BULL FIGHT was a Lumière film, then very popular, and THE NAVAL BRIGADE was a Watson film recently sold to Williamson by Smith. Only the two films, SEAMEN AT CUTLASS DRILL and FLAG DRILL can be attributed to Williamson himself.

Little is known at present about the fourth member of the Brighton group, Alfred Darling of 47 Chester Terrace. Williamson refers to him as having provided technical assistance to both himself and to Smith. There is no doubt that Darling was a very able mechanic, and the cinematographic cameras he was later to design were probably among the best in the world for their time. In 1897, he was associated with the firm of J. Wrench & Son, and in July took out a patent, with Alfred Wrench, for a claw-operated cine-camera with a variable shutter (Brit. Pat. No. 17248).

Like so many inventors, Darling's achievements are mostly submerged in the commercial world in which he worked, the credit generally going to the firm that employed him. Thus a great deal of the credit for the success of Wrench's early cinematographic apparatus must surely belong to him, and there can be little doubt that he enjoyed considerable prestige within the trade. There is no evidence for supposing that Darling was ever engaged in film production, although he is likely to have taken 'test strips' during the period when a particular camera he had designed was undergoing trials.

As we have already noted, Darling supplied several items of equipment to G.A. Smith and the latter's accounts show that the goods included a complete camera outfit, together with four extra aluminium reels; a film perforator; a film winder and two printing machines. Thus, contrary to popular belief, Darling was solely a manufacturer of cinematograph cameras, but also made other equipment connected with the trade.

Farther along the coast from Brighton, at Southsea near Portsmouth, the well-known yachting and marine photographers, G. West & Son, were established. Here the son Alfred J. West (1858-1937) was just beginning a successful career as a cinematographer and exhibitor of naval subjects which, from 1898 onwards, were to achieve a considerable reputation in England under the general title of WEST'S OUR NAVY. This series comprised a number of films dealing with various aspects of life ashore, and afloat, in the Royal Navy. In 1897, West carried out his first experiments with cinematography with the assistance of the Royal Naval Torpedo School, Portsmouth, but his film career more properly belongs to the succeeding years, so will be left to a future volume.

PORTER, OR AMBIVALENCE*

Noël Burch

The work of Edwin S. Porter - in so far as it is known to me, at least(1) - is a locus of contradictions which informed the development of the cinema in its beginnings. Among professional historians, circumscribed as they are, no matter what their orientation in other respects, by the linear view which has hitherto proved such a serious hindrance to any attempt to evolve a materialist theory of the history of the cinema, Porter's films have aroused entirely contradictory attitudes. Three may be distinguished, each corresponding to one of the main ideological positions which turn by turn have hindered any systematic examination of this period.

First there is the prevailing thesis concerning these beginnings, according to which a language gradually emerged out of a sort of primordial chaos generally described as 'theatrical': the language, the cinema's natural language, innate in the camera from the outset, but only brought into the light of day as the result of determined efforts by certain 'pioneers of genius'. From which it follows that the prescribed approach for anyone wishing to study this period is the enumeration of 'firsts': 'the first close-up', 'the first match cut', 'the first parallel montage', and so on ad nauseam. And although the deliberate falsification of documents in support of some film-maker or other's claims to priority is not entirely proven, what is certain is that the proper thoroughness was not displayed in the examination of certain documents, as I mention below. It was under the criterion of this pursuit of 'firsts' that many historians felt, like Lewis Jacobs,(2) that they could establish Porter as the 'inventor of cinematic language'. No such assertion, of course, in no matter what area, is admissible today.

Without departing from this linear and teleological view, other historians who stress the 'popular charms' of the primitive cinema, and who feel no obligation to argue precedence for Porter, fall into the opposite extreme: they see in Porter only a common plagiarist (I shall return to the ideological ramifications of this interesting accusation), largely outstripped as an 'artist' by the French film-makers and as a 'pioneer' by the English. This is the attitude of Deslandes and Richard, but also, to a certain extent, of their bête noire, Georges Sadoul(3).

Lastly, another attitude seems to have been emerging over the past few years, linked more or less to the notion that the primitive cinema was a sort of Paradise Lost, 'regained' today thanks to the various avant-garde movements. As early as 1962 Professor Gessner(4) felt he could trace the seeds for L'ANNÉE DERNIÈRE À MARIENBAD in the unusual montage of THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, while other writers like to contrast the 'avant-gardism' of Méliès with the 'conformism' of Porter, Griffith et al.

To understand why the adherents of a linear history - and as one sees, their ideological horizons can be very different - seem unable to read Porter's films, a brief examination of the forces working on the cinema at this period is necessary. Also relevant would be an analysis, not of the spontaneous emergence of some 'natural' language, but of the establishment of a mode of representation, historically and culturally determined, and of the conditions which enabled it to continue exercising an almost absolute hegemony over Western film production down to the present day. Such an analysis lies outside the scope of the present article, but my examination of some of Porter's films, which expose the first stages of the process, will provide some clues towards its explanation. First, however, a consideration of the contradictory forces that were working on the emergent cinema even before 1895, is necessary before I go on to describe how these forces were to exercise contradictory influences on these films of Porter's.

As the investigations I am conducting stand at present, I distinguish three forces or historical and cultural trends which moulded the cinema during its first two decades(5). Chief among these, obviously, was the aggregate of folk art kept alive by the urban working classes in Europe and the United States at the turn of the century. These comprise both modes of representation and narrative or gestural material deriving from melodrama, vaudeville, pantomime (in England), conjuring, music hall and circus; from caricatures, the 'penny plain, tuppence coloured' sheets, strip cartoons; from magic lantern shows in the home(6), the street and the theatre; from street entertainers, fairground acts(7), waxwork shows. The corollary to these circumstances (both cause and effect) was that in its early days the cinema addressed itself exclusively to the urban 'lower classes', and that its practitioners were for the most part still 'of humble origin'. It is therefore not surprising that for at least ten years the more affluent turned up their noses at the cinema, and that the middle classes contented themselves with sending their children (naturally) and the latter's nurses or sometimes (it came to the same thing) their mothers and grandmothers to these dubious places where all one saw was pictures reflecting, 'in form and content', the infantilism of the working classes.

The cinema, however, was developing within a society governed by certain specific production relationships. It would have been unthinkable that it might be 'immunised', that it might escape the underlying pressures(8) exercised by the specifically bourgeois modes of representation - this being my second 'force' - from literature, painting, and especially the theatre, which were then in their heyday. Moreover, although a film might very occasionally mirror the aspirations and struggles of the popular masses, the substance of the great majority of films at this period reflects, directly or indirectly, the viewpoint imposed by the ruling classes. But this had been true of the English melodrama, for instance, since its birth: only one or two 'factory melodramas' at the beginning of the 19th. century took up positions of class struggle (and, as with the primitive cinema, this was usually a matter of opportunism on the part of lower middle class playwrights addressing themselves to a working class audience). Nevertheless, the melodrama undoubtedly constituted a theatrical form quite distinct from those of the bourgeois theatre. So for the first ten years of the cinema's existence, linearity, haptic screen space and the individualisation of characters are features to be found only incidentally here and there. They still figure largely as elements dominated, in particular, by others of popular origin.

But between 1908 and 1915 this relationship was to undergo a gradual reversal, principally because of the economic development of the cinema and the resulting need to attract an audience with more money and leisure at its disposal.

A third force, which I shall call 'scientistic', also presided over this first period of development; and for a while its role, in conjunction with the modes of popular representation, was wholly determinative. This 'scientism' certainly figured as an element of dominant ideology, but it was also linked to genuinely scientific practices; and it was in this respect that it was to influence the early cinema in a way directly opposed to the impetus given by those arts on which the bourgeois era had already left its mutable mark. On a strictly technological level, the first moving pictures came most directly out of experiments by Muybridge, Marey, and other researchers whose goal was most certainly not the restitution or representation of movement, but simply its analysis. The physiologist Marey considered himself satisfied when, by means of the various ingenious instruments and apparatus he had constructed for the purpose, he had succeeded in breaking down human and animal movement into successive photographic images. Yet only a small further step remained, still from a strictly technological point of view, for engineers like Auguste and Louis Lumière, or Edison and Dickson, to complete these experiments by synthesising the movement that had been thus decomposed.

Already adumbrated between these two first steps towards the entertainment cinema, however - by the Lumières and by the Edison team - are the terms of the contradiction which was to govern this whole first period. Edison, for whom the recording and reproduction of moving images was merely - and this is significant - an extension of his earlier (and very profitable) invention of the phonograph, had set as the goal of his first experiments in this new area the recording and mass distribution of opera (an echo of the ideology of the Gesamtkunstwerk). And one of the 'cinema' devices which emerged from his laboratories, the kinetophonograph - whose lone spectator, in the sensory isolation of its twin eye-pieces and headphones, received more or less synchronous images and sounds - was a striking prefiguration of the conditions of cushioned darkness to be met with in the picture palaces of the 1930s. At the opposite extreme of the production line, it was Edison's collaborators who also constructed a studio foreshadowing the first sound stages, and on it shot what was probably the first real moving picture close-up: FRED OTT'S SNEEZE (1895). It seems to me indicative of the profound nature of the forces which were thus already at work on the emergent cinema that the stipulation from the journalist who initiated this film was that the close-up should show a pretty girl sneezing. It was purely for reasons of expediency, it appears, that Dickson happened to use his assistant, Fred Ott, thus frustrating his 'client' of the orgasmic image of his desires. But Raff and Gammon, sub-contractors of the Edison/Dickson processes, were soon to make the erotic vocation of the close-up(9) explicit in another way with their premonitory film THE KISS (1896), a brief tableau borrowed from a successful Broadway play (in other words, from the bourgeois theatre). Edison himself, it seems, lost all interest in the cinema when he realized that his dream of 'reproducing life' was impracticable in the short term (as president of a vast trust, of course, he would soon display a keenly renewed interest!). Nonetheless, through his vision of the cinema and in the drift of the early experiments made under his direction, his name stands for the presence, during the cinema's

beginnings, of forces stemming directly from the bourgeois ideology of representation; forces which were, before too long, to exercise an overwhelming influence on the future of the film industry.

But the 'invention of the cinema' did not take place solely in Orange, New Jersey.

Georges Sadoul is correct in stressing that the first programme at the Grand Café offered themes whose class content was perfectly evident to a clientele recruited on the Grands Boulevards of Paris; they saw that distinguished representatives of the solid citizenry of Lyons were showing off their wives, their children, their pastimes - in short, their property. Yet these films also possess another dimension. Although the class content of a film like LA SORTIE DES USINES LUMIÈRE is identical to the rest on an iconographic level - the Lumières show their workers just as they show their private harbour at La Ciotat - it presents (along with L'ENTRÉE D'UN TRAIN EN GARE, RECRÉATION À LA MARINIÈRE, LANCEMENT D'UN NAVIRE À LA CIOTAT, and innumerable other films from the first Lumière catalogue) a representational approach diametrically opposed to the one in THE KISS, or for that matter in LE DÉJEUNER DE BÉBÉ. And this approach, which consisted in setting up a camera outside the factory gates and cranking the handle as soon as they opened in order to record an event which was certainly predictable in general outline but totally unrehearsed in detail, is still akin to the 'scientificness' of Muybridge photographing a galloping horse, or Marey birds in flight(10). These 'documentary' images on the one hand, and the 'narrative tableau' of L'ARROSEUR ARROSÉ(11) on the other, were to give birth to a sort of panoramic view - an acentric, 'non-directive' image leaving the eye more or less 'free' to roam over the entire frame, and to organize the signifiers as it will (as best it can); an image, moreover, in which the presence of the characters never predominates over their environment(12), but is invariably inscribed within it(13). And it was this view, to be seen in both the films of Méliès and Edwin S. Porter's work for the Edison company, which was to dominate cinema the world over for more than ten years.

Of the four vitally important Porter films of 1903 that are known to me, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN is the most purely primitive; that is to say, it resumes and strikingly illuminates some of the principal features of the period. It also shows that the primitive mode of representation was not simply an 'obstacle'; despite the opprobrium habitually levelled against the primitive 'theatricality' in terms of which this film is entirely conceived - and which I shall attempt to reconsider - it is a remarkable piece of work. Made following the popular success of a stage version of Harriet Beecher Stowe's celebrated novel, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN is an admirable example of the relationship which apparently existed between the primitive cinema and its audience. In the context of the system prevalent today (and this has been true for more than sixty years now), a screen adaptation of even a very well-known work must 'make as though' that work had no previous existence outside the film. The 'digest' that is made of it must hold water on its own: a typical Hollywood adaptation, even of the Bible, will identify and establish all its characters and situations as though introducing them for the first time, in accordance with the canons of the enclosed, autarchic world of the

bourgeois novel where the story (and history, for that matter) exists only in so far as it is invented by the text. A film like UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, which 'tells' a novel several hundred pages long in some twenty tableaux and in ten minutes, was predicated upon the knowledge of the audience, who were left to fill in enormous narrative gaps for themselves (possibly with the aid on occasion of a lecturer, but whose role was to jog the audience's memory rather than to take its place). Each tableau is preceded by a title, such as 'Eliza asks Tom to Go Away with Her'. Apart from their obvious reliance on the spectator's previous knowledge of the novel (the title quoted is the first in the film), these succinct titles always refer to the climax of the tableau, often still some time away. For example, 'Eva and Tom in the Garden' introduces a tableau which begins with a long dance number performed by black servants before Eva and Tom make their entry. There is therefore no direct causal link between title and image of the kind which was, of course, to become the rule after 1915 (and which would find its equivalent in the word/image relationship after 1929). Each tableau is thus programmed in advance, each coup de théâtre is 'given away' in advance, which obviates all effect of suspense and induces, with the complicity of the audience, an expectation quite different from the kind of expectation involved in the bourgeois theatre and novel, for instance. Actually, the notion of suspense is entirely irrelevant here, since the audience, knowing the story already, ultimately did not come to discover its twists and turns, but to look at the pictures, to enjoy the concatenation of a series of spectacularly presented archetypes - to browse through an album of sumptuous photographs illustrating a text which was to be found elsewhere: it came to participate in a ritual of confirmation(14). One thinks of the medieval Japanese courtesans contemplating the scrolls which illustrated familiar stories handed down over the centuries. And this is only one of the ways in which the primitive cinema more closely resembles the arts of the Orient than those of the bourgeois West(15).

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, according to the historians of linearity, is a 'retrograde' film. And the montage model it presents is indeed the first and the most elementary produced by the cinema (around 1896): a succession of tableaux without continuity links, either spatial or temporal, undoubtedly 'modelled' on the theatre, but - and the qualification is important - the popular theatre: we are a long way from the 'three unities' which the bourgeois theatre borrowed from the classical breviary. And one has to be completely blinded by the ideology of 'progress' in the cinema not to realize that within the framework fixed by this model, no matter how elementary, remarkable films were produced: Haggar's THE LIFE OF CHARLES PEACE (1904), for instance, or Billy Bitzer's KENTUCKY FEUD (1905), not to mention films which have, admittedly been more universally recognized, like Zecca's L'HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME (1901) or Méliès' LE VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE (1902). These films, deriving from popular entertainments and bearing no real relationship to the theatre of Shaw, Feydeau, Antoine or Belasco, constitute a cinematic 'specificity' whose legitimacy we should, after Warhol, after Godard, be in a position to recognize. We can, in other words, no longer impugn the plebeian origins of the cinema, taxed with 'theatricality', as a sort of original sin expiated by the 'great Griffith'.

In fact Griffith and his more innovatory contemporaries were to endow the cinema with the essential characteristics of another theatricality - that of 'the grown-ups', of the bourgeois theatre - through a number of contributions which were undoubtedly constituent of a second 'specificity'. The failure of the attempts to make a pure and simple transposition of the bourgeois theatre to the screen (Films d'Art), a failure due precisely to the basic incompatibility between the primitive mode of representation and the codes of the bourgeois theatre, had shown that only the establishment of a thoroughly haptic screen space, the linearisation of the visual signifiers (through montage, 'centering', and lighting), the constitution of an enveloping diegetic space-time, and so on, could in fact 'render' what was essential to this theatre (as well as the novels and paintings) prized by the middle classes...the lack of which was being increasingly sharply felt by film-makers, producers and the more perspicacious critics, notably in America.

But no history of the cinema claiming to be informed by historical and dialectical materialism can any longer give absolute precedence to this second 'specificity' - the institutional mode of representation - over the first, from either a heuristic or even an aesthetic point of view.

The first manifestations of a narrativity through montage (the juxtaposition of several shots temporally and spatially disjoined, and linked principally by a knowledge of the story to which they refer: a system of which UNCLE TOM'S CABIN is a belated and fully achieved example) were the innumerable versions of THE PASSION which flourished in both Europe and America after 1896. Without the aid of a single inter-title(16), sometimes presumably without even a narrator, these sequences of visually autonomous tableaux nevertheless formed an easily recognizable narrative progression, where everyone knew what had gone before and what was coming next, and where everyone spontaneously furnished all the necessary mental 'articulations'.

Next came a more elaborate form, which held sway for a good ten years: the chase film, thought to have been conceived in England around 1900. The trend of this evolution is obvious: at each stage, the concern was to weave closer and closer and more and more significant links between the successive tableaux. To start with, lacking the more sophisticated liaisons which were not long in appearing (match-cutting systems, alternate montage, and so on), film-makers contented themselves with launching a narrative course, clearly constructed from one tableau to the next, which would forge a chain of spatio-temporal sequentiality no matter what. No matter that the screen direction (and/or entries and exits from the frame) comprised 'bad matches' (according to criteria formulated much later, of course); the simple situation of the chase, bi-univocally concatenated from one shot to the next by its very nature, sufficed to make the narrative movement legible. This was the first decisive step towards closure, towards the linearity of the institutional mode.

With THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY - also 1903 - it becomes evident why Porter is the 'Janus' of this period. With this film he had - to talk like a traditional historian - one foot effectively 'in the past' and one 'in the future'. Admittedly phrases like this do relate to a very real trend in history; but for my part I shall simply say that this film has some of the characteristics of two modes of representation, one of which was to succeed the other, but cannot be said to embody the future all on its own(17). And it is precisely the co-existence of these two modes within the same 'text' - and above all the manner of this co-existence - that makes Porter's films so arresting and, from a heuristic point of view, so important. THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY opens with a series of tableaux showing 'scenes from daily life' in a settlement in the Far West (and one cannot stress too highly the fact that at this time the terms still referred to a living reality; hence, perhaps, in part, the extremely realistic effect of some of the tableaux in this film - or in KENTUCKY FEUD). Nothing seems to bind these tableaux together, unless (possibly) the continuing presence of the same characters. These characters, however, are still so dwarfed within the frame, and their dress so similar(18), that to distinguish one from another is difficult, to say the least. One would be hard put to it, for instance, to assert that the characters seen in the saloon (where a somewhat intemperate cowboy rides in on horseback, and where a citizen is persuaded to 'dance' by six-gun bullets) are the same as the ones subsequently seen in front of the hotel (the arrival of a stagecoach full of tourists, an exhibition of lassooing). This latter shot, which is exemplary in its 'primitivism', with a small crowd moving about and several actions going on at once, lasts for several minutes. Then, about two-thirds of the way through the film, there is a radical change in narrative method: bandits attack the stagecoach, and in a series of shots which instantly arouse a sense of recognition in the spectator today(19), a 'thrilling chase' begins, still in long shot of course, but with the connection between the shots (both temporal and spatial) very clearly defined as being one of proximity (if not of actual contiguity). Here we are at the opposite extreme from the loose autarchy of the earlier tableaux which 'led' nowhere, and whose busy, acentric composition has been replaced by a determined effort towards simplification and 'centering' which greatly facilitates the establishment, link by link, of the chain of signification.

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, Porter's most celebrated film, made at the end of this crucial year, 1903, after THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY, extends this concatenatory structure to the whole film (with the exception, as we shall see, of one shot). Each tableau therefore now brings its 'brick' to the narrative edifice (Pudovkin's terms are already apt here), and we pass from one décor to the next with inexorable logic. The shots showing the robbery itself arouse a very strong impression of continuity and proximity, and certain articulations even come remarkably close to an effect of contiguity (which was undoubtedly anticipatory for the period). The final pursuit, notably with its crossing of a river followed by a relatively mobile camera, is a model of the genre already explored in England. Yet almost all the shots show the action from 'far away', so that it still remains just as difficult to distinguish between the characters.

There is even one moment at which the modern viewer, attuned to certain codes which developed in symbiosis with the institutional mode, invariably assumes the horsemen riding towards the camera to be the lawmen, whereas they are in fact the outlaws, as one realizes only when the pursuing lawmen appear in frame behind them.

Given the course that Porter had taken, this remote impersonality, with its lack of presence and individualization, could not but be felt as a deficiency...just as it was by the bourgeois 'non-audience' which turned up its nose at Porter's films along with the rest(20). No doubt that was why he added (and this may have been a 'first') a close shot of a man (the Edison catalogue states that it is 'Barnes, leader of the outlaw band') aiming his gun at the camera 'and firing point-blank at each individual in the audience'. But the most remarkable thing is that this shot was originally delivered to the American nickelodeons and the fairground cinemas of Europe in the form of a separate reel; it was up to the exhibitors to decide whether to stick it on at the beginning or the end of the film.

This shot is rich in its implications. In the first place, in addition to being what was no doubt an excellent publicity gag aimed not at the audience but at the exhibitors (at a time when they were beginning to clamour for novelty), the gesture of allowing exhibitors to choose where to place the shot suggests that the production executives, even though they may have realized what it introduced into the Lilliputian world of the remaining tableaux in terms of an individualized presence, had absolutely no idea what to do with it. Not only did they feel it impossible (they were in fact not yet in possession of the necessary syntactical means) to introduce this shot during the course of the film - would it not break up just this effect of continuity which had been so hardly won? - but they were very probably unable to settle the problem of whether it should go at the beginning or the end. Placed at the beginning, of course, the 'frightening' effect of this unaccustomed image might soften the spectators up emotionally; but would they not then be disappointed by the subsequent return to and maintenance of separation from the spectator and the codes of acting that entailed? Placed at the end of the film, the shot might have a surprise effect (by contrast with the preceding ones) and leave the spectator with a pleasant memory; but in that case, would the shot 'colour' the whole film as one might hope?(21). Because, of course, this strategy however prophetic it may have seemed, also remains a 'step backwards' as our advocates of linear interpretations would say, because it in fact undermines the narrative closure which was beginning to establish itself at this time. The shot is not an element in the film; it simply purports to establish a new kind of link between the spectator and the screen (and the metaphor of an outlaw firing straight at the camera indicates clearly enough the sort of relationship - fascinated aspiration and forcible rape - it was to be). But it does so from 'outside' the diegesis: this outlaw is in fact the lecturer in a new form. What we have here is therefore a device that is essentially primitive in character, both in its quality of 'openness' and of paradoxical 'distancing' (at one level the gesture annihilates the distance, and at another, re-establishes it).

Interestingly enough, this device of the 'emblematic' close shot soon became common practice and remained so for several years. Lubin's THE BOLD BANK ROBBERY (1907) begins and ends with a group portrait (in close shot) of the three protagonists(22), and it was not uncommon for a film to end with a close shot of the pretty heroine, whose charms had hitherto been revealed only in ensemble shots, smiling at the camera. One can imagine the reactions of a predominantly male audience to this sudden 'intimacy'.

By pointing to the existence of an earlier film called FIRE! (1901) by the important English pioneer Williamson, some historians have sought to diminish the interest of THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, which is both the most impressive and most problematic of the films made in this key year in Porter's career. It is in fact true that these two films are very much alike, in both subject matter and narrative profile. But quite apart from the fact that Porter's film comprises very specific experiments which make it of exceptional interest to the historian, such attempts to project into the world of primitive cinema our conceptions of originality and plagiarism (deriving from bourgeois notions of private property) - in actual fact our repression of intertextuality - are merely another manifestation of the determination to linearize a phenomenon which is basically resistant. To take this attitude is to ignore the fact (while acknowledging it as an 'exotic' item) that for several years cinematographic pictures simply did not belong to anyone, either by law or by right (just as still photographs, for several decades, belonged to no one)(23), and there was a free circulation of ideas and images such as we can only guess at today. The notion of plagiarism is all the more irrelevant here in that most films borrowed both form and subject from elsewhere anyway - from the popular arts which comprised the last real 'public domain' - and that far from degrading 'original ideas', the films which 'copied' others frequently improved on them. (Sigmund Lubin's reputation for being a mere plagiarist does not always seem to me to stand up to a viewing of the films themselves, which are often very much above average in quality).

At all events, among the major contradictions of this period, as illustrated by Porter's films, the one that implies the deepest disruption is undoubtedly that which is illustrated in THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. The film opens with a montage often comprising ellipses so startling that one wonders how audiences could follow the story without a lecturer's help (in his office, the chief fireman dreams of a woman and child in danger - they are seen in vignette; in close-up, a hand breaks the glass and activates a fire alarm; in their dormitory, the firemen get out of bed and rush to the pole that leads to the engine-house; in the engine-house, the fire engines start up; the doors open, and the engines leave). Next, a series of shots corresponding directly to the 'cops and robbers' or Western chase: the engines hurry to the scene of the fire. Finally a long shot shows the burning house and the engines arriving. We pass inside the house (a rudimentary studio set): the woman makes an agitated appeal in front of the window, then collapses on to the bed. A ladder appears, then a fireman.

He carries the woman to safety in his arms, returns, carries off the child, returns, and puts out the fire (the whole comprising lengthy intervals during which the frame remains empty between the successive disappearances and reappearances by the characters). The next shot shows the facade of the burning house. The woman appears at the window, makes an agitated appeal and disappears. The firemen set up a ladder...and we see, obviously occupying the same length of time, the same action that we previously witnessed from inside the house.

Seeing this curious document in the form in which I have described it - that is to say, as it was deposited at the Library of Congress in 1903 - any historian worthy of the name ought to find the process of its 'dialetical' gestation obvious enough: sensing the as yet still distant possibility of absolute ubiquity in the camera - the possibility, that is to say, that the spectator might accept a series of shots as being different points of view of a single continuous action, rather than simply variants of 'what he might see from his seat' (here I am simplifying problems that are more complex) - Porter in fact films one action twice, from two different 'points of view' (actually the two were several miles apart, which also implies an extraordinary intuition of the possibilities offered by montage in the area of fictitious connections, theorized by Kuleshov some twenty years later). But at the same time Porter felt, probably with reason, that the audience was not yet ready to accept this sort of transportation in space-time, and he (or someone else, it doesn't really matter) decided to show the two actions successively...which obviously has the effect of undermining the already remarkably controlled sequential linearization of the preceding scenes. So once again one of Porter's 'steps forward' in fact ends by accentuating some features of the primitive cinema even more strongly than before: its non-homogeneity in THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY, its non-occlusion in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, and here its non-linearity.

But the historiography of this film comprises another lesson. Around 1940, it seems, on the strength of an entry in an Edison catalogue which appeared to suggest that this double sequence had been put together in 1903 in accordance with the rules of modern continuity, someone (who?) simply re-edited the film, leaving out parts that quite obviously originally belonged, and Porter was turned into the modest inventor of one of the basic syntagms of the institutional mode...some ten years before any such figure began to appear in the standard syntax. What is unfortunate is that a number of historians, including Georges Sadoul, continued to give credence to this myth following Lewis Jacobs, who appears to have been the first to take this catalogue into account. More interesting, however, is the question as to the authenticity or otherwise of the description. For if it should prove to be authentic (and for the moment I have no real evidence to the contrary), it might mean that the aspiration to this linear ubiquity which was to become characteristic of the institutional mode had reached a level where it could be written down but not yet realized on film - not because of some technical obstacle, but because of an enormous blind spot difficult for us to analyse. However, the fact that once these two shots were filmed, it was decided to connect them in a manner implying an obvious non-linearity rather than disturb the unity of the spatial viewpoint, seems to me to say a good deal about the alterity of the relationship these early films entertained with the spectators who watched them.

Does it not suggest that the feeling of being seated in a theatre in front of a screen had, for spectators then, a sort of priority over the feeling of being carried away by an imaginary time-flow, modelled on the semblance of linearity which ordinary time has for us? But any such hypothesis is extremely hazardous, and would require the backing of a good deal more evidence before it could be seriously entertained.

Visionary, plagiarist, 'auteur'...none of these clichés can really help in situating Porter's work. It is the readiness to confine his films within these terms which leads so often to the obvious being bypassed; the fact that these films are the loci of contradictions, that their contradictions are also those of an era of cinema, and that neither can be deciphered except by way of this twin perspective. But once this decipherment has been achieved (and I can only claim to have prepared the way here: among other things, access to a far wider corpus of work is essential), it will enable us to determine absolutely basic matters concerning the genealogy of the institutional mode as well as the nature of the primitive modes; and it is probably in this respect that Porter's films will ultimately occupy a privileged place in the history of the cinema.

Postscript

The Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF) symposium in Brighton (May 1978) gave me an opportunity of seeing most of the remaining Porter films that have survived. These confirm the theses set forth here on the basis of what turn out to be, indeed, his most important films (to which, however, I would now add THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN POLICEMAN (1905). American scholars have now definitive confirmation of what has been for some years the prevailing hypothesis concerning THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (a distribution copy found in Maine is identical with copyright version) and while it was pointed out to me that 1903 is an incorrect date for THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY, the fact that this film actually dates from 1906 merely confirms that 'progress' in Porter's work, as in primitive cinema as a whole, was anything but linear.

Translated by Tom Milne; this article appeared in SCREEN Autumn 1978.

NOTES

* This article will be appearing in 1979 in Le Cinéma Americain, approche textuelle, Raymond Bellour ed, Flammarion, Paris.

1. Eight films out of the fifty-odd which have survived: THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN COWBOY, THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, ROMANCE OF THE RAILS (all 1903); ROUNDING UP THE YEGGMEN (1904); DREAM OF A WELSH RAREBIT FIEND (1906); RESCUED FROM AN EAGLE'S NEST (1907). ROMANCE OF THE RAILS, one of the earliest advertising films I have seen, is remarkable chiefly for a long tracking shot behind a train; THE DREAM OF A WELSH RAREBIT FIEND is a pleasant trick film in the Pathé manner; RESCUED FROM AN EAGLE'S NEST is absolutely typical of the general advance of the American cinema in 1907, but is otherwise unremarkable. I limit myself to a closer analysis of the four major films of 1903.

2. The Rise of the American Film, first published New York, 1939, reprinted, New York, 1968.

3. Jacques Deslandes, Histoire comparée du cinéma: v1 De la cinématique au cinématographe, 1826-1896, Tournai 1966; v2, with Jacques Richard, Du cinématographie au cinéma, 1896-1906, Tournai, 1968. Georges Sadoul, Histoire générale du cinéma, 3rd ed, Paris, 1973 - continuing.

4. Robert Gessner: 'Porter and the Creation of Cinematic Motion', Journal of the Society of Cinematologists vII, 1962.

5. The present article has been produced in connection with a wider study with Jorge Dana relating to the genealogy of the mode of representation characteristic of the institution of cinema.

6. Aimed, it should be stressed, at the children of the bourgeoisie, like all scientific toys such as the zoetrope or the praxinoscope which foreshadowed the projection of moving pictures. A fascinating study could be made of the relationship between the popular presentational arts (circus, puppets, etc) and an audience of middle class children not yet broken in to the codes of the representational arts of their class.

7. One of the most important features of the early fairground cinema in England and France was the lecturer, a barker who lured passers-by into the booth, then delivered a commentary during the screening whose 'distanciating' effect became literally unbearable around 1910 with the development of 'absorbing' techniques in the dominant narrativity. The American lecturer, whose social implications were quite different, derived from the tradition of the slide-show lecture.

8. Transmitted, in particular, through the medium of a specialized press which, in America at least, developed rapidly after 1905. Cf Skauffman and Henstall (eds), American film criticism from the beginnings to 'Citizen Kane', New York, 1972.

9. A vocation deriving in our cultures from the codes of social distance as classified by the semiological discipline known as proxemics, whereby the close-up corresponds to the 'intimate distance' associated with bodily contact (intercourse or wrestling) cf Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension, London, 1969.

10. The etymology of the name given by the Lumières to their invention (Cinématographe: 'inscription of movement') as against the Edison/Dickson Vitascope ('image of life') neatly summarises the distance separating their respective ideological approaches.

11. Possibly derived from a contemporary strip cartoon.

12. The contrast with the black background in Dickson's interiors is striking.

13. This is the great paradox involved in the literal transposition to the screen of the proscenium frame: the characters are suddenly 'crushed' by sets which they would have dominated in the theatre through their voices and their 'presence' in relief, as well as the use of lighting...and opera-glasses.

14. It is of course difficult to imagine how recent immigrants, said to form the main clientèle of the nickelodeons (in order to perfect their English, according to Billy Bitzer) reacted to a film like this.

15. In Japan, the cinema retained its 'lecturer' (the benshi, derived in particular from the doll theatres) until 1937.

16. These do not seem to have been incorporated into films prior to 1900; the magic lanterns with which the more prosperous fairground booths were equipped were apparently used only to project the opening titles. Since each tableau of the Passion films was sold separately, each had its own opening title.

17. The future was also THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI, much closer to the primitives (or to us) than to Griffith or DeMille.

18. No doubt the zealous attempts to make films in colour, which very soon resulted in a number of ingenious processes, were largely due to a premonition that this problem of differentiation might be resolved by colour.

19. Which doubtless also explains why our impression of 'hyper-realism' vanishes too:for us montage, contrasted with 'non-montage', is an undeniable sign of 'fiction'.

20. With the exception, it seems, of travel films and other documentaries, though these were still made 'in the Lumière manner'.

21. It goes without saying that I do not claim, here or elsewhere, to be reconstituting the thoughts of people long since dead; I am simply trying to open out, in a graphic way, the area of speculation suggested by this shot.

22. The effect here is even more 'progressive' than in Porter's case, since the characters, instead of being filmed against a black background, are in the setting shown in the following or preceding tableau. The match cut was not very far away - in fact the English, it seems, were employing it already: cf Cecil Hepworth's RESCUED BY ROVER (1904).

23. cf Maurice Edelman: Le Droit saisi par la photographie, Maspero, Paris 1972.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF EARLY CINEMA

Michael Chanan - UK

In the early days, films were treated as straightforward commodities to be sold on the open market at a uniform price of so much per foot. Different kinds of films were all treated in the same way - no differentiation was made according to type or subject matter. The price of all new films was fixed, and it was determined primarily by the cost of raw film stock. This condition can be registered in the fact that film production at this stage was simply called manufacture; and that not unnaturally the price of films fell during the first couple of years after the first commercial films shows as the supply of ready-coated celluloid roll film increased.

Yet the film is not an ordinary commodity. It has a number of peculiarities. It took time, however, for the film business to discover what this consisted in, so the history of the early economic development of cinema is in large part the history of this process of discovery.

Consider first the unexpected fact that Edison neglected to patent his Kinetoscope outside the United States. Was this an oversight? Or was it that he didn't believe it worth the expense for something he didn't think would be more than a short-term money spinner (a common enough view at the time)? Some people have suggested it was probably the latter, since he wasn't normally careless about patents. After all, as early as 1881, the British Electrical Review described him as "the young man who keeps the road to the Patent Office hot with his footsteps", and explained:

> His plan appears to be to patent all the ideas that occur to him, whether tried or untried, and to trust to future labours to select and combine those which prove themselves the fittest. The result is that the great bulk of his patents are valueless in point of practicability; but they serve to fence the ground in from other competitors.[1]

All the historical evidence now supports this type of reading of Edison's business sense. We can no longer think of him as an intuitive "eureka" type of inventor. He was in fact one of the first to organise a proper research laboratory, to treat invention as a business like any other, to deal in patents systematically as pieces of property which can be bought and sold, which can yield royalties, can be offered up as securities against investments and so on. All this has been obscured, however, by popular historical accounts, which do not deserve to be called historical at all, since they merely pander to ideological notions of genius and inspiration. Edison's contemporaries did not all suffer from such illusions, even though he had successfully manufactured for himself a popular reputation as "the wizard of Menlo Park". As the English journal Photographic Work said in 1894:

> The exhibition of Mr Edison's Kinetoscope in London is disappointing, as when it is announced that Mr Edison has

> 'invented' something, we at least expect that he will carry refinement, completeness and perfection of construction a long way beyond what has previously been done. Mr Edison should, perhaps, rather rank as a careful and laborious constructor than as an inventor - that is to say, if a man may be called a constructor of articles which are made by others under his control.[2]

Where in that case should we look for an explanation of why Edison did not take out a patent on the Kinetoscope outside the United States? We may turn to the English film pioneer Birt Acres, who said in a letter to the British Journal of Photography in 1896:

> I believe that no patents were taken out on the Edison machine, the Company relying on the difficulty of the successful making of films, and, as machines were of no use without films, they made it a stipulation with the sale of films that they were only to be used with their own machines.[3]

If this was Edison's policy, what we know, of course, is that it didn't work; largely because it is the nature of invention that an invention is rarely unique. Again we must depart here from conventional popular history, which is forever remarking on the strange coincidences of discovery and invention. There are always coincidences, yes; but there's nothing strange about that. Invention is brought about by a particular conjunction of technological opportunity with exploitation of economic conditions. If the conditions exist, it would be surprising if the same invention, more or less, was <u>not</u> achieved independently and simultaneously by different people. Technological opportunity is the consequence of the historical stage of development which has been reached by the forces of production. In the case of the invention of cinematography, this means: the improvement of photographic emulsions; the development of precision engineering and instrument making and its application to the problem of the intermittent drive mechanism; the development of the chemicals industry involved in the quite unconnected invention of celluloid, the first of the plastics, and the improvement of its production techniques to the point where it became available as a thin film, durable, flexible and transparent enough to provide the base for the film strip. Economic conditions then provide the mechanisms whereby any particular invention may be financed, developed and tested, and finally marketed. Here the legal superstructure, which defines property rights in certain forms of knowledge through the patents laws, comes into play. But the period when cinematography was invented and its commercialisation initiated, was a transitional period in this respect, and this was one of the reasons for Edison's failure to control the market which he played a part in opening up; in spite of the extensive experiences he and his associates had in patent litigation in respect of other inventions.

The story is well known whereby the London precison instrument maker R. W. Paul was asked to copy an Edison Kinetoscope and initially refused because he assumed it would be subject to patent; and how he then undertook to

manufacture his own Kinetoscopes when he discovered that it wasn't. These he sold to travelling showmen and, in his own words, "in conjunction with business friends installed fifteen at the Exhibition at Earls Court, London, showing some of the first of our British films, including the Boat Race and Derby of 1895".[4] But this is skipping over certain crucial intermediary stages. Paul was able to copy the Kinetoscope easily enough, and at first he and his customers relied on the supply of Edison's own films. When Edison heard what was going on he of course tried to cut off the supply. This made it necessary for Paul to devise a camera to make films of his own in order for the enterprise to succeed. Two other considerations should be mentioned here. First, it is possible that the films were subject to international copyright. Several commentators have supposed as much, although more research would be needed to confirm this. Secondly, Paul had been struck with the commercial limitations of the money-in-the-slot peep-show machine, and resolved to devise a method of projection. His project for a camera was also necessary to expand the supply of films to guarantee the success of this further enterprise.

Should Paul be counted as one of the inventors of cinematography? As a precision instrument maker he was well equipped for the tasks he set himself, and his independent achievement in producing both a camera and a projector cannot be doubted (apart from the debated question of the role played by Birt Acres as his collaborator, which I don't want to go into here). Moreover the intermittent drive mechanism he developed was an improvement on Edison's. He employed an established technique with which he was obviously well familiar, the Maltese Cross, and the application of this device was enough at the time to ensure that he would be granted his own patent. Nevertheless the question of whether he should be counted an inventor is misconceived, at any rate when it asks for a simple unequivocal answer. It seems to assume we know what an inventor is. But before the era of corporate capitalism and the systematic application of massive funds to research and development, historically successful inventors were in fact those who were able to combine their technological skills with an ability to play the board of economics. What produces success in these conditions is the astuteness to turn an invention into the means of achieving a technological rent. A technological rent is a surplus-profit originating from the protection of technical advances or innovations by means of monopolistic practices.

What counts here as a monopolistic practice? In <u>The Beginnings of Cinema in England</u>, John Barnes has remarked that information about the first camera which Paul made is difficult to come by, but this isn't surprising: "....cameras generally are the least documented of early cinematographic equipment, since it was usually the practice of the first film-makers to supply films exclusively for use in projectors of their own make. The camera was thus regarded as the fountainhead of their success and its details were kept secret."[5]

An important clue to this situation was the absence of standardisation in the perforation of raw film stock during the first few years. It was a

while before major suppliers like Eastman began to produce stocks which were ready perforated. The reason for this delay was the conditions of early competition in both the manufacture of celluloid and the manufacture of equipment. Until the process of continuous casting on rotating drums was introduced in 1899, no single manufacturer of celluloid was able to be sure of monopoly control, either in terms of capturing a sufficiently large section of the market or in terms of sufficiently consistent quality. The evidence is unclear as to whether priority for continuous casting belongs to Eastman or the Celluloid Manufacturing Company, but in any case the method gave much greater lengths and a uniform thickness, it eliminated the static electricity marking which sometimes resulted from casting on a flat surface, and, moreover it was operable 24 hours a day.

Before that, however, the structure of the market allowed direct competition in the supply of celluloid by small scale producers who did not have the means or expertise to supply the finished product - raw film stock ready to go straight into the camera or the printer. Because of the unreliability of the supply, filmmakers not only equipped themselves to apply their own perforations, but often bought their celluloid in sheets and cut and coated it themselves as well. But the reason why early conditions produced this effect was largely the competition which existed in the means of production - i.e. cameras and projectors - which still lay in the hands of individual small entrepreneurs. As long as each producer was in competition with every other producer of the means of production, and therefore zealous of his own techniques, standardisation could not take effect. One of the factors which contributed to this situation, at any rate in Britain, was the state of Patents legislation. It was not until the Patents Act of 1907 that, as a direct result of increasing technological competition in a whole series of fields and the ensuing wrangles, an official search for novelty on the part of the Patent Office before a patent could be granted was introduced. Many of the patents granted in connection with moving pictures would likely not have been granted if this provision had been in operation earlier. (As an example of the immediate effects of the 1907 Act in the field of cinema, one need only consider the ensuing history of patent litigation over Urban's Kinemacolor process.)

These early conditions should also be understood in terms of the absence as yet of any established 'compartmentalisation' of production into the various specialised sectors which later came to characterise the structure of the film industry. Such specialisation had not yet developed, just as there was no division of labour in the production process itself, among the members of the film crew, the technicians. Of the firms which established positions of leadership in the first few years, many made films as well as manufacturing equipment, but their business in equipment prevailed over their business making films. That is to say, they did not make equipment in order to be able to sell films, they made and sold films in order to sustain their primary business making equipment. Thus it would happen that the maker of a projector, in order to gain an edge over a competitor, typically incorporated an idiosyncractic design, for example in the

perforations, corresponding to their own camera, in order to ensure that purchasers of the projector would also have to purchase films from the same source. The object of this strategy was not to capture the market in films, but to penetrate and extend the market in order to increase demand in what we would nowadays call the 'hardware'.

Thus it is possible to understand the pattern taken by such businesses as Paul's: a primary undertaking in the manufacture and sale first of kinetoscopes and then of projectors, and a secondary one in the manufacture and sale of film. But such a pattern wasn't unique. Elsewhere too several companies which dominated production during the whole of the period right up to the First World War began by manufacturing equipment. These included Pathé and Gaumont in France, Edison, Biograph and Vitagraph in the United States, and Messter in Germany. Their situation may be likened to leading companies in radio broadcasting in the United States in the 20s, in the first few years, before the establishment of the commercial broadcasting system. A good many radio stations were initially set up by equipment manufacturers for the simple reason that without the transmission of programmes the public radio enterprise was pointless. There are differences, of course, between radio and film, but it is precisely the comparison which enables us to understand the peculiarity of film as a commodity. In both cases, a primary distinction needs to be made between hardware and software. Hardware refers to the means of production, and of broadcasting (diffusion)/exhibition/ reception; software refers to the programming, the product which is to be broadcast/exhibited/received.

In the case of broadcasting something which frequently escapes attention is that programmes themselves are not actually commodities in the strict sense of the term, at least under certain - and in fact common - conditions. A commodity is something which, at different moments, constitutes both a use-value and an exchange-value, and in which the use-value carries the exchange-value. There can be no exchange-value unless the purchaser expects to find a use-value in his or her purchase. But there can be use-value without exchange value - in which case the object is not a commodity. Therefore radio and television programmes are not commodities in the strict sense unless they are bought and sold. Often they aren't. Apart from such special cases as pay-tv, they are not commodities from the viewer's or listener's point of view, if all that is necessary is to buy a set and turn it on. This was certainly clear to the early manufacturers of radio equipment. They therefore regarded the provision of programmes as a necessary expense in the establishment of the market in which the sets were the commodities - until they realized that there was another way of providing programmes which wasn't at their expense and could even make its own money.

But even in commercial radio the programmes themselves may still not be commodities insofar as they're produced by companies for their own use. Notice, by way of comparison that the products in another new medium, the gramophone, are necessarily always commodities; though if a record contains a piece of music which is in the public domain, it is the record, but not the piece of music, which is the commodity - to be accurate, the record and the performance, which means, the performer as well. But in

broadcasting, just as records turn something into a commodity which previously had no permanent material form, there is a commodity of a different order, one might say a non-material commodity, which nevertheless can be bought and sold for the purpose of financing the enterprise and accumulating capital. That is, air-space - in the particular forms of time for commercials, or the sponsorship of programmes. It was precisely this discovery which was involved in the appearance of commercial broadcasting networks, although there are, of course, still other ways of financing broadcasting stations.

Turning back now to cinema, we find that the film is an object of exchange value, which produces a direct income from the consumer, but that it has certain further peculiarities. According to Marx, "the use-values of commodities become use-values by a mutual exchange of places: they pass from the hands of those for whom they were means of exchange into the hands of those for whom they serve as consumer goods".[6] The peculiarity of film is that this physical exchange need not take place. The owner for whom the film serves as an exchange-value need never let go of it to realize its exchange-value. The film as a material object does not pass into the hands of the consumer. What the viewer receives and takes away is, in Stanley Cavell's felicitous phrase, "a projection as light as light"? What the owner of the film sells is the right of admission to view the film.

It is this which accounts for the whole structure of ownership and control in the film industry. If there is no need for the film as commodity to pass physically into the hands of the consumer, there is also no reason why the owner (who turns out to be the distributor) should let its ownership pass into the hands of the exhibitor (when distributor and exhibitor are not the same entity) when he can make some kind of contractual agreement instead, which gives the exhibitor rights of exhibition without rights of ownership; just as the exhibitor sells the viewer the right to consume without the right of ownership. The early history of cinema reveals that the accumulation of capital by the distributors, which led to their domination over production as well as exhibition (because they became the principle bankers for production money, the people most prepared to take the risks) - that this stage of capital accumulation began when they hit on the device of exclusive film rental. This occurred after the period with which this conference is concerned came to an end, in other words during the years 1906 up to the First World War. The remainder of this paper will be devoted to an account of the changing conditions of production, distribution and exhibition which led up to the instigation of exclusive film rental.

Although films were initially sold on the open market, a brisk second-hand trade developed quickly. It was initiated by enterprising showmen wanting to exchange, sell or rent their mounting stocks. The pioneers in this development in Britain seems to have been J. D. Walker and E. G. Turner, whose company was called Walturdaw. They were already exploiting the Edison Kinetoscope and phonograph early in 1896, and in July they bought a film projector, the first manufactured by one of Paul's first rivals, Wrench.

They toured the country under the name North American Entertainment Company, using first Edison films and films by Lumière. By the end of 1897 they had three machines in operation and an accumulating stock of films. Turner himself later explained what happened then:

> The price of films quickly dropped from 1s to 8d per foot, and then became standard at 6d per foot; this allowed us to increase our store, but it soon became evident that to have to provide new films every time we took a repeat engagement was too expensive. So we conceived the idea, first of all, of an interchange with other exhibitors, who experienced the same difficulty in regard to new supplies. From this we eventually evolved the renting of films to other people, because we found that we had by far a larger stock than any of the other men. By buying films regularly we could use them ourselves and hire them to other people, and so in such small beginnings was evolved the great renting system as we know it today.... We could buy as many as ten and twelve prints of an interesting subject, and on one occasion we actually bought eighty prints of a film, which was entitled LANDING AN OLD LADY FROM A SMALL BOAT.... We then extended operations to the entertainment bureaus, such as Whiteley's, Keith Prowse, Harrods, Gamage, Webster and Girling, H. L. Toms, Woods of Cheapside, Ashton and Mitchell, Army and Navy Stores, the Church Mission Halls, Salvation Army, the Leysian Mission, City Road, and many more.....[8]

What was it that was discovered here? In the first place, it seems, simply the fact that films are relatively durable, that the film is not used up in a single act of consumption, it continues to be available for further exploitation. But there are several different types of relatively durable commodities, so this in itself is not enough to make film peculiar. The peculiarity that Walker and Turner and those like them discovered concerning precisely the fact that the film does not need to pass physically into the hands of the consumer for its exchange-value to be realized. Another way of expressing this is to say that while goods offered on the capitalist market usually pass from the producer (manufacturer) to the wholesaler, and from the wholesaler to the retailer and thence to the consumer, the terms 'producer', 'distributor', 'exhibitor' and 'audience' which we now apply to the film industry do not signify quite the same set of relationships, and that the difference already existed embryonically even before the rationalisation of the film industry into its present structure. When <u>this</u> is related to the nature of the durability of the film, its peculiar character as a commodity begins to emerge more clearly (though other factors may also come into play) and the evolution and structure of the industry can be better understood. In a word, the means by which prices are fixed, and the manner in which domination of the market can be achieved can be seen to be different from the case of commodities, including other cultural commodities like gramophone record and the book, which can only be sold once and whose sale removes them from the market. Each copy of a film <u>remains within the market</u> until it has deteriorated physically from so many showings that it is no

longer viewable.

Exhibition was at first the business of itinerant showmen because, as Peter Bachlin pointed out in his pioneering and still almost unique economic study of cinema, that was virtually the only way it could be. "The exhibitors were able, thanks to their continual change of location, to present their programmes until the films were totally used up, and in this way to amortise the cost price through numerous showings."[9] As he also points out, the itinerant shows were usually family businesses.

One of the outstanding examples in Britain was William Haggar, and he illustrates fully the link between the itinerant film showmen and the nineteenth century tradition of popular itinerant theatre. Haggar was drawn into film in the summer of 1897. He was playing a highly successful theatrical season in Aberafon to the hundreds of migrant workers who formed the labour force building the new docks at Margam. He bought a projector with some of the profits. He had already been running a photographic side show. The following year he handed the theatre over to his son and went on tour with a new projector. He opened on April 5th 1898 at the Aberafon fair, and collected £15 in twopences and threepences. The following week at Pontypridd he took nothing at all, owing to a combination of rain and a strike. Such were the tribulations of itinerant showmen.

There were also tribulations for the dealers they obtained their films from. A. C. Bromhead said of the fairground showmen that "a certain directness characterised their methods, but they were full of good hard common sense and were shrewhands at a bargain. Sometimes it was difficult to collect accounts from them. A representative meeting a showman who was behind with his account was immediately invited to 'come and collect it yourself'. That representative spent a couple of days on the roundabouts collecting the amount due, in twopences. It was not at all unusual to wait all day until the money for the film just sold had been collected and to stay put in the pay box or round the show while it was coming in." 10

Haggar soon encountered considerable competition and, to improve his business, decided to start making his own films when he faced with one competitor, a firm called Wadbrooks, which scored a huge success in 1901 with their film of a Wales-England football international at Cardiff. One of Haggar's first films, THE MAID OF CEFN YDFA, made in 1902, proved particularly successful. He took £40 at the ticket office on the first showing alone.

Naturally travelling showmen like Haggar could shoot their own films, but they had no facilities for developing and printing them. Haggar made an agreement with the Gaumont company in London. They bore the costs of developing and printing the film in return for countrywide rights except for the area which Haggar himself covered. Bromhead, who ran the Gaumont London business, recorded later that he seemed to remember that he also supplied Haggar with negative stock. Nevertheless, the deal was basically in Gaumont's favour. Bromhead recalled that he made 480 prints of Haggar's THE POACHERS, of which well over 100 were exported to Europe.

Bromhead himself, who later became one of the leading figures in the British Film industry, began as an urban showman, in partnership with T. A. Welsh. But like other early showmen he quickly developed interests in film dealing. He and Welsh were astonished, he recorded later, when A. D. Thomas bought 100 copies of a film made by Gaumont in Paris of the Seaforth Highlanders marching through Cairo en route to the Battle of Omdurman in 1898. He then discovered that Thomas had bought them for the film dealers McGuire and Baucas, which at that time was run by Urban before he set up his own Warwick Trading Company. This was the firm, with headquarters in New York, which opened the first Kinetoscope Parlour in London in 1894. This discovery made Bromhead realize, he said, what business potential there was in importing films. He therefore simply went ahead and obtained British sales rights on films they found out about from the Catalogue of Gaumont in Paris, which listed films made by people who had bought cameras from them. This was how Bromhead's association with Gaumont began. Some film histories record that Gaumont opened a London office in 1898. In effect it was Bromhead and Welsh who set themselves up in an office in Cecil Court as agents for Gaumont films.

They also operated as an agency for film producers in Britain - people like Haggar. Bromhead was also Hepworth's agent until Hepworth opened his own office. Between 1902 and 1904, however, Bromhead began to expand into both production and exhibition. He opened a studio in 1902 at Loughborough Junction for which he obtained Gaumont's backing, and then in 1904 he opened what was probably the first permanent cinema in the country, the Daily Bioscope in Bishopsgate. Long before this, urban showmen used to take over derelict shops or other suitable premises but only on a temporary basis, introducing films in new locales and then moving on. This of course was one of the results of the sale of films on the open market. These small-time operators could not afford to keep replenishing their stock, so they moved on to find new audiences instead. It was a satisfactory system only in these early days while the thing was still a novelty.

In various respects, Bromhead's Daily Bioscope was like the music hall 'penny gaff', and indeed this was the term which was soon taken over and applied to its numerous imitators. Yet it really contained the seeds of something rather different. It was a fixed cinema that was opened by a dealer. In other words, it represents the opposite line of development to that pursued by Walker and Turner. They were exhibitors who became dealers; Bromhead was a dealer who became an exhibitor.

During the next few years, Bromhead's most significant interventions lay in the organisation of distribution. It was he, at any rate in Britain, who seems to have initiated the system of exclusive booking contracts whereby the highest bidder in each locality secured the sole rights for a particular film - a development which could obviously not take place until fixed cinemas amounted to a significant part of the market. According to Bromhead's own account, he took this step in order to try and insert some order into the somewhat chaotic conditions which prevailed in distribution at the time. He was not only concerned with the fact that the same films often came to be available on both open sale and rental at the same time, but also with

various malpractices whereby, for example, showmen received copies of films on approval and were able to show them first and then return them saying that they didn't want them. We should not regard these malpractices as incidental. The history of the film industry is so riddled with a succession of various different types of malpractice that they should be regarded as an inherent result of the peculiarity of film as a commodity and the contradictions which this entails in a capitalist film industry, even before any kind of rationalisation has taken place as well as after.

Peter Bachlin has explained the broad rationale behind the appearance of rental in the first place like this:

> The distributor took the risk of purchasing films on his own account, while the exhibitor did no more than rent them; and the distributor's intervention improved economic conditions for the exhibitor by allowing more frequent programme changes. This created a growth in the market for the producer: films could reach the consumer in greater number and more rapidly; moreover the new system constituted a kind of sales guarantee for their films. In general, the distributor bought copies of one or several films from one or several producers and rented them to many exhibitors; by doing this it was possible to obtain for them a great sum than their cost price. The old system of selling the individual copy, which meant ceding a piece of property, was replaced by the temporary concession of the right to exhibit.
>
> It is undeniable that the birth of the branch of distribution accelerated the development of the film industry: the reduction in the price of films, their diffusion and more rapid distribution led to an increase in the number of cinemas.

In fact, of course, Bromhead had realized that permanent cinemas, like the one he established in Bishopsgate, would obviously prefer the rental system, because they didn't want to be lumbered with copies of films which they owned themselves but which they could only repeat a limited number of times.

Initially, however, the introduction of rental had a chaotic effect because of the way it intensified competition. For example, exhibitors of the 'town hall' type, who moved from one fixed location to another, were nonetheless forced to purchase a greater number of new films for fear that someone else would already have shown them on the same locale where they were about to play. This wreaked havoc with their custom of calculating their costs partly on the basis of the rental for the location as a fixed percentage of the cost of their films. Fairground showmen, similarly, were forced to spend more on dolling up their trailers and tents and on musical accompaniment to try and keep their audiences from the new permanent cinemas. In their turn, producers were gradually forced to abandon open sale, which meant losing a certain amount of control over their product.

Yet it was still the distributor who was faced with the greatest risks. He was the one who had to recoup the money from exhibitors who fell behind in their payments or were even forced out of business, or even just to keep track of exhibitors who moved around all the time. It was therefore the

distributor who took the next step by instituting the exclusive rental system, which is really a form of monopoly. It took time to establish itself, but it was a fundamental development. It reduced the distributor's risk; it also offered another important advantage which both distributor and producer shared (depending on the nature of the agreement they had): it reduced the number of copies of a film that were needed because it made the exploitation of each copy more efficient.

Now let us turn to film production, and observe, to begin with, that in Britain, it began more or less as a cottage industry, or a little more precisely, as a suburban detached or semi-detached industry. Paul opened a studio in New Southgate in North London in 1899, attached to his manufacturing works. Hepworth built a studio in the back garden of a house he rented at Walton-on-Thames in 1900. This was after he left the Warwick Trading Company which was run by Charles Urban.

Before joining Urban, Hepworth ran, unsuccessfully according to his own account, a small shop selling cameras and dry-plates for still photography, but he had already begun to tinker with film. After his arc-lamp, originally designed for magic-lantern projection, which brought him into contact with Paul, he bought a film projector which he proceeded to modify. While working for Urban he made his own first film, but Urban employed him basically to print and process the films which the company handled. Hepworth invented a semi-mechanical process for printing and developing in which the film was cranked through the baths in the same way it was cranked through the camera and projector. In fact he used parts taken from a projector in his first machine. Without such a device, the strips of film had to be handled individually, and this was one of the reasons why they had such short lengths. Urban agreed to pay him a royalty of a farthing per foot for all films processed on the new machine, but evidently he soon found this an uneconomic proposition, so he sacked Hepworth. Hepworth thereupon took his machine away with him and set up on his own, in the house at Walton-on-Thames. He soon found that there was too little work to be had processing other people's films to sustain a business, so he decided he'd better make his own. That was when he built the stage in his back garden and started filming. He also of course followed general practice and filmed a variety of public events like Edward's Coronation. This was where his printing and developing machine paid off the most handsomely He and his staff spent a week solid, non-stop, trying to satisfy the demand for prints of the coronation film. One of the younger members of the staff actually fell asleep at the machine. His advantage in the manufacture of copies gave him a leading position in production, a lead he managed to maintain right through to the twenties. He was one of the few producers who managed to stay in business in Britain during the First World War, although he finally went bankrupt in the early twenties, when he tried to float a public company in the middle of a highly apathetic money market, with the result that it was seriously undersubscribed. In the early 1900s, however, he was able to expand by building a large glass-covered studio, and seems to have been one of the first British producers to have opened his own New York distribution office.

It took about ten or fifteen years for the special character of film as a commodity to emerge. One of the things that means is that that's the time it took for film to take on what we now think of as the first real hues of art. There was nothing mysterious involved in this process. What happened, to put it crudely, was that film makers began to develop greater sensitivity towards the expressive possibilities of the new medium; audiences began to demonstrate preferences which directed the filmmakers in certain directions and reinforced certain of their explorations; and dealers began to realize the consequences of these things. They realized that film was no ordinary commodity. More efficient means could be developed for its exploitation. People's tastes could be exploited.

But in taking on the hues of art, film began to develop the intense division of labour which we now associate quite naturally with the production of a film. In the beginning, the division of labour in film production hardly existed. Since the earliest films were scarcely more than moving photographs, short scenes ranging from public events to comic sketches, they were manufactured with little sophistication and at ridiculously little cost - scarcely more than the cost of the film stock, if you discount the cost of the camera itself. Of course what this means is that there were various 'overheads' which were not counted into the costs of production. Not just the overheads included in good company accounting, but also any costs which may have been involved in staging a scene for the camera especially. This is just another way of saying that there was as yet no concept of film production, but only of manufacture. Put it this way and it becomes clear that the discovery of production values was one and the same thing as the laying down of the foundations for the capitalist film industry, and that the process, therefore,by which film became an art was historically conditional upon this inevitable capitalist phase.

Among the unpaid overheads in this first stage of the manufacture of films was the labour power of the actors. For example, it seems highly probable that Haggar didn't have to pay his actors anything special when he made MERCH CEFN YDFA (The Maid of Cefn Ydfa) in 1902, since they were members of his own theatre company. By this time, Cecil Hepworth had settled at Walton-on-Thames near London, and was producing shorts in his back garden or at the river. He says in his autobiography that the 'actors' in these films were generally members of his company, family or friends, who appeared in front of the camera (and remained uncredited). The camera was operated by someone who wasn't 'acting'. Other jobs - printing, processing and so forth - were also shared. The first time Hepworth paid actors a fee was in 1905, for the film RESCUED BY ROVER. The principles, who came down from London to augment a cast which included Hepworth himself, his wife, his baby and his dog, were paid half a guinea each - to include travelling expenses. Even so, the total cost of production was £7 13s. 9d. The film ran 425 ft, about seven minutes, and prints sold for £10 12s. 6d. (6d. per foot). A total of 395 prints were sold, and this required two remakes of the film because the negative wore out in the printing. Even considering the remake costs and the cost of the raw stock for each copy, it is clear that the profits must have been enormous.

Gradually, of course, people began to show aptitude for particular jobs. Certainly one of the first specific jobs to emerge, as the techniques of filming developed their first real elements of judgement and choice, must have been that of the cameraman (there is no evidence that there was ever at this time a camera-woman). The job in the early stages also included functions later split off and ascribed to the director (such as deciding where to place the camera and how to divide the film up into its constituent shots) as well as combining technical functions which were later divided up between several members of the crew working in a unit, as both mise-en-scene and technology grew more complex. But to begin with, as with the films made on commission for pioneer producer-distributors like Pathé or Charles Urban, which especially in Urban's case were mainly actuality, the cameraman was the filmmaker. For a while even when the cameraman was beginning to evolve his distinctive role, and other specific functions were beginning to develop as well, nevertheless everyone in a company like Hepworth's still constituted a general pool of labour. It would have been impossible without one to have fulfilled the tasks of manufacturing the hundreds of copies of the more successful films which were needed, using the primitive equipment then available. Hepworth himself says as much in his autobiography, and he had partly machanised the process.

Evidently at the beginning films were made under rough-and-ready conditions which were similar to those in which the bricoleur works, the figure described by Lévi-Strauss as "someone who works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of a craftsman" (to which Lévi-Strauss's translator adds the footnote: "The 'bricoleur' has no precise equivalent in English. He is a man who undertakes odd jobs and is a Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself man, but, as the text makes clear, he is of a different standing from, for instance, the English 'odd job man' or handyman").[11] The question I would pose here is, to what extent can a connection be traced between the development of a more sophisticated kind of craft knowledge - the kind which always lies at the roots of any aesthetic form of production - and the evolution of more efficient capitalist relations of production, both technical and social, needed in order to improve the exploitation of the film as a commodity of a particular kind? It is clear that the aesthetic conditions of early film were intimately bound up with the ways it first entered the market - at the bottom, unlike most technical or technological innovations which enter at the top. But what the evidence now points to is that the peculiarities of film as a commodity began to force some effect before the aesthetic issues emerged and were posed in any way articulately. Certainly there was virtually no one for several years who took film seriously as an art form, at any rate, not publicly and with any resonance. But in terms of the economic aspects contradictions were beginning to appear which a classical pattern of capitalist development could not easily deal with. By the end of the period we are concerned with here, the end of the first decade or so of cinema's history, there was still little advance in the relations of production within what we now call film production; but in the fields of distribution and exhibition things were already poised and ready on the brink of major new developments. In the ensuing period, these new economic developments will begin to force the aesthetic issues, force them into shape and out into the open.

The economic conditions of early cinema can be summarised as follows. The characteristics which governed initially were threefold. First, the makers of equipment were favoured at the start because they were able to hold back from the open sale of the means of production of the film, namely, the camera; this enabled them also to achieve a dominant position in the production of films. This was also a possibility, however, because the actual making of films did not require any great degree of capitalisation. Indeed a large part of the catalogue of a company like Pathé or Gaumont was made up of films made by purchasers of cameras, once these were freely on sale, whose films the camera companies or dealers agreed to handle. Actual production remained a smaller proportion of these companies' business than the manufacture and sale of equipment, while they used the sale of films at a low and uniform price to penetrate and extend the market for the sale of the hardware.

Second, the monopoly of the manufacturers of film stock was only really advanced by the development of standardisation. Equipment makers were forced to admit standardisation when there had been a sufficient growth in the market that it was possibly no longer in their interests to hold back from it, otherwise they would be unnecessarily limiting themselves to only a portion of it. But they were also forced into it by the introduction of new mass production techniques in the manufacture of film stock,which gave the leading specialist companies a major advantage.

Third, a separate group of dealers emerged from the moment it became apparent that the film possesses certain peculiarities as a commodity which keeps it within the market and able to produce a continuing exchange value. At this point film begins to show signs of departing from the classical pattern of capitalist economic development.

The situation that therefore existed after about a decade was like this. As long as exhibition places remained small and films short, the possibilities of profit resided mainly in the large turnover of daily showings. Frequent programme changes were necessary, however, if an exhibitor was to remain in the same place. Since this was something many could still not afford, they remained itinerants, following well-established traditions in popular entertainment. But the extent of the market was still growing and production was expanding. New film 'factories', however, as the first studios were originally called, only managed to satisfy this expanding demand with difficulty. In every country the rapid expansion of the market meant that supply could only be satisfied by the internationalisation of the market. Here too were seeds of ways of going beyond the classical patterns of capitalist development, reinforced because this internationalisation of trade occurred so early in the history of the new productive sector.

The conditions of free competition, the absence of a commercial tradition specific to the trade, and of trade bodies to regulate business practices, these things were only to be expected, and contributed to anarchy. Competition was intensifying on every level. Exhibitors who began to pay rental charges, calculated originally according to a certain percentage of the purchase price of a copy in relation to the age of the film, were being forced to go for the newest and therefore most expensive films. Since dealers had to maintain relationships with several producers and exclusive agreements were still a rarity, they also had to purchase the

newest films as soon as they became available, for immediate rental to exhibitors. Production companies were, however, increasingly obliged to go through these renters in order to sell their goods, because they were progressively less able to sell directly to exhibitors, since exhibitors were less inclined to buy and more inclined to rent. Going over to rental, the dealers acquired a gradually stronger position, reinforcing the lead they had established by handling the sale of films by individual producers in markets the producers concerned were unable to reach. The dealers were thus propelled towards better control over the conditions of supply and demand than either producers or exhibitors. Since they were also more liable to bear the brunt of the risks involved (which, of course, were growing), and given that they were soon in the best position to determine prices, the further rationalisation of the industry gradually came to depend on either their lead or their acquiescence. These were the early conditions. We are still suffering from the consequences.

ENGLISH FILMS DIRECTED (OR POSSIBLY DIRECTED) BY THEO BOUWMEESTER

Geoffrey N. Donaldson - Netherlands

THEO FRENKEL Senior

While working in England (and later in Germany) Theo Frenkel Sr was known professionally as "Theo Bouwmeester". His wife, the actress Julie Frenkel-Meijer, used the professional name "Julie Bouwmeester".

The following is a CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE ENGLISH FILMS DIRECTED (OR POSSIBLY DIRECTED) BY THEO BOUWMEESTER

Sources of information are indicated with the following abbreviations:

DG The British Film Catalogue 1895-1970 by Dennis Gifford
(In Mr Gifford's note on how to use his book it is stated that "director's names which are given within brackets have been supplied by the compiler from sources unconfirmed by documentary evidence". I have retained this use of brackets.)

KW The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly

B The Bioscope

(None of the material I have found in these two trade magazines mentions Theo Bouwmeester as director of the films mentioned in my list.)

KC Kinemacolor Film Catalogue 1912-1913
(This catalogue has no indication whatsoever of who directed the films, but I have assumed that Theo Bouwmeester probably directed most of the Kinemacolor fiction films made between August 1910 and July 1912. Incidentally, the catalogue only includes Kinemacolor fiction films made up to about February 1912.)

FA Theo Frenkel's photo albums, in the possession of the Nederlands Filmmuseum. Many - but not all - of the photos in these albums were identified by Frenkel himself....unfortunately not always accurately.

FB Biographical articles published by Theo Frenkel Sr in various Dutch newspapers and magazines.

Other sources of information are named in full.

Information about each film

1 Year, month and day of release, derived from The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly (KW/d) and in one or two cases from The Bioscope (B/d). Where no release date was mentioned I have used the date of the issue of The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly in which a synopsis of the film was published (KW/s). If this material was not (yet) available to me, I have used the date given by Mr Gifford (DG), year and month only. Films for which I have no date at all are listed separately.

2 Title of film + alternative titles.

3 Length in feet (derived from KW, B or DG, and in the case of the Kinemacolor films from KC),

4 Name of production/distribution company. (NCK = Natural Colour Kinematograph Co., i.e. the Kinemacolor films. Here I have also indicated - where possible - whether the film was made in the Hove studio or in the Nice studio. NCK/(?) indicates that I do not know where the film was made.

5 Director: Theo Bouwmeester or (Theo Bouwmeester).

6 Players

7 Other information

Theo Frenkel Senior/Theo Bouwmeester

FRENKEL, Theodorus Maurits (Theo)

Born: 14th July 1871, Rotterdam

Died: 20th September 1956, Amsterdam

Son of the musician Maurits Frenkel and Holland's greatest tragedienne Theo(dora) Bouwmeester.

Up to about 1915 Theo Frenkel used the professional name "Theo Bouwmeester" both in Holland and abroad.

Thereafter he usually used the name "Theo Frenkel Senior", the "Senior" being added to distinguish himself from his actor nephew Theo Frenkel Junior.

When Frenkel worked for a couple of years in Berlin in the early 'twenties he was usually called "Theo Frenkel Bouwmeester".

He made his debut on the stage in Amsterdam in June 1897. From about 1904 he mainly worked abroad as a stage actor (in Belgium, France, Denmark, Spain and England).

In a series of reminiscences published in 1917 in a Dutch newspaper, Theo Frenkel stated that "about 10 years ago" (thus approximately in 1907) he made his very first film appearance. According to Frenkel he was acting at the time in a theatre in Brussels where he was seen by Charles Pathé. Pathé invited him to act in one of his productions. The title of the film is not mentioned, nor is there any hint given about the story-line or the kind of rôle Frenkel played. The only information given is that the film was made at Pathé's studio in Vincennes and that it was directed by a certain "Monsieur Moreau". So far I have not been able to find out anything about this director Moreau, nor have I been able to discover the title of the French film in which Frenkel/Bouwmeester made his debut.

It appears that from about 1904 onwards Frenkel was living in England, although he was often away on tour. As an actor he specialized in one-act plays in which he was the only performer. Such one-man playlets appear to have been very popular at that time.

Presumably he must have met Hepworth in 1908 and started directing films at Hepworth's Walton-on Thames studio towards the end of the same year.

NOTES

1 Length of the Kinemacolor films

In this list the length of all the Kinemacolor films is that given in the Kinemacolor Film Catalogue 1912-1913. However, it should be noted, as Dennis Gifford has done in his The British Film Catalogue 1895-1970, that "films made in the Kinemacolor system ran at twice the normal speed". In Gifford's catalogue the published footages were "halved....to give a correct comparison with normal films".

2 Players in Bouwmeester's films

In a series of reminiscences published from 10th to 20th June, 1917, in the Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf, Theo Frenkel stated that while working for both Cecil Hepworth and Charles Urban he had his own small permanent company of actors and actresses. He did not mention the names of any of the players in his Hepworth films but in connection with the Kinemacolor films the following actors were mentioned (alas, without Christian names): Conyers, Curtis, Hamilton, Millns and H. Vaughan.

Theo Bouwmeester and his wife Julie are easily recognizable in many photos, particularly from Kinemacolor films, in Frenkel's photo albums.

A biographical note about Wyndham Standing in the press-book for THE HYPOCRITES (an Anglo-Dutch production of 1923) claims that "Wyndham Standing made the first colour picture many years ago with Banmiester (sic), the famous Dutch actor". This could indicate that Standing acted in one of Bouwmeester's earliest Kinemacolor films (perhaps BY ORDER OF NAPOLEON).

3 Cameramen who worked on the Kinemacolor films

In the above-mentioned reminiscences, Theo Frenkel mentioned a cameraman named "Mackenzie".

In a letter of 16th August, 1910, from the Secretary of The Natural Color Kinematograph Company Ltd., there is a reference to a cameraman named "Petersson".

4 Theo Bouwmeester and the Kinemacolor films

From a letter of 16th August, 1910, from the Secretary of The Natural Color Kinematograph Company Ltd., to Mr Theo Bouwmeester, Cinematograph Works, Wilbury Road, Hove, Brighton, it appears that Bouwmeester started directing (and writing) Kinemacolor fiction films for Charles Urban during August 1910. (See Annex 1)

In The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly of October 13, 1910, there is an advertisement announcing "a large number of Comic, Dramatic, Historic and General Natural Color Motion Picture Subjects" which have been secured at Brighton, under the production of Mr Theo Bouwmeester". (See Annex 11) From April 1911 onwards, when the Kinemacolor films were being shown at the Scala Theatre, London, the programme booklets usually gave the following credit: "Director of Studios, Nice and Brighton, and Producer of Kinemacolor Plays.....Theo Bouwmeester". (See Annex 111)

From a letter of 25th April, 1912, from the Secretary of The Natural Color Kinematograph Company Ltd, to Mr Theo Bouwmeester, Villa Julie, Mont Boron, Nice, it is evident that Bouwmeester intended leaving Urban. (See Annex 1V)

In a Scala programme booklet of 24th July, 1912, Theo Bouwmeester was still mentioned as "Director of Studios, Nice and Brighton, and Producer of Kinemacolor Plays".....but from an item in The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly of August 29, 1912, it is evident that by then Theo Bouwmeester had been replaced: "Mr Alfred de Manby and his partner, Mr Leedham Bantock, have been appointed artistic directors to Mr Charles Urban, and they will undertake the production of film plays, visiting every corner of the world in search of material and scenic effects, producing the stories amidst the proper surroundings having regard to the nature of the theme."

5 Theo Bouwmeester and the Kinemacolor studio in Nice

In order to profit from weather conditions which on the French Riviera were more favourable and reliable than those in Hove - and thus presumably to assure an uninterrupted flow of Kinemacolor fiction films - Charles Urban opened a studio in Nice.

Apparently Theo Bouwmeester and his little company of Kinemacolor players and technicians shuttled backwards and forwards, spending a few months in the south of France and then a few months in Hove, depending on the weather.

So far I have found nothing in the contemporary English trade magazines about the exact date of the opening of the Nice studio; nor have the Departmental Archives in Nice been able to supply any information about this. However, it

is probable that Bouwmeester first worked in Nice during the winter of 1910-1911, as advertisements for the first Nice-made Kinemacolor fiction films started appearing in The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly (KW) in April 1911.

Until he left Urban's employ in July 1912, Bouwmeester made at least nineteen Kinemacolor fiction films in Nice.

The first of these was probably THE CRUSADER. There is no doubt, however, about THE REBEL'S DAUGHTER having been made in Nice, as a synopsis in KW of 20th April, 1911, calls this film "A Kinemacolor drama full of the rich colour of Southern climes". An advertisement for TELEMACHUS (KW, 27th April 1911) acclaims "the gorgeous Southern Scenery" and a synopsis of A FRENCH DUEL (KW, 1st June 1911) calls it "An amusing comedy staged in the South of France and containing many delightful views of the Riviera".

A news item concerning OEDIPUS REX, published in The Bioscope of 11th January, 1912, is even more informative:

> "Admirably acted by Mr Charles Urban's own company of players, at Nice, the action of the masterpiece has been preserved, while being reverently compressed; whilst the glorious, old-world scenery to be found outside Nice and Cimiez has furnished classic backgrounds which closely approximate to the accepted views of Delphi and Thebes and Corinth."

I have not found any information about when Charles Urban ceased his activities in Nice and closed the Kinemacolor studio.

6 Location of the Kinemacolor studio in Nice

In one of Theo Frenkel's photo albums there is a postcard of Nice - "Mont-Boron et le Château de l'Anglais" - to be more precise - on which Frenkel has indicated with an arrow the place where the Kinemacolor studio was situated.

A copy of this postcard was forwarded to Monsieur E. Hildesheimer of the Departmental Archives in Nice who, in a letter dated 3rd February, 1976, wrote: "L'indication que vous donnez permet de localiser le studio Kinemacolor sur la corniche inférieure près de la grande construction appelée 'château de l'Anglais'".

It is also known, from correspondence that has been preserved, that when in Nice Theo Bouwmeester and his wife were residing at: "Villa Julie", Avenue Ernestine, Mont-Boron. (See Annex IV)

English films directed (or possibly directed) by Bouwmeester	Source of information
1 1908, November 12 (KW/s) THE ANARCHIST'S SWEETHEART (375) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW
2 1908, December 10 (KW/s) POVERTY AND COMPASSION (375) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW
3 1908, December 17 (KW/s) TO THE CUSTODY OF THE FATHER (450) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW
The following two films may have been released in 1908, 1909 or 1910:	
4 SMITH'S KNOCKABOUT THEATRE ( ) Hepworth Theo Bouwmeester with: Theo Bouwmeester Photo in FA identified by Theo Frenkel (Bouwmeester). No contemporary references to a film of this title have been found yet, but the photo referred to above does show Theo Bouwmeester as a "strong man" performing in front of a circus side-show advertised as "Smith's Knockabout Theatre".	FA
5 TWO OF THE BOYS ( ) Hepworth Theo Frenkel with: Theo Frenkel Photo in FA identified by Theo Frenkel (Bouwmeester). No contemporary references to a film of this title have been found yet.	FA
6 1909, March 4 (KW/s) A WOMAN'S VANITY (450) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW
7 1909, April 8 (KW/s) THE SPECIAL LICENCE (750) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW
8 1909, April 15 (KW/s) THE BAILIFF AND THE DRESSMAKERS ( ) Hepworth (Theo Bouwmeester)	DG KW

9 1909, April 22 (KW/s) DG KW
THE WRONG COAT (575) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

10 1909, April 29 (KW/s) DG KW
WHEN THIEVES FALL OUT (450) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

11 1909, May 13 (KW/s) DG KW
THE TREACHEROUS POLICEMAN (675) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

12 1909, June 17 (KW/s) DG KW
ONLY A TRAMP (350) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

13 1909, June 17 (KW/s) DG KW
WITHIN AN ACE (350) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

14 1909, June 24 (KW/s) DG KW
THE LUCK OF THE CARDS (475) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

15 1909, June (DG) DG
JAILBIRD IN BORROWED FEATHERS (600) Urban Trading Co.
(Theo Bouwmeester)

16 1909, July 1 (KW/s) DG KW
ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER (625) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

17 1909, July (DG) DG
SALOME MAD (600) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

18 1909, July 15 (KW/s) DG KW
MISTAKEN IDENTITY (400) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

19 1909, July 22 (KW/s) DG KW
THE NEW SERVANT (475) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

20 1909, August 12 (KW/s) DG KW
TEACHING A HUSBAND A LESSON (600) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

21 1909, August 19 (KW/s) DG KW

THE BURGLAR AND THE CHILD (450) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

22 1909, August 26 (KW/s) DG KW

FARMER GILES' VISIT TO LONDON (KW) (550) Hepworth
or FARMER GILES IN LONDON (DG)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

23 1909, September 2 (KW/s) DG KW

THE CURSE OF MONEY (525) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

24 1909, September 30 (KW/s) DG KW

ROBBING THE WIDOWED AND FATHERLESS (575) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

25 1909, October 7 (KW/s) DG KW

A NARROW ESCAPE FROM LYNCHING (375) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

26 1909, October 21 (KW/s) DG KW

FELLOW CLERKS (975) Hepworth
Theo Bouwmeester

27 1909, October (DG) DG

A FATHER'S MISTAKE (625) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

28 1909, November (DG) DG

THE SLEEPWALKER (425) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

29 1909, November 11 (KW/s) DG KW

A COWARD'S COURAGE (350) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

30 1909, November (DG) DG

THE BLIND MAN (650) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

31 1909, December 2 (KW/s) DG KW

A SINNER'S REPENTANCE (650) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

32 1909, December 23 (KW/s) DG KW

AN ATTEMPT TO SMASH A BANK (625) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

33 1909, December 23 (KW/s) DG KW

THE IDIOT OF THE MOUNTAINS (450) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

34 1910, January (DG) DG

ALMOST (650) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

35 1910, January 13 (KW/s) DG KW

A TREACHEROUS WOMAN (KW) (600) Hepworth
or A WOMAN'S TREACHERY (DG)
(Theo Bouwmeester)
A copy of A WOMAN'S TREACHERY is preserved at the National Film Archive, London (563 ft.)

36 1910, February 3 (KW/s) DG KW

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY (500) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

37 1910, March 17 (KW/d) DG KW FB

LORD BLEND'S LOVE STORY (1050) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)
FB mentions a film called "A Doctor's Dilemma".

38 1910, March 24 (KW/s) DG KW

A WOMAN'S FOLLY (575) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

39 1910, April 21 (KW/s) DG KW

THE BROTHERS (775) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

40 1910, April 28 (KW/s) DG KW

FROM STORM TO SUNSHINE (600) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

41 1910, May 5 (KW/s) DG KW

HIS ONLY DAUGHTER (850) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)
with: Madge Campbell (the daughter)

42 1910, May 12 (KW/s) DG KW

THE PICTURE THIEVES (650) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

43 1910, May 19 (KW/s) DG KW

THE LITTLE ORPHAN (525) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

44 1910, May 26 (KW/s) DG KW

THE STRICKEN HOME (725) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

45 1910, June 2 (KW/s) DG KW

THE OLD SOLDIER (625) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

46 1910, June 9 (KW/s) DG KW

A MAD INFATUATION (525) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

47 1910, June 16 (KW/s) DG KW

THE CHILD AND THE FIDDLER (750) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

48 1910, June 23 (KW/s) DG KW

THE TWO FATHERS (750) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

49 1910, June 30 (KW/s) DG KW

A WORKER'S WIFE (575) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

50 1910, July 7 (KW/s) DG KW

A SAILOR'S SACRIFICE (725) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

51 1910, July 14 (KW/s) DG KW

TRUE TO HIS DUTY (800) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

52 1910, July (DG) DG

HIS BROTHER'S WIFE (775) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

53 1910, July 28 (KW/s) DG KW

JAKE'S DAUGHTER (650) Hepworth
(Theo Bouwmeester)

54 1910, July 28 (KW/s) DG KW

THE PLANS OF THE FORTRESS (990) Urban Trading Co.
(Theo Bouwmeester)

55 1910, July (DG) DG

THE GREAT FIGHT AT ALL-SERENO (350) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

56 1910, August 17 (KW/d) DG KW

THE SUFFRAGETTE AND THE HOBBLE SKIRT (550) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

57 1910, August 25 (KW/s) DG KW

IMPERSONATING THE POLICEMAN LODGER (675) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

58 1910, September 28 (KW/d) DG KW

THE BEWITCHED BOXING GLOVES (567) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

59 1910, September (DG) DG KC

THE COSTER'S WEDDING (905) NCK/Hove *
Theo Bouwmeester

60 1910, October 5 (KW/d) DG KW

THE WEDDING THAT DIDN'T COME OFF (590) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

61 1910, October 12 (KW/d) DG KW KC

THE BULLY (755) NCK/Hove* and Kineto (in monochrome)
Theo Bouwmeester

62 1910, November 2 (KW/d) DG KW

THE FREEZING MIXTURE (600) Kineto
Reissued in 1917 as POTTED PLAYS No 3
(Theo Bouwmeester)

63 1910, November 9 (KW/d) DG KW

THE ELECTRIC(AL) VITALIZER (530) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

* Kinemacolor films.....but see note concerning film No 65

64 1910, November 16 (KW/d) DG KW

A MOVING PICTURE REHEARSAL (470) Kineto
(Theo Bouwmeester)

65 1910, November 24 (KW/review) KW KC FA

BY ORDER OF NAPOLEON (1240) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Napoleon), Julie Bouwmeester
According to the review in KW of 24th November, 1910, this was "The First Kinemacolor Dramatic Picture".

66 1910, December 14 (KW/d) DG KW

HIS MOTHER'S NECKLACE (575) Kineto
Theo Bouwmeester

67 1910, December 28 (KW/d) DG KW FB

A RECORD HUSTLE THROUGH FOGGY LONDON (KW) (410) Kineto
or SEEING LONDON IN ONE DAY (DG)
Theo Bouwmeester
FB mentions a film called "How to See London in One Hour".

The following films may have been released during 1910:

68 OUR DARLING ( ) Kineto FA
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester
No contemporary reference to a film of this title has been found yet. Possibly Frenkel's identification of a photo in FA is inaccurate.

69 1911, January 5 (KW/s) DG KW

JUGGLING ON THE BRAIN (450) Kineto
Theo Bouwmeester

70 1911, February 16 (KW/s) DG KW KC

A TRAGEDY OF THE OLDEN TIMES (1175) NCK/Hove
or A STORY OF THE OLDEN TIMES
or IN THE OLDEN TIME
Theo Bouwmeester

71 1911, February 16 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE OLD HAT (865) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

72 1911, February 16 (KW/d) DG KW

THROUGH FIRE TO FORTUNE (630) Kineto
Theo Bouwmeester

73 1911, March 2 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

THE HIGHLANDER (1205) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

74 1911, March 9 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

THE KING OF INDIGO (700) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

75 1911, March (DG) — DG KC

KITTY THE DRESSMAKER (1060) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

76 1911, March 23 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

THE LOST RING, or JOHNSON'S HONEYMOON (930) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

77 1911, March 30 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

FROM FACTORY GIRL TO PRIMA DONNA
Theo Bouwmeester

78 1911, April 6 (KW/advertisement) — KW KC

THE CRUSADER (1320) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester

79 1911, April 6 (KW/s) * — DG KW KC

LADY BEAULAY'S NECKLACE (1240) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

80 1911, April (KW/s) — DG KW KC

LOVE'S STRATEGY (985) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

81 1911, April 11 (Scala Programme) — KW KC Scala Programme

THE REBEL'S DAUGHTER (1110) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
In the Scala programme booklet for 11th April, 1911, it is stated that this film was "Produced by Mr Theo Bouwmeester".

82 1911, April 13 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

HIS CONSCIENCE (1265) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

* But according to an advertisement in KW of 8th December, 1910, this was "the Second Kinemacolor Drama to be introduced to the public".

83 1911, April 13 (KW/s) DG KW KC
A MODERN HERO (860) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

84 1911, April 27 (KW/s) DG KW KC
THE AMOROUS DOCTOR (1000) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

85 1911, April 27 (KW/s) DG KW KC
THE TWO CHORUS GIRLS (845) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

86 1911, May 4 (KW/s) DG KW KC
FATE (1220) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

87 1911, May 4 (KW/s) DG KW
FOLLOWING MOTHER'S FOOTSTEPS (1110) NCK/Hove
Reissued by Kineto as IN MOTHER'S FOOTSTEPS
Theo Bouwmeester

88 1911, May 11 (KW/s) DG KW KC
LOVE CONQUERS (1040) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

89 1911, May 11 (KW/s) KW KC
SWANK AND THE REMEDY (1125) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

90 1911, May 18 (KW/s) KW KC FA FB
THE FALL OF BABYLON (1190) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Belshazzar), Julie Bouwmeester

91 1911, May 18 (KW/s) KW KC FA FB
TELEMACHUS (1035) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Telemachus)

92 1911, May 25 (KW/s) KW KC
THE CLOWN'S SACRIFICE (1160) NCK/(?)
Theo Bouwmeester

93 1911, May (DG) DG KC
THE BURGLAR AS FATHER CHRISTMAS (935) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

94 1911, May (DG)

KINEMACOLOR SONGS ( ) NCK/Hove
"Simon the Cellarer" and "Kitty of Coleraine"
Theo Bouwmeester

DG
Scala Programme

95 1911, May (DG)

THE WOOD CUTTER'S ROMANCE (540) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

DG

96 1911, June 1 (KW/s)

THE FLOWER GIRL OF FLORENCE (1260) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

97 1911, June 1 (KW/s)

A FRENCH DUEL (925) NCK/Nice
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

98 1911, June 8 (KW/s)

BROWN'S GERMAN LIVER CURE (895) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

99 1911, June 8 (KW/s)

HIS LAST BURGLARY (1000) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

DG
KW
KC

100 1911, June 15 (KW/s)

DETECTIVE HENRI AND THE PARIS APACHES (955) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

101 1911, June 15 (KW/s)

TWO CAN PLAY AT THE SAME GAME (970) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

102 1911, June 29 (KW/s)

A DEVOTED FRIEND (1335) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

KW
KC

103 1911, July (Scala Programme)

CHECKMATED (1215) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Napoleon)

DG
KC
Scala Programme

104 1911, July (Scala Programme)

GALILEO (1145) NCK/(?)
Theo Bouwmeester

KC
Scala Programme

105 1911, July 20 (KW/s) — KW, KC

THE BLACKMAILER (1305) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

106 1911, July 27 (KW/s) — KW, KC

IN THE REIGN OF TERROR (1165) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

107 1911, July 27 (KW/s) — KW, KC, FB

SAMSON AND DELILAH (1005) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Samson)

108 1911, August 17 (KW/s) — DG, KW, KC

A NOBLE HEART (1245) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

109 1911, August 31 (KW/s) — DG, KW, KC

THE LITTLE DAUGHTER'S LETTER (1070) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

110 1911, September (DG) — DG, KC

BOYS WILL BE BOYS (855) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

111 1911, September (DG) — DG

THE MODERN PYGMALION AND GALATEA (670) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

112 1911, September (DG) — DG, KC

MYSTIC MANIPULATIONS (990) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

113 1911, September (DG) — DG, KC, Scala Programme

LITTLE LADY LAFAYETTE (975) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

114 1911, September (DG) — DG, KC

MISCHIEVOUS PUCK (845) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

115 1911, September (DG) — DG, KC

THE HYPNOTIST AND THE CONVICT (580) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

116 1911, September (DG) — DG KC

THE WIZARD AND THE BRIGANDS (820) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

117 1911, September 21 (KW/s) — DG KW KC

JOHNSON AT THE WEDDING (1140) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

118 1911, September 21 (KW/s) — KW KC

LOVE IN A COTTAGE (1225) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

119 1911, September (DG) — DG KC

UNCLE'S PICNIC (785) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

120 1911, October (DG) — DG KC

MUSIC HATH CHARMS (935) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

121 1911, October (DG) — DG KC

THE MILLIONAIRE'S NEPHEW (1060) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

122 1911, October 19 (KW/s) — KW

JULIUS CAESAR'S SANDALS ( ) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

123 1911, November 2 (KW/s) — KW

JANE SHORE ( ) NCK/Hove
(Theo Bouwmeester)

124 1911, November (DG) — DG KC FA

A LOVE STORY OF CHARLES 11 (1345) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester

125 1911, November (DG) — DG KC

THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER (1180) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

126 1911, November (DG) — DG KC FB

OLIVER CROMWELL (1230) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
Mentioned in FB

127 1911, November 16 (KW/s) DG
DANDY DICK OF BISHOPSGATE (1285) NCK/Hove KW
Theo Bouwmeester KC

128 1911, November 23 (KW/s) DG
THE LAST FAREWELL (815) Kineto KW
(Theo Bouwmeester)

129 1911, November 23 (KW/s) KW
A LUCKY ESCAPE (1000) NCK/(?) KC
(Theo Bouwmeester)

130 1911, November 30 (KW/s) DG
TWO CHRISTMAS HAMPERS (1375) NCK/Hove KW
Theo Bouwmeester KC

131 1911, December (DG) DG
BUFFALO BILL ON THE BRAIN (445) Kineto
Theo Bouwmeester

132 1911, December 7 (KW/d) DG
"MAJOR", THE RED CROSS DOG (715) Kineto KW
Theo Bouwmeester

133 1911, December 7 (KW/s) DG
THE GENERAL'S ONLY SON (1350) NCK/Hove KW
Theo Bouwmeester KC

134 1911, December 7 (KW/s) DG
SIMPKIN'S DREAM OF A HOLIDAY (845) NCK/Hove KW
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester KC

135 1911, December (DG) DG
LOVE OR RICHES (1295) NCK/Hove KC^
Theo Bouwmeester

136 1911, December 14 (KW/s) KW
THE PRIEST'S BURDEN (1120) NCK/(?) KC
(Theo Bouwmeester)

137 1911, December (DG) DG
THE ADOPTED CHILD (1275) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

138 1911, December 21 (KW/s) DG KW KC

NELL GWYNN THE ORANGE GIRL (1280) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

139 1911, December 28 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE INVENTOR'S SON (1355) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

140 1911, December 28 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE MAGIC RING (1030) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

The following nine films (arranged alphabetically were probably released during 1911, although some of them may have been shown between October and December 1910 and in January-February 1912. All nine films are listed in the Kinemacolor Film Catalogue 1912-1913 which only includes films released up to and including February 1912.

141 (probably 1911) KC FA FB

CAESAR'S PRISONERS (1240) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Julius Caesar), Julie Bouwmeester (the captured Queen)

142 (probably 1911) KC

A CITIZENESS OF PARIS (1175) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

143 (probably 1911) KC

ESTER: A BIBLICAL EPISODE (1300) NCK/Nice
(Theo Bouwmeester)

144 (probably 1911) KC

FOR THE CROWN (1395) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

145 (probably 1911) KC FA

THE PASSIONS OF AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS (945) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (Cleopatra)

146 (probably 1911) KC

THE PEASANTS AND THE FAIRY (1065) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

147 (probably 1911) KC

THE SILKEN THREAD (940) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

148 (probably 1911) KC

LA TOSCA (2000) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

149 (probably 1911) KC FA

TRILBY AND SVENGALI (1195) NCL/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (Trilby),
Theo Bouwmeester (Svengali)

150 1912, January 4 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE LITTLE WOODEN SOLDIER (1935) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

151 1912, January 4 (KW/s) DG KW KC

A SEASIDE COMEDY (1045) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

152 1912, January 11 (KW/s) DG KW KC

GERALD'S BUTTERFLY (570) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

153 1912, January 11 (KW/s) KW KC

THE MINSTREL KING (1385) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

154 1912, January 11 (KW/s) (B) KW B KC FA FB

OEDIPUS REX (3705) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Oedipus), Suzanne de Baere
(Iocasta)

155 1912, January 11 (KW/s) KW KC

THE TWO RIVALS (955) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmaster)

156 1912, January 18 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE TIDE OF FORTUNE (1365) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmaster

157 1912, January 18 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE VICISSITUDES OF A TOP HAT (1085) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

158 1912, January 25 (KW/s) KW KC

THE OLD GUITAR (1380) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

159 1912, February 1 (KW/s) DG KW KC

THE CAP OF INVISIBILITY (645) NCK/Hove
(W.R. Booth) Theo Bouwmeester

160 1912, February 1 (KW/s) DG KW FB

A TRUE BRITTON (1300) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (the Soldier)
FB mentions a film about the Boer War.

161 1912, February 8 (KW/s) DG KW KC

AN ELIZABETHAN ROMANCE (1130) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

162 1912, February 15 (KW/s) DG KW KC

A GAMBLER'S VILLAINY (795) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

163 1912, April 18 (KW/s) KW FA

THE LUST FOR GOLD ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (King Midas), Julie Bouwmeester
In FA identified as "The Love of Gold".

164 1912, April 18 (KW/s) KW

THE PRODIGAL DAUGHTER ( ) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

165 1912, April 18 (KW/s) KW FA

ROMANI, THE BRIGAND ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester, Julie Bouwmeester

166 1912, April 18 (KW/s) KW KC FA

THE VANDAL OUTLAWS (2410) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (the Baroness)

167 1912, April 25 (KW/s) KW FA

ONLY A WOMAN ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Dennis)

168 1912, May 30 (KW/s) KW

THE MIGHTY DOLLAR ( ) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

169 1912, June 6 (KW/s) KW FA

OFIA, THE WOMAN SPY ( ) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (Ofia), Theo Bouwmeester

170 1912, June 13 (KW/s) KW FA

THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester

171 1912, July 4 (KW/s) KW

AN ACTOR'S ROMANCE ( ) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

172 1912, August 1 (KW/s) DG KW

THE ROMANCE OF A ROYALIST MAID ( ) NCK/(?)
(Theo Bouwmeester)

DG gives director credit: F. Martin Thornton (and he could be right).

Theo Bouwmeester presumably left Charles Urban's Natural Colour Kinematograph Company at the end of July 1912 and then started to work for Pathé's English production company Britannia Films.

His first film for Britannia Films was presumably:

173 1912, November 27 (KW/d) DG KW FA

LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS (2013) Pathé/Britannia
Theo Bouwmeester

DG gives director credit: (A.E. Coleby).
Photos in FA identified as "Après les ténèbres".

The following seven films (arranged alphabetically) are not listed in the Kinemacolor Film Catalogue. Consequently, it is most likely that they were released during 1912.

No contemporary references to these films have been found yet, for example in publications such as The Bioscope and The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly.

From the photos in Frenkel's albums it is obvious that in most cases these films were made from the stories mentioned by Frenkel.

174 (probably 1912) FA

CARMEN ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (Carmen), Theo Bouwmeester (Don José)

175 (probably 1912) FA

CHARLES 1V ( ) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Charles 1V of France), Julie Bouwmeester

176 (probably 1912) FA

HEROD (or JOHN THE BAPTIST) ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Herod)

177 (probably 1912) FA

JUDITH ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Julie Bouwmeester (Judith of Bethulia)

178 (probably 1912) FA

THE PRODIGAL SON ( ) NCK/Nice
Theo Bouwmeester

179 (probably 1912) FA

THE RIVALS ( ) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester

180 (probably 1912) FA

TALMA ( ) NCK/Hove
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Talma)

181 1913, February 22 (KW/d), reissued on 7th March 1915 (B) DG KW B FA Pathé-Journal

THE ORPHAN (1966) Pathé/Britannia
Theo Bouwmeester

DG gives director credit: (A.E. Coleby).

182 1913, April 16 (KW/d) DG KW FA Pathé-Journal

A WHIFF OF ONION(S) (773) Pathé/Britannia
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Theo Bouwmeester (the Lodger)
In FA identified as "The Lodger".

DG gives director credit: (A.E. Coleby).

183 1913, May 17 (KW/d) DG KW FA Pathé-Journal

THE BOATSWAIN'S DAUGHTER (768) Pathé/Britannia
Theo Bouwmeester
with: Lewis Willoughby, Edwin Palmer, Wyndham Guise, Miss Murray, Miss George

DG gives director credit: (A.E. Coleby).

Theo Bouwmeester presumably worked for Britannia Films from August to December 1912, perhaps a month or two longer. It is possible that in that period he directed more films than the four Britannia productions mentioned in this list.

Bouwmeester started working in Germany early in 1913. His first German film, FRAUENLEID, made for Messters Projektion GmbH, Berlin, was submitted to the censor during April 1913 and released on 27th June 1913.

In Theo Frenkel's photo albums there are quite a number of photos which Frenkel himself did not identify..... and which it had been impossible to identify, even tentatively, by matching the scenes with the synopses of the films on this list.

There are also a few photos - all appear to be from Kinemacolor films - which Frenkel identified with a French or a Dutch title. These titles are:

184 LE BAGNARD FA
with: Theo Bouwmeester

185 LE CHÂTEAU ET L'ABBÉ FA

186 DE INDUSTRIEEL VAN PONT AVESNES FA
with: Theo Bouwmeester, Julie Bouwmeester

187 DON CÉSAR DE BAZAN FA
with: Theo Bouwmeester (Don César de Bazan)

188 MAROCCO EN HET VREEMDELINGENLEGIOEN FA

Here too it has been impossible to identify the films by matching the scenes with the synopses of the films on this list of films directed by Theo Bouwmeester.

DANISH FEATURE FILMS 1900-1906 AND ENGLISH FEATURE FILMS FROM THE SAME PERIOD, SHOWN IN DENMARK

Marguerite Engberg - Copenhagen

The production of feature films in Denmark 1900-1906 and an attempt to list the English feature films which were shown during this period.

Compared to many other countries, for example England, France and U.S.A., the film production in Denmark began somewhat late. This was mainly due to the difficulties in finding a large enough public for this new entertainment; "cinema going". Many attempts, however, were made to attract the public. Vilhelm Pacht, for instance, arranged a film performance on June 7th, 1896, at his entertainment place "Panorama", situated at the Town Hall Square of Copenhagen. On the following day, "Politiken", one of the main newspapers, wrote an article about the event, and a few days later the Royal Family honoured the establishment with their attendance. But not even this publicity made the film showing at "Panorama" an economic success. People soon tired of "de levende Billeder" (the moving pictures) and Pacht had to find other ways of attracting the public.

During the next years, until 1904, several other film pioneers gave showings occasionally at market places, music halls, and at other public gatherings, but they were all forced to terminate shortly after. One of these, however, deserves special mention. It is Peter Elfelt (1866-1931), a court photographer, and deeply involved in everything concerning photography and related subjects, for instance, perspective photography. In 1896 Elfelt attended a film showing at "Panorama" given by Vilhelm Pacht. This new form of expression inspired him, and he even succeeded in buying a camera constructed for Lumiere by Jules Carpentier. Peter Elfelt made his first film, a reportage film, during the Christmas holidays of a total of 200 reportage films. Besides being a Danish pioneer in this genre he also worked within other film genres; producing the earliest Danish advertisement film, the earliest ballet film, and in 1903 the earliest feature film: "Henrettelsen" (The Execution). This film, however, was no success, and Peter Elfelt did not feel inclined to continue working with feature films. Though his film interest became a prolific activity with him, it never overshadowed his main interest which was photography.

In 1904, an important film historic event took place in this country. Constantin Philipsen (1859-1925), one of the film pioneers who at an earlier stage tried in vain to establish a cinema, made another venture; on September 7th 1904 he opened the first regular cinema in the centre of Copenhagen, where films were shown every day at certain fixed hours. He called the cinema "Kosmorama". This time it was no failure. The reason for this change in attitude from the public was that the programmes which Constantin Philipsen was now able to present had improved much from the short flickering pictures he and Pacht had shown a few years earlier. Not only the technical quality was much better, but thanks to the prolonged running time of a single film,

it was possible to compose small dramatic stories which attracted the attention of the public, more so than the earlier films. "Kosmorama" became an immediate success, and soon after a series of cinemas sprang up all over the country.

From now on a great demand for films arose, a demand which soon became very difficult to satisfy. As we know the total world production of films was small at that period, and the demand for films was growing enormously everywhere.

Ole Olsen (1863-1943), (the owner of "Biograf-Teatret", a cinema founded in Copenhagen in 1905), conscious of this new demand began his own film production. By the end of 1905 he had ordered two Pathé cameras from France, and by January 1906 was underway with the first production. The first films made were reportage films, and one of these, a film on the funeral of King Christian IX was a very great success, sold in many copies. Ole Olsen ventured further and began the production of feature films, founding a film company: Nordisk Films Kompagni. Before the end of the year he had produced 35 feature films besides a large number of reportage films.

The total production of Danish feature films during the years 1900-1906 was insignificant compared to that of U.S.A., France and England. However, Nordisk Films Kompagni only four years later, in 1910, could boast of being the second largest company in the world. Of the 36 films made during this period only 4 exist today; the one film by Peter Elfelt and three films produced by Nordisk Films Kompagni.

1. HENRETTELSEN (The Execution)

Production: Peter Elfelt 1903
Director: Peter Elfelt
Script: Christian Lundsgaard and Scheel Vandel
Camera: Peter Elfelt
Original Length: 35-40m. Surviving material: ca. 25 m.
With: Francesca Nathansen and Victor Betzonich

Plot synopsis: A mother, who has killed her ten children, is being executed. We follow her on her way to the scaffold.

The film was shot in the courtyard of Christiansborg Castle in Copenhagen very early in the morning, so that no inquisitive on-lookers should disturb the filming. We do not know exactly when it was taken but as there is snow in the streets and as the morning is rather light, it was probably shot in February or March. It is a very primitive film - using stationary camera and there are no close-ups. The surviving material shows the woman coming out from a door, walking between two men through an arcade. According to Francesca Nathansen we miss the beginning where she is sitting in the prison. The original film was a one sprocket-hole Lumière film and the quality of the material rather poor.

2. EN NY HAT TIL MADAMMEN (A new hat for my wife)

Production: Nordisk Films Kompagni 1906
Director: Viggo Larsen
Camera: Axel Sørensen (Graatkjær)
Original Length: 120 m. Surviving material 50 m.
With: Jean Hersholt

Plot synopsis: (of the surviving material) A hat is purchased. A message boy on a bicycle stops outside an apartment building. He carries an enormous hat box. The hat-box cannot fit through the door. The boy calls for help, and from a flat on the 2nd floor a man sends down a rope which the boy fastens to the box. The box is then hauled through the window of the flat thereby crushing the (window) frame. The owner of the hat (a woman) walks down the street wearing the new hat. She tries in vain to enter a taxi, continues walking and collides with people and things on her way.

The film is taken in totals. There is no camera movement, but there is, in the scene in the flat an example of cross-cutting. Part of the film is taken in the streets and part of it in a decoration. (The first Danish studio was not built until the Autumn of 1907).

3. ANARKISTENS SVIGERMOR

Original English title: The Anarchist's Mother-in-Law
Production: Nordisk Films Kompagni 1906
Director: Viggo Larsen
Camera: Axel Sørensen (Graatkjær)
Set decorator: Robert Krause
Original length: 90 m. surviving material: 80 m.
Copies sold: 66
Danish premiere: 23.10.1906
With: Viggo Larsen and MargretheJespersen

Plot synopsis: The matrimonial life of an anarchist and his wife is being disturbed by the wife's mother. At last the anarchist blows his mother-in-law to pieces with dynamite.

The film consists of 8 shots, all taken in totals, with an example of cross-cutting: The scene consists of shots of a room, the street, and the man as he jumps. The actors use a primitive pantomimic style. There are no titles to this film and the actors presumably find it difficult to express the whole story without words.

4. DEN HVIDE SLAVINDE (The White Slave-Girl)

Production: Nordisk Films Kompagni
Director: Viggo Larsen
Script: Arnold Richard Nielsen

Camera: Axel Sørensen (Graatkjær)
Set decorator: Robert Krause
Original Length: 155m. surviving material: 150m.
Danish premiere: 12.1.1907
With: Gerda Jensen, Viggo Larsen, Gustav Lund

Plot Synopsis: An advertisement tempts a young, provincial girl to seek employment in a big town. As a farewell present her fiancé gives her a cage with a carrier pigeon. Arriving in the town, the girl, too late, realises that she has fallen into the hands of white slave traders. By means of the pigeon, however, she sends a letter to her fiancé telling him about her desperate situation, and she is then rescued in the nick of time.

It is a film treating an urgent social problem: white slave traffic. But it is evident that the director was more interested in describing the fast life of a big town than in the social problem itself.

In 1910 Danish films resumed the same topic, and again the directors focused the interest on the piquant scenes of the films.

Of the 35 feature films, which Nordisk Films Kompagni produced in 1906, there were 22 dramas and 13 comedies (as the company categorized the latter). The average length of the dramas was 125m. and of the comedies 90m. "Den hvide Slavinde" is as we see the only drama preserved from that year.

English Feature Films in Danish Cinemas 1900-1906

Until the Spring 1906 all feature films shown in this country, apart from "Henrettelsen", were of foreign origin. On 24th March 1906 the premiere of the earliest feature film made by Nordisk Films Kompagni was held. Hereafter Danish films gradually took a prominent place in the programmes of the cinemas in this country.

In the years 1900-1906 films made by Pathé Freres dominated the Danish market, however, American and English films were also imported. Unfortunately, it is impossible to produce any exact information as to which English films were shown in Denmark as any record of this is vague and incomplete.

During the period 1900 to September 1904 when Constantin Philipsen opened the first regular cinema, films were as mentioned before only shown now and then. The film pioneers either could not afford or did not bother to advertise their programmes regularly. But from September 1904 matters improved. Now the cinemas issued programmes of their repertoire. The majority of these programmes are preserved by the Royal Library in Copenhagen.

This collection of programmes has been the main source for this investigation. Other sources have been: the English films preserved in this country, advertisements in newspapers, and the correspondence files of Nordisk Films Kompagni. From May 1906, a copy of all outgoing letters from the company are preserved. Among these letters are letters to English companies from whom Ole Olsen bought films for his cinema. In the correspondence these films are quoted either by

the title or by the number in the film catalogues. Unfortunately, we do not have the catalogues in Denmark, but I presume they exist in England. The quoting of these numbers may therefore be of some value.

It has not always been possible to know for certain whether a film in one of the film programmes is of English origin . I have consequently only mentioned films which I am quite sure of as being English.

The text of the programmes was of course written in Danish, the same concerns the title of the film (a direct translation is given below). In cases where I know the original English title, this is listed under or:. On the day a programme was delivered to the Royal Library, a date stamp and library seal was marked on the programme. This date is indicated by ind:. dt: stands for: Danish title.

English feature films shown at "Kosmorama"

1. dt: DET FORSVUNDNE BARN (The child who disappeared)
   or: The Lost Child
   ind: 27.7.1905

2. dt: ASKEPOT (Cinderella) 10 parts.
   ind: 27.7.1905

3. dt: TORNEROSE (The Sleeping Beauty) ten tableaus
   ind: 27.7.1905

4. dt: GULLIVERS REJSE I LILLIPUTTERNES OG KÆMPERNES LAND
   (Gulliver's Travels in the Country of the Lilliputtians and the giants)
   ind: 27.7.1905

5. dt: CHARLEYS TANTES AUTOMOBILTUR (Charley's Aunt's automobile tour)

6. dt: DA MARY JANE SKULE TÆNDE ILD PA KOMFURET MED PETROLEUM
   (When Mary Jane used petroleum to light the range)
   or: Mary Jane's Mishap, 1901, director: G.A. Smith
   ind: 27.5.1905

7. dt: BORTFØRELSE PR. AUTOMOBIL (Elopement by Car)
   or: The Run-Away Match (?)
   ind: 9.1.1906

8. dt: BØRNERØVERNE (The Robbers of Children)

   Plot Synopsis: Mr. Williams and his wife steal children in London, dress them in rags and teach them how to beg. The parents of Tom, a three year old boy who has been kidnapped, recognise their child.

   ind: 9.1.1906

9. dt: BRØDE OG ANGER (Guilt and Penitence)

Plot Synopsis: A banker is murdered outside a cafe in London; a man (another banker) tries to throw the blame on an intoxicated person by placing the murder-weapon into his hand and by putting a watch into his pocket.

ind: 9.1.1906

English feature films shown at "Biograf Teatret" (opened: 23.4.1905)

1. dt: LIVET I KULMINERNE (Life in the Coalmines)

(Description: Today's most dashing picture. More than 20.000 artistically hand-coloured photographs)

Plot Synopsis: A melodramatic story about a father and his son working in the mines. An explosion takes place. The father is saved, but the son dies.

ind: 10.10.1905

2. dt: KAPTAJN KETTLES NORDPOLSFÆRD
or: How Captain Kettle Discovered the North Pole (1903)
ind: 1905

3. dt: "TROFAST" - HUNDEN SOM OPDAGER ("Faithful" The Dog Detective)
ind: 1.10.1900

Plot synopsis: A banker is held up by burglars, but a dog, a poodle, pursues the burglars.

4. dt: DEN KLOGE HEST (HESTEN SOM REDNINGSMAND) (The Clever Horse, or, The Horse Rescuer)
or: Black Beauty (Hepworth)
ind: 1.10.1906
Length: 140 m
Danish premiere: 18.8.1906

5. dt: STAKKELS ALGY (Poor Algy)

Plot Synopsis: A young couple are on a picnic. A man steals their food and the same thief compels the young man to give him his clothes.
ind: 1.10.1906

English feature films shown at "Biorama" (opened: end 1905)

1. dt: EN EPISODE FRA DET ENGELSKE DERBY (An episode from the English Derby)

Plot Synopsis: A young girl gambles at the races, wins and is taken prisoner with the money.
ind: 1906

2. dt: EN LONDONERFORRETNINGSMANDS TRAVLE DAG (The Busy Day of a London Businessman.)

   Plot Synopsis: The film shows the daily routine of a London businessman. By lunchtime the work day has apparently come to a close as the races and a gay time are the afternoon activities. The man goes to a ballet with a girlfriend (The ballet, states the programme, is filmed during a real theatre performance without extra lighting). The film ends after a scene at the man's home, where it is 12.30 at night and where his wife is rebelling.

English feature film shown at "Thaumatographen" (a minor cinema opened in 1905)

1. dt: DEN ENGELSKE PRÆST OG STRAFFEFANGEN (The English Clergyman and the Convict)
   or: Convict and Cure
   ind: 19.12.1906
   Production: British Gaumont 1904
   Plot Synopsis: A thief steals a clergyman's clothes while the latter is bathing

In the correspondence of Nordisk Films Kompagni there are letters to the following English film companies: The Warwick Trading Company, Robert Paul, Charles Urban Trading Company, Hepworth Manufacturing Company, Leon Gaumont, England, and the Sheffield Photo Company.

1. Warwick Trading Company

There is only one letter to this company, and it is sent to the French branch. The letter dates from 25.5.1906, quote: "La présente pour vous aviser que je garde: Schlau, Schlauer am Schlausten., le montant va suivre demain en cheque sur Paris. Salutations distingués. Ole Olsen"

2. Robert Paul

7.6.1906: Orders HOUSE TO LET No. 7080, Returns No. 7135, 7170
4.9.1906: Orders 7275, Returns 7156, 7263
27.11.1906: This letter has the following content: "I am sorry to trouble you again, but will you kindly send the first copy of any of your films as Miniature Photographs per book post". A letter with the same content is also sent to Hepworth. Ole Olsen no doubt wishes to see the films before he purchases them.

3. Charles Urban

21.7.1906: Orders 1842, 1844, 1846, 1843, 1840, 1837; Returns 1834, 1946, 1837.
17.8.1906: orders THE PROSPECTORS 1851
25.8.1906: orders HOW THE FOIT (?) BUD FLEED (?) 1868

7.9.1906: returns 1855
10.9.1906: orders THE MINER'S DAUGHTER
17.9.1906: orders 1862, B 142, 1861
25.9.1906: returns 292
12.11.1906: orders 1863, 1913; returns 1866, 1890
11.12.1906: orders 3151, 3154, 1867, 1930, 6225; returns 1932

4. Hepworth

28.7.1906: returns 1080, 1082, 1090, 1095
17.8.1906: orders BLACK BEAUTY 1113 (140 m)
25.8.1906: orders SQUATTER'S DAUGHTER (190m)
4.9.1906: orders JENKINS WASHES UP(90m)
10.9.1906: returns 1046, 1071
11.9.1906: orders LE NOUVEAU SERGEANT DE VILLE 1127
25.9.1906: orders 7311, 7309: returns 7253
18.11.1906: orders THE BURGLAR OF THE JUDGE 1151; THE FATAL LEAP 1146;
THE POET AND HIS BABIES 1017
1.12.1906: returns 1006, 986, 1014, 966, 989

5. Leon Gaumont, England

21.8.1906: orders CLOSER CLOSED 814; BAD HALFPENNY 744;
returns: BETRAYED 871; PUGGLE MANUAL (?) 676;
SLOVEN DAYS 815; DOG DETECTIVE 817.
30.10.1906: orders FOUR HOOLIGANS, LODGING HOUSE, NIGHT OF THE PARTY,
PUPIL TEACHER.
4.12.1906: orders 145, 1551, 492; returns 143
11.12.1906: orders 296/8083; returns 287/8101, 649/4

English films from the years 1900-1906 and still existing in Denmark

GRANDMA'S READING GLASS (1900)
BANKVÆGTEREN (The Bank Watchman) (ca. 1905)

The latter is very close in plot to RESCUED BY ROVER. In this case it is a bull-dog which is a detective, and catches the burglar who has stolen a bag with money from a safe in the bank.

In a few cases, Nordisk Films Kompagni not only bought a positive copy of a film, but also the negative. The following three films figure in the "negative" protocol of the company: BLACK BEAUTY, THE MINER'S DAUGHTER, and JENKINS WASHES UP. None of these negatives however are preserved.

Besides the English feature films, also a large number of English reportage films were shown in Denmark during the period 1900-1906, for example Charles Urban's film THE BUSY BEES (1903), and same company's film about Port Arthur's siege and fall, and Gaumont's film MAN THE LIFEBOAT (1904).

ARTICULATION OF SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN DESIGNATED FILMS 1900-1906

John L. Fell - USA

As motion pictures initiate coherent narrative patterns involving two or more shots, alternative ways to link space present themselves. The sequential articulation of continuous (or seemingly continuous) spaces proves doubly interesting; an intuited groping toward expository "sophistication", and a rejection of contradictory narrative routes.

Continuity in the Single Shot

Before space was separated by discreet shots and rejoined through editing, other techniques at times seem almost to replace an editing function with compensatory techniques. (Such attribution of cause must be held in cautious check. Narrative development can hardly be explained by facile alternatives to devices not yet evolved). But caution notwithstanding, the determinations of story, staging and locale inescapably require some sorts of solutions to formal problems which a film-maker has imposed upon himself. Three such resolutions follow.

Simultaneous Playing Areas, a theatrical convention dating at least from the early nineteenth century, appear in IN A RAINES LAW HOTEL (A M & B 1905), THE BRIDAL CHAMBER (A M & B 1905), THE ABDUCTORS (A M & B 1905), and BLACKMAIL (A M & B 1905). In point of fact, the first three titles were copyrighted on the same day and use an identical set, dressed with slight variation. All the stories require action in one area that is overseen from an adjacent location which sustains secrecy. BLACKMAIL is slightly more complicated. Two women enter the outer room of a business office. While one proceeds to the adjoining private quarters and kisses a man at his desk, her companion photographs the proceedings. Unnerved, the man pays for the picture; while he sits disconsolate at his desk, both women move to the outer area and split the profits. Here, exits and entrances between the two spaces are obscured. A performer disappears momentarily from one office room before reappearing in another. The other films' stagings simply amount to cross-sectional views. In each case, the story's "point" requires audience omniscience toward behaviours unbeknownst to all the actors.

Pans seem most often either to widen a purview of vision, that is, to serve the purpose of more distant camera angles, or else functionally to follow action. Another, more occasional, employment substitutes, as it were, for a cut. In THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY (Edison 1905), a parody of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY performed largely by children and apparently directed by Porter, the bandit gang stops a narrow gauge railroad train and robs its passengers. One horizontal camera movement follows the escaping bandits on horseback, then pivots back to the victims, bereft in their abandoned railroad car.

DEEP SPACE might have produced a like effect in THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY,

had the camera setup composed a railroad track running from foreground to background in sharp diagonal. Such staging characterizes several Edison war re-enactments. For CHARGE OF BOER CAVALRY (Edison 1900), the camera's high angle encompasses a vast area between two hills, where uniformed Boer army cavalry approach the camera, sabres in hand. Distance lends a sort of anonymous authenticity to the staged manoeuvre, whose seeming actuality is emphasised by passages of horses horizontally across screen, right to left, between camera and soldiers. Similarly, RED CROSS AMBULANCE ON BATTLEFIELD (Edison 1900), same location, same camera setup, stages involved oval movements in the field, supplemented by the arrival of Red Cross wagons, left to right, re-positioning of figures on the field, and exits of the vehicles right to left, all in one shot.

The two war films bear interesting comparison with THE BATTLE OF THE YALU (Russo-Japanese War) (A M & B 1904). Filmed by Bitzer in the light snows of New York's Mohawk Valley near Syracuse, separate shots alternate camera angles so that Japanese and Russian troops switch foreground-background relationships, as if one shot were the reverse angle of its precedents. (The five-shot "sequence" carries four copyrights, so that one must timidly estimate how often the episodes which are sequential on the Library of Congress Paper Print roll may actually have been exhibited in such combination).

Bridging Time and Space

In cases where sequentially presented locations are connected by a character's movements from one place to another, i.e. an exit and an entrance, time may sometimes be seen to overlap the two scenes. Thus, during an interior in THE FIREBUG (A M & B 1905) a pyromaniac escapes through a basement window, pursued by another male figure. The following shot presents an exterior of the same window, and each man re-enacts the escape and pursuit. THE TUNNEL WORKERS (A M & B 1906) carries even more interesting shot pairings. The foreman of a tunnel construction gang is observed kissing a woman by her workman husband. Later, a tunnel construction is evoked with two sets, one a reverse angle of the other with a background door linking an anterior ready room to a digging site. On the former set, the foreman exits through the door. The workman pauses to gesture his rage toward the camera in a melodramatic aside, then follows. The next scene re-enacts the passage of both figures through the door from the adjacent set. At this point, the two fight, and there is an explosion which buries them beneath rocks. Fellow workers rescue both men, carrying them through the door. Then, reverting to the earlier set, we continue the rescue as if continuously, that is, action reasonably matches and time seems smoothly to bridge the cut. A like employment of one door connecting adjacent rooms figures in ROUNDING UP OF THE "YEGGMEN" (Edison 1904).

Cut-Ins

Similar instances of continuous time bridged by matching action manifest in closer-shot magnifications of elements visible in a preceding, more distant shot, the cut-in. In GAY SHOE CLERK (Edison 1903), a salesman

adjusting the footwear of a young woman customer is accentuated by a following closeup. Whether action matches is problematical. The continuity of movement may be clumsy or it may be unintentional.

THE STRENUOUS LIFE, or ANTI-RACE SUICIDE (Edison 1904) complicates matters by implying different intentions from the cut-in. A businessman arrives home with an obstetrician. (The father's passage from foyer to living room suggests continuous time while reversing screen directions!) A maid brings a newborn child downstairs, presenting it to the father, who mimes the baby's heaviness. The maid brings in a scale on which the infant is placed. The father happily gesticulates his offspring's weight (ambiguously this may be read as seven or twelve pounds. The scale's reading isn't discernible). A closer shot follows. The father's hand movements are repeated, clearly in such a way that his gesticulation should not be read as continuous with the earlier movement, but rather a re-staging of the last expression. So closeups might sometimes be considered as inserts intended to emphasise detail through enlargement and repetition.

One of the clearest time-space matches occurs in Porter's DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND (Edison 1906). A long shot of a man flying through space, clinging to the footboard of his bed, culminates in his losing hold and falling, snagging on a weather vane. In medium close shot, the man is then seen hanging from the perch in his nightshirt. A similary matched continuity appears in Méliès' LE VOYAGE A TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE (1904). Here, a loose train car plummets over a cliff, followed by a closer shot which preserves speed, screen direction and studio geography with convincing fidelity.

In THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN (which also suggests, like THE FIREBUG, that closeups may introduce characters at the beoinning of a film), a woman admires her suitor's bouquet, first in long shot then closeup, but her flower-sniffing actions do not match. In STOLEN BY GYPSIES (Edison, Porter 1905), the closeup of a baby being diapered advises us of an identifying butterfly birthmark on the child's shoulder. In THE SEVEN AGES (Edison 1905), a film distinguished by functional "fireplace" lighting, four of the intertitled episodes ("Playmates," "Soldier", "Judge", "Second Childhood") appear with closeup inserts of embracing couples. The "Soldier" material mismatches actor positions from its earlier shot. The discrepancy strikes us by its very unabashed presence.

Overall Pattern

The organisational schemes which cohere multi-shot films of this period themselves diminish or facilitate an impulse to edit on contiguous space. Notions like a day's experience (FUN ON THE FARM, British 1905) and famous locations (Coney Island in BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS. Edison 1905; RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND, Edison 1903) are defiantly episodic. Further, they ignore the continuity of proceeding from a geographic overview to the particular. In contrast, an event film EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ WITH PANORAMA OF AUBURN PRISON (Edison 1900), ellipses time by telescoping separate moments into a progressive passage from prison exterior to the electric chair within.

Another way in which spatial relationships may be seen to evolve is in terms of physical oppositions. At first, confrontation is visualised in the general manner of a fully-seen prizefight ring, both antagonists in frame. For example, in CAPTURE OF THE BIDDLE BROTHERS (Edison, Porter 1902), mounted men approach the camera from a distance, riding in snow through a forest. Then a sleigh enters, coming from behind the camera and approaching the horsemen. The sleigh's two occupants stop, descend and shoot it out with the approaching figures.

The separation of opposing figures may first transpire in chase films, although initially pursuer and pursued generally pass diagonally before the viewer in the same shot. An early instance is THE TERRIBLE KIDS (Edison 1902). Chases seem to encourage convincing shot-to-shot continuity, as long as screen direction is vaguely matched. Early variations on the theme appear in MANIAC CHASE (Edison 1904) which adds trick effects and in THE GENTLEMAN HIGHWAYMAN (A M & B 1905) which uses automobiles. It might be argued that out-of-door filming was a necessary condition for radical shifts in camera angle, the kind which amounted to more daring editing rationales than the mere enlargement of a previous image, because the visual field was freed from studio-set limitations.

STORM AT SEA (Edison 1900), which contains three shots, may be viewed either as a triad of distinct moments, sustained by the idea of atmosphere, or else as showing blustering ocean movements which could be "as seen" by an initially documented shipboard passenger at the railing.

Motivated Point of View

Motivating a subsequent shot by glance, often an off-screen glance, suggests the overlaying of a subjective vantage onto offstage theatre space derivations. As late as 1904, in WESTERN STAGE COACH HOLDUP (Edison), a robbery is preceded by one bandit's peering offscreen in anticipation of a stage's arrival. The in-camera matted shot appears at least as early as GRANDPA'S READING GLASS (A M & B 1902), suggesting a magnifying glass through which various objects are viewed. A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE (A M & B 1903) simulates keyholes by which means activities in various hotel rooms are spied by a woman seeking her husband. In BATTLE OF CHEMULPO BAY (Edison 1904), a shipboard gun crew fires at Russian battleships in the bay. One sailor raises binoculars to his eyes, and we cut to a circular matte which encloses a flag closeup. Gunfire devastates the flag, and we cut back to shipboard.

In TOUR DE MONDE D'UN POLICIER (Pathe 1905) a shipboard detective views Suez Canal traffic with binoculars, and we see the scene ourselves through a two-circle matte. A like technique appears, more fully developed, in REVOLUTION EN RUSSE (Pathe, Nonguet 1906). In this eight shot film, which recounts the Potemkin mutiny, a deckboard officer, telescope in hand, views the beseiged, burning town of Odessa. Then, as if seen through the telescope, a family flees the bombardment. Cut back to deck officer, who lowers his instrument and speaks to the gun crew. The "subjective" telescope is repeated, followed again by its viewer on deck.

Evidence of Editorial Pre-Planning

Evidence of pre-design can help to distinguish the self-conscious from the fortuitous. As shots increase in single films, their sequence can be designated as non-repeating or else to be rescheduling earlier camera setups. In Porter's THE WHITE CAPS (Edison 1905), shot 1 consists of an exterior cottage entrance, through which a drunken man enters. Shot 2, cottage interior, shows the man beating his wife. Shot 3 exactly repeats the composition of shot 1. Woman and daughter flee. A famous case in point is THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, in which the same railroad station interior appears as shots 1 and 10.

In THE SUBURBANITES (A M & B 1904), a fourteen shot story filmed both on location at Asbury Park, New Jersey and in Biograph's New York studio, repeated shots of the same sets (a kitchen, a living room) are checkerboarded with one another. Further, the final shot, an exterior, is separated from any earlier exterior by five shots. Such reliance on script suggests increasing awareness that spatial relationships can be realised through editing, which is to say, through preconception.

Relation of Angle to Narrative Agent

Finally, camera position itself implies discourse, that is, a sometimes-unanswerable question is generated: Who is telling the story? Closeups generally suggest a kind of facilitating agency, perhaps obsequious, perhaps condescending toward maximising our understanding and comprehension. Distant shots, as with Edison's Boer War films, pretend to candor and accident by clever stagings of horizontal movements contrary to the primary, vertical screen directions. The compositions of Biograph's seemingly least talented cameraman, one Weed - NOVEL WAY OF CATCHING A BURGLAR (1904), A WINDY DAY ON THE ROOF (1904) - yet compose his single shot gags with bottom-frame figures cut off at the torso, maximizing our interest in what is not seen.

If pans serve most often as facilitating agents, there is a provoking moment in STOLEN BY GYPSIES. A gypsy kidnaps a baby untended on the family lawn. He skulks left into a carriage and exits. Camera then pans right to a distant side of the house. Here, different, new robbers appear, escaping with a bag of chickens. This pair is pursued by the household, some of whom mistake the thieves for the kidnappers. As audience, with foreknowledge independent from and superior to the wisdoms of any performers, we occupy a seemingly unique relation to the unfolding events. Narrative approaches a new level of complexity when Porter manipulates, rather than merely eases, the order of our perceptions.

CAMERA MOVEMENT IN EDISON AND BIOGRAPH FILMS: 1900-1906

Jon Gartenberg - USA

A pervading point of view about the American cinema during its formative years is that the filmmaking made little use of camera movement. Instead, great attention in the film histories is placed upon the emergence of editing. For example, in Lewis Jacobs' The Rise of the American Film, he states that Edwin S. Porter (an important director at Edison during this period)

> distinguished the movies from other theatrical forms and gave them the invention of editing. Almost all motion picture developments since Porter's discovery spring from the principle of editing, which is the basis of motion picture artistry.[1]

A chronological viewing of the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company (hereafter referred to as the Biograph Company) and Edison Company productions between 1900 and 1906 for this Brighton project make evident that camera movement is an important contributing force to the technical, dramatic, and aesthetic development of the motion picture. Camera movement is evident as early as 1900, is employed with increasing frequency and innovation during the ensuing years, and by 1906 establishes itself as a basic filmmaking technique of the American cinema which is often integrated with the use of editing such as in the genre of the chase film. This paper will hopefully provide a beginning step in our understanding of the use of this technique in the early history of the American cinema.

During the years 1900-1902, most of the Biograph and Edison productions are photographed in the studio. The films are one shot, photograph the characters at full-length view, and are comprised largely of scenes of mischief and havoc within realistic settings inside rooms or of disappearing characters and trick effects within more theatrical settings. Since the scenes are staged and the actions pre-planned, the necessity to move the camera within the shot does not arise. Even when the films begin to move out-of-doors (which occurs more often at Edison than at Biograph), they are predominantly imitative of the interior scenes. Mischievous acts are filmed from a long view in a single shot. Biograph's THE LOVER'S KNOT (June 25, 1902)[2] is an exemplary case. In this film, a man is gesturing to his sweetheart on the front porch of his house, while his feet are tied together by a mischief-maker. In Edison's THE INTERRUPTED BATHERS (October 22, 1902), a tramp steals the clothes of a woman who is bathing, and she must walk about in a barrel and in THE INTERRUPTED PICNIC (October 22, 1902), a tramp scares away the picnickers, only to be later thrown in the lake. Like THE LOVER'S KNOT, both these films are shot out of doors, contain mischief-making, are photographed in one shot, and contain no panning.

As the films are photographed with increasing frequency out-of-doors, camera pans occur with more regularity. The most common type of camera movement is the pan, in which the camera pivots slightly horizontally in order to recenter a character who has moved out of the frame. Evidence of this type of pan occurs even as late as 1903, in one-shot films such as THE HEAVENLY TWINS

AT ODDS (Edison, October 14, 1903), in which one of the babies on the beach moves off to the side of the image. Because the child has moved accidentally out of the field of vision, the camera must readjust and pan slightly in order to record his further actions.

The first Biograph film of this 1900-1906 period which employs a pan is LOVE IN THE SUBURBS (September 11, 1900). The experience of the camera moving from a set position to encompass a greater field of vision must have been a great novelty for the viewing public, as it was for those of us who viewed this film for the project. While a woman walks across the image from the right to the left in an exterior street scene, the camera pans to the left, paralleling her movement. She is followed by two gentlemen. As she moves left, they move left, and the camera pans left. When she stops, they stop, and the camera stops. Then, as the camera pans further, a policeman enters the image and he wards off the two gentlemen. Two important advances in narrative cinema are established in this one-shot film. First, when the camera makes its first jerky pan, the concept of film space is extended beyond the immediate field of vision. Second, the movement of the policeman from offscreen space into the field of vision as the camera pans resolves the tension in the narrative of the film. This also occurs in the first Edison film of the period shot out-of-doors which employs a camera pan. In THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S MISHAP (July 31, 1901), the camera pans right to make room for a photographer at the side of the railroad tracks; had he stayed where he was, a train would have run him over. The panning of the camera to offscreen space is important to the resolution of the tension arising from within the image itself.

These beginning efforts with camera pans in 1900 and 1901 are faltering ones: the pans rely on chance rather than indicating forethought as to where they will end. However, in 1902, another advancement occurs in terms of camera panning. In A PIPE STORY OF THE FOURTH (Biograph, July 7, 1902), evidence of preplanning the pan occurs. In the second shot of the film, a man has accidentally blown himself up with fireworks. In the third shot of the film there is a cut back up the street, and as the ambulance approaches, the camera pans down the street, stopping at the point where the man is lying on the ground.

In 1903 and 1904, a greater variety of techniques and sophistication of structure appears to occur in the Biograph and Edison films. Multiple shot films are evolving, developing logical narratives, especially at the Edison Company, which produced the well-known LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (January 21, 1903). A lesser-known but equally important film is THE STRENUOUS LIFE, OR ANTI-RACE SUICIDE (Edison, December 19, 1904). In the fourth shot of this film, a man gestures with his hands as a baby is weighed on a scale; in the fifth shot of the film, the man's gestures are repeated, but they are photographed from a closer view. This is a non-continuous editing style; that is, cutting from one shot to the next and repeating the same action.

While the Edison Company is using the structure of editing to cut into a closer view, Biograph's resolution of this problem is accomplished in a fascinating alternate manner. At Biograph, many productions in 1903 are still being shot indoors with the same subjects and themes as in the 1900 to 1902 films. A film which begins like these earlier films is HOOLIGAN IN JAIL (September 25, 1903). In this film, a prisoner is seated at a table in a long view of the interior of a prison cell. The guard enters the room, and leaves him his food. Then a fascinating change takes place. In order to get a closer view of his facial expressions, as the prisoner sits eating and making grimaces, the camera dollies in instead of resorting to editing. What a novelty this also must have been for the viewing public, and how dynamic the camera movement appears today when seen in the chronological context of the other static films! The dolly ends precisely at the point where the camera can capture in close up the facial gestures of the character, tightly framing his face. It appears that great attention is given as to the point where the dolly will end. This close up view has an earlier precedent in films such as A DULL RAZOR (Edison, February 28, 1900) and FACIAL EXPRESSIONS (January 27, 1902), in which the camera is placed at a relatively close view to record the detailed facial gestures of the characters. In the same manner as HOOLIGAN IN JAIL, the dolly shot later recurs in only two other films of the period, A SUBJECT FOR THE ROGUE'S GALLERY (January 13, 1904) and PHOTOGRAPHING A FEMALE CROOK (January 13, 1904). Surprisingly, this technique is not further developed during this 1900 - 1906 period neither at Biograph nor at Edison. It remains a dynamic innovative technique, rather than developing as an alternative solution to editing.

By the very nature of their moving from the foreground toward the background of the image, the dolly shots in the above Biograph films create a sense of depth in the image. Through a different technique from the dolly shot (and from editing), the same aesthetic result is created in yet another way at the Edison Company. By moving the characters from the background toward the foreground of the image, combined with panning, various one-shot films end with the characters in a close up view. This consciousness about movement in depth in the image owes a debt to the recreated actuality.

In a series of films recreating the Boer War made by the Edison company around April of 1900 (CAPTURE OF THE BOER BATTERY BY BRITISH (April 14), CHARGE OF BOER CAVALRY (April 14), CAPTURE OF BOER BATTERY (April 16), CHARGE OF BOER CAVALRY (April 16), BOERS BRINGING IN BRITISH PRISONERS (April 14), ENGLISH LANCERS CHARGING (April 28), RED CROSS AMBULANCE ON BATTLEFIELD (April 28), BATTLE OF MAFEKING (April 28), and BOER COMMISSARY TRAIN TREKING (April 28), there are no camera movements, and yet a sense of depth is created through the mise-en-scene. In most of the above-mentioned films, soldiers charge from the background toward the foreground of the image, often moving diagonally across the field of vision. (This can be seen as an early precurser of the chase film in which characters move diagonally through the frame).

This interaction between background and foreground recurs in CAPTURE OF THE BIDDLE BROTHERS (Edison, February 24, 1902). In this film, the law moves on horse-drawn sleighs from the background toward the foreground of the image while having a shootout with the outlaws in the midground of the image. The movement in depth occurs with greater sophistication in other westerns made in this 1903 - 1904 period, BRUSH BETWEEN COWBOYS AND INDIANS (Edison, May 18, 1904) and COWBOYS AND INDIANS FORDING RIVER IN A WAGON (Edison, May 18, 1904). In the former film, the camera pans back and forth between the two groups of people who are moving diagonally from the right background toward the left foreground of the image. There is no cutting between the two groups, just like the chase films of 1904 - 1906 in which the pursuers and the pursued appear in the same image without being separated into different shots. In the latter film, COWBOYS AND INDIANS FORDING RIVER IN A WAGON (May 18, 1904), as the mule-driven wagon crosses the river, the camera pans. This panning movement to the right, combined with the movement of the characters from the left background toward the right foreground of the image , ends dramatically at the close of the pan with the characters in a dynamic close shot, having much the same aesthetic and dramatic effect as the end of HOOLIGAN IN JAIL.

Another film in the western genre, WESTERN STAGE COACH HOLD UP (Edison, also May 18, 1904), firmly establishes the use of camera movement and mise-en-scene as opposed to editing in order to follow the actions of two separate groups of characters. This one shot film employs a series of complex pans left and right to follow the movement of the robbers and of the stagecoach. Moreover, the panning to characters out of the camera's field of vision increases the dramatic tension of the film in a more conscious way from the first accidental efforts in a film such as LOVE IN THE SUBURBS (Biograph, September 11, 1900).

While these technical innovations are occurring during 1903 and 1904, both the Edison and Biograph companies are also producing a series of films based on stage plays and operas, including JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (Edison, June 20, 1902), UNCLE TOM'S CABIN (Edison, July 30, 1903), and PARSIFAL (October 13, 1904). Since the films are all shot in the studio, not one camera movement occurs. From our contemporary perspective of film grammar we would logically include camera movement such as a vertical pan (tilt) as when Jack climbs the beanstalk. However, during the 1900 - 1906 period, an established convention is that camera movement almost exclusively does not occur in films shot in the studio. The only occasion I noticed is in BOMBARDMENT OF TAKU FORTS, BY THE ALLIED FLEETS (Edison, August 16, 1900), in which the camera pans ever so lightly to capture the impact of toy bombs hitting toy ships in a miniature set of water and boats. This appears to have been a readjustment of the image in order to incorporate action accidentally occurring just outside the field of vision of the camera, rather than being a pre-planned gesture. Like the dolly shot, panning in interiors during this period rarely occurs, not even in UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, which contains a miniature set of the boat race between the Robert E. Lee and Natchez (Edison, July 30, 1903), reminiscent of BOMBARDMENT OF TAKU FORTS, BY THE ALLIED FLEETS.

In the film histories which discuss this 1900 to 1906 American period, the only attention paid to camera movement is in the panorama film. For example, Lewis Jacobs states that

> The moving picture camera was bulky; its machinery often got out of order. Carrying it through the streets and around the countryside was a laborious enterprise in itself. Once set up for shooting, the camera was seldom if ever changed for another viewpoint; the whole subject was photographed in one shot, without any shift in the camera's position. A mechanical device was finally invented to overcome this rigidity of technique. It was a flexible tripod head on which the camera was supported, and it made possible the 'panning' of the scene. By this means a camera could be made to move from side to side, thus photographing a wider angle of view or a moving object. The picture so taken was proudly classified in the catalogues as a 'Panoramic View.'[3]

The panorama film frequently occurs from 1900 through 1902, as titles from company catalogues readily indicate: CIRCULAR PANORAMA OF ELECTRIC TOWER (Edison, August 14, 1901), CIRCULAR PANORAMA OF SUSPENSION BRIDGE AND AMERICAN FALLS (August 13, 1901), PANORAMA OF GORGE RAILWAY (May 26, 1900). The camera provides a long view of the sights, slowly panning. In ARRIVAL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL, LORD MINTO AT QUEBEC (Edison, February 17, 1902), an extensive pan (apparently more than 90^{o}) serves to bring the characters in the background into the foreground, resulting in a dramatic effect not unlike HOOLIGAN IN JAIL and COWBOYS AND INDIANS FORDING RIVER IN A WAGON.

However, the great structural advancement in the use of the panorama occurs in EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ WITH PANORAMA OF AUBURN PRISON (November 9, 1901). In this film, the panning technique is integrated into the narrative and into a sopisticated exterior-interior editing structure. The panorama which begins the film is of the outside of the prison walls, from which dissolves ensue to the prison courtyard, then to Czolgosz outside his cell, and finally, to his execution. The dissolves create an illusion of temporal simultaneity and the panning movement serves to bring the viewer into the drama in the prison's interior in what begins as an otherwise ordinary panorama film.

A novel use of the panorama film occurs in TWENTIETH CENTURY TRAMP, OR HAPPY HOOLIGAN AND HIS AIRSHIP (Edison, January 27, 1902), in which a panorama of lower Manhattan and the Brooklyn Bridge occurs on the bottom half of the image. The top part of the image contains a man riding an aerial blimp-like object, surveying the panorama below. The split screen technique creates two actions occurring simultaneously in time.

By mid-1903 and into early 1904, as the camera pan was employed with greater frequency in the fiction films, the panorama occurs less frequently as a device in itself. By this time the panoramas are incorporated more directly into the stories. In RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND (Edison, August 13, 1903) and in BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS (Edison, September 1, 1905), the camera freely

follows the characters as they move about from ride to ride. The two films function in effect like panoramas of Coney Island. More specifically, in one shot in the middle of RUBE AND MANDY AT CONEY ISLAND, the attractions are photographed in panorama style from a high angle down upon the fair in a sweeping pan of the crowds below. In EUROPEAN REST CURE (Edison, September 1, 1904), a panorama occurs of the waterfront from the departing ship. Panoramas like these convey a sense of the ambiance of the actual locations. These panoramas, however, are a far cry from Griffith's use of the technique in THE COUNTRY DOCTOR, a Biograph film of 1909. The panorama which occurs at the beginning of the film and which reverses itself at the film's conclusion creates a circular structure and infuses the film with an emotional power and an aesthetic unity.

In BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS, another exciting innovation in camera movement occurs. In one shot at the beginning of the film, the camera pans as a bevy of well-dressed young women pile into a car. In the next shot, they are driven to the Coney Island amusement park. This shot is photographed head on from a car which is moving ahead of them and which obviously contains the cameraman shooting from out the back of the car. In BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS, this tracking shot is held for an extensive period of time, indicating the great novelty and vivid sense of movement inherent in the image, not unlike the effect of the dolly shot in HOOLIGAN IN JAIL. The increased flexibility of the camera is also established for the first time in this period, combining the characters moving in depth autonomously from the camera moving in depth. This tracking device was later perfected for great dramatic intensity by D. W. Griffith in such films as THE BIRTH OF A NATION (1915) and INTOLERANCE (1916).

This tracking shot in BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS has a precurser in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (Edison, December 1, 1903). In this film, the camera, set on top of the train, records the fight between the villain and the trainman. However, although the camera is mounted on top of the train as the fight occurs, it is securely fastened and does not move autonomously from the characters. The resultant visual image is not as dynamic as in BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS.

As the camera pans increase their frequency during 1903, 1904, and into 1905, a particular camera movement becomes an established convention. In the narrative multi-shot films, pans are used to record the movement of characters from various means of transport (horse-drawn carriages, automobiles, shoeleather, canoes) into a variety of buildings (stores, houses, apartments, amusement park arcades, campfires). In films like THE STRENUOUS LIFE, OR ANTI-RACE SUICIDE (Edison, December 19, 1904), THE KLEPTOMANIAC (Edison, February 4, 1905), HOW JONES LOST HIS ROLL (Edison, March 27, 1905), BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS (Edison, September 1, 1905), and KIT CARSON (September 8, 11, 1903, Biograph) such camera pans integrate themselves into the editing structure, linking the characters in one scene to those in the next scene.

At the same time that the pan is becoming conventionalized in 1904, the chase film is emerging as the predominant form of entertainment in the Biograph and Edison films. Usually beginning with a theft or an escape, in the subsequent shots the pursuers chase the pursued until they are apprehended.

Almost without exception, these chase films contain camera pans in one shot or another. However, the amount and function of the panning varies greatly from film to film.

A few chase films almost completely lack camera pans, even where our contemporary understanding of camera movement would compel us to insert them. In RAFFLES THE DOG (Edison, June 30, 1905), an inverse of the RESCUED BY ROVER story because in this film the dog is a thief rather than a hero, every shot but one is static. The one pan is slight, involving movement to readjust the carriage in the frame, almost like the accidental panning movements in the earlier films of the 1900-1906 period. Similarly, THE GENTLEMEN HIGHWAYMAN, Biograph, January 14 1905), which includes a car chase, contains only an occasional slight camera pan.

From the point of view of technique and structure, the model chase film for the years 1904 to 1905 begins with a camera pan in which the theft or escape occurs. Then, in a series of about ten shots, the chase ensues with no panning or else with slight panning in order to readjust the characters in the centre of the image. No extensive panning is required in these shots because the sense of characters running, of a great distance travelled, and of time passing is created through the composition of each shot in which the characters run diagonally from the background to the foreground of the image and through the editing structure, which links together a series of scenic views of paths in the countryside and city streets as the characters move across these terrains. Crosscutting between the pursuers and the pursued does not occur; the film language convention of the time is to keep them in the same shot.

Two similiar chase films involving baby kidnapping, THE LOST CHILD (Biograph, October 1904) and STOLEN BY GYPSIES (Edison, July 15, 1905), exemplify this form. Moreover, the panning in the beginning of each film raises the device from only a technique to a more complex level of artistry which implicates the viewer in the narrative. A description of the beginning of each film is necessary in order to be able to later draw the relevant conclusions. In the first shot of THE LOST CHILD, a woman places her baby outside her house; she returns inside, and the baby wanders into the doghouse on the lawn. When the woman reappears, she looks for the baby. As she moves left, the camera first begins to pan. It stops precisely where a man is bending down with a basket beyond the fence of the mother's yard. The woman, thinking the man has taken the baby, begins chasing him, and others follow suit.

In STOLEN BY GYPSIES, the third shot of the film shows a maid caring for a baby outside the house. When called inside by the mother, she leaves the baby. A gypsy enters the image from the left and gathers up the child. The camera pans left, following his movement to a carriage in the street outside the house. The carriage then moves away toward the background of the image. In the next shot, the carriage drives even further away. Following this shot, the maid discovers the baby missing. She and the mother search for the child.

As the maid throws her hands up in despair, the camera pans right to the other side of the house from where the carriage took the baby away. The maid and the mother observe thieves running with a sack, and thinking they have stolen the baby, chase after them, followed by the other household help.

In both these films, camera movement transcends technique and takes on a more complex meaning. The panning described above creates a more sophisticated narrative, with two autonomous stories: on the one hand, the chase, and on the other , the recovery of the baby, unrelated to the apprehension of the supposed culprits. In THE LOST CHILD, the baby is found by returning to the house and in STOLEN BY GYPSIES by a visit to a gypsy camp years later. The panning also firmly establishes that the chased individual could not possibly have taken the child, something that editing could not so clearly accomplish. Therefore, the panning manipulates the viewer so that he is implicated in the narrative, knowing more about what is transpiring than the protagonists in the film.

In STOLEN BY GYPSIES, the panning to one side of the house in one shot and to the other side of the house in the other shot gives an aesthetic symmetry to the beginning of the film. Also in this film, camera movement and editing work together in the beginning to create a sense of temporal simultaneity: as the gypsy wagon is driving away in shot 4, the camera is panning across the yard as the maid and the mother chase the wrong thieves in shot 5.

The first film directed by D. W. Griffith, THE ADVENTURES OF DOLLY (Biograph, 1908), is a child-gypsy kidnap story. In the future, this film should be re-evaluated, because Griffith's apparent sophistication in his first directorial effort may be due more to the genre conventions established in 1904 and 1905 in the gypsy films, including camera pans, than to Griffith's own ingenuity.

In other chase films of 1904 and 1905, the degree of camera movement
In THE WHITE CAPS (Edison, September 14, 1905), pans occur before the chase begins. In ROUNDING UP OF THE YEGGMEN (Edison, September 16, 1904), the camera pans extensively to follow movement of the characters within the chase itself.

Of all the chase films of this 1904-1905 period, the one which displays purely technical virtuosity of camera panning is THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY (Edison, September 1, 1905). Undoubtedly a parody of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, it incorporates a series of pans left and right, all contained in one shot, in which robbers hold up a miniature train filled with passengers.

The next significant advancement which occurs with respect to camera panning is the increase of the distance between the subject and the camera. In THE HORSE THIEF (Biograph, August 31, 1905), another chase film which begins with a pan, the camera is placed at a greater distance from the subject than in previous chase films. When the camera pans, more movement can be incorporated into the field of vision. This increased distance replaced the need for editing because the theft occurs and the chase gets well under way in a single panning movement.

This increased subject to camera distance making possible a longer and more aesthetic pan occurs earlier in MANIAC CHASE (Edison, October 7, 1904). This film is a copy of Biograph's ESCAPED LUNATIC (January ? 1904), in which a man escapes from prison and is chased through the woods by his jailors. MANIAC CHASE, however, has a more extensive panning and a more sophisticated structure. Once again, the chase begins with a camera pan early in the film.

In this initial pan to the left in MANIAC CHASE in the second shot of the film, the camera is at a far distance from the subject so that much is encompassed in the field of vision in a single camera movement. This long slow camera pan sweeps across an image of aesthetic beauty: as the prisoner moves behind some trees, they rustle in the wind; later in the pan, a wall in the midground of the image obscures the field of vision. Even later, the pan includes his crossing a river and moving toward the background of the image. The beginning and ending point of the pan, in this shot and in others, is precisely worked out. For example, in another shot of the film, the "maniac" climbs a tree; his pursuers follow. He is obscured by the rustling leaves. The camera pans right and stops, anticipating where he will drop down from the branches. In this film, the camera controls where the action in the image will occur, rather than as in earlier films wherein the action dictates the panning movement of the camera.

At the beginning and end of the long pan in the second shot of the film, there are slight vertical movements of the camera (tilts) to center the character in the image. This tilt previously occurs in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY and later in HONEYMOON AT NIAGRA FALLS (Edison, October 16, 1906). In other films, tilting does not occur, even where our contemporary knowledge of camera movement would want to include it. In the BURGLAR'S SLIDE FOR LIFE (Edison, April 28, 1905), as the thief slides down the clotheslines in the back of apartment houses, the camera cuts, instead of employing tilts to follow his movement. Thus, camera tilts is not a frequently used technique, and like the dolly, it remains a novelty for the period.

This development of a greater subject to camera distance to allow for more to be incorporated in the field of vision as the camera pans culminates in NO WEDDING BELLS FOR HIM (Biograph, July 18, 19, 1906). In one shot of the film, the camera, placed at a great distance from the action, pans to the right as two men are running while a train passes them, moving in the same direction. These men run down a set of steps as the pan continues, and a trolley approaches from the background toward the foreground at the base of the steps. It is going just a bit too fast for the men, and they only catch up with the trolley when they are in a close-up at the foreground of the image. This shot represents a beautiful choreography of camera movement and action in the image as well as following a narrative logic. Editing could not have duplicated this sense of unified movement.

At the same time as these chase films are being made, other films are employing great subject to camera distances in which characters move from the background toward the foreground of the image, and in which pans function as a transition between the characters in one scene and the characters in the next scene. This occurs in THE SUBURBANITE (October 21, 22, 1904, Biograph), in which characters move from a street in the background toward the foreground, and then over into a house.

And yet, there are always exceptions. Some films in this period have only slight pans. In CITY HALL TO HARLEM IN 15 SECONDS VIA THE SUBWAY ROUTE (Edison, October 22, 1904), two or three shots contain pans to follow the man walking into the station and onto the tracks. In THE EX-CONVICT (Edison, November 19, 1904), a small pan occurs when the man rescues the girl who has wandered into the street.

By 1906, camera panning is incorporated into stories with great regularity. In such films as THE FOX HUNT (Biograph, August 23, September 29, 1906) and DOCTOR DIPPY'S SANITARIUM (Biograph, September 3, 4, 10, 1906), there are long pans to follow the action. In WAITING AT THE CHURCH (Edison, July 21, 1906), the camera pans to follow the action as a man and woman get up from a bench and walk around the building. In 1906, pans occur more frequently within the chase shots, the characters often moving parallel to the direction of the pan rather than from the background toward the foreground. In THE TERRIBLE KIDS (Edison, May 1, 1906), there is such a pan in a street scene chase and in WINTER STRAW RIDE (April 7, 1906), the camera pans as the women in a sleigh move over the snowy terrain, parallel to the pan. In some films, such as ATTACK ON FORT BOONESBORO (Biograph, June ? 1906). the pans are still used randomly. In SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK (Biograph, November 8, 14, 18, 1906), the first scenes are shot high atop a skyscraper under construction. The fights are breathtaking, and the panoramas over the rooftops of New York are incorporated into the story by emphasizing the drama of the height at which the action takes place.

In HONEYMOON AT NIAGRA FALLS (Edison, October 16, 1906), many different uses of the camera pan coalesce together in one film. First of all, there is a pan in almost every shot, the greatest amount of the entire period. Pans link friends arriving in a car with newlyweds departing by train. There are extensive panoramas of the waterfalls. In one particular shot, the camera pans horizontally, and then vertically down into a swirling mass of water, engaging the viewer aesthetically in the great force carried by the water. In another shot, the point of view of the camera appears to be subjective, from that of what is seen through the married couple's eyes as they look out the boat at the falls. Then the camera pans and reveals the couple looking out at the water. The camera's third person role all throughout this 1900 to 1906 period is reaffirmed by the panning. The rocking boat (which also occurs in STORM AT SEA , Edison, August 9, 1900), makes it appear almost as though the camera is swaying to create the effect. In GOOD OLD 5¢ TROLLEY RIDE (Edison, May 16, 1905), the studio set of the subway car interior sways back and forth, creating the comedy within the scene of people falling on each other, and like the scenes photographed on the rocking boats, almost gives the illusion that the camera is autonomously swaying back and forth.

In summary, it is difficult to rigidly categorize camera movement in this 1900-1906 period, because for a given year exceptions can always be found to the rule. However, I do think certain trends and interrelationships do develop, and I have tried to trace them in this paper. Although in 1900 through 1902 camera movement is taking tenuous steps, by 1906 it is fully integrated into the narrative. The very first Biograph pans are jerky; Edison pans are smoother. Biograph stays more indoors, where pans rarely if ever occur. Edison moves out-of-doors, and frees the camera for panning, employing it more frequently than Biograph does. Biograph is usually the innovator in terms of camera movement technique, yet Edison often takes the same subject and improves upon it stylistically such as in STOLEN BY GYPSIES and MANIAC CHASE. Some camera movements, such as dollies and tilts, are rarely incorporated into later films for narrative purposes, and remain a novelty. Aesthetic impact is created when a figure moves from the background to the foreground of the image combined with panning so that the character is framed in a close-up view at the end of the shot. By 1904 panning becomes less random and more conventionalized, linking characters arriving by transport with those in buildings or else starting off chase films. Great attention is given to the beginning and ending point of a pan. Rather than alternating both right and left in a given shot, the panning movement is a more sweeping gesture. By 1906 camera pans occur more frequently within the shots of pursuit in the chase films, and more spectacular panoramic views are stressed. A greater subject to camera distance allows more action to be incorporated into the field of vision. Panning seems inextricably linked to the machine age. In film after film, cars, trains, and trolleys move throughout image after image, and the camera, a machine itself, also engages in the sensation of movement.

We need to screen the 1907 and 1908 Biograph and Edison films, and ask ourselves these questions: does panning become a more restricted and controlled device, in order to increase its dramatic and aesthetic impact, or is there even a great sense of expansiveness and freedom created through extensive camera movement? What camera movements can be attributed to the conventions of the time, rather than to Griffith's ingenuity, when he first begins directing films for Biograph in 1908? How much is panning extended to interiors (THE HOUSE OF CARDS, an Edison film of 1907, shows evidence of this)? When are pans, tilts, and dollies regularly combined in the same shot? At the same time, we must look back and attempt to ascertain the effect of actualities or recreated actualities upon the first uses of the camera pan, as opposed to their use in fictional stories, to see where the trend begins.

For this paper, I screened all the Edison films and only part of the Biographs (which were much larger in quantity) available. Thus, there is perhaps more attention to the development at Edison. Future work should fill in the developments at Biograph in more detail.

Such comments aside, this paper hopefully has begun to alter the common misconception that the only great development in this period is editing and that the few camera pans which do occur are novelties and random gestures without significance within the structure of the film. Rather, I have hoped to establish that panning is a conventional device in this early 1900 to 1906 period, that it has a development in its own right, and that it often serves as an alternative solution to editing.

Footnotes

1. Lewis Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939, p.35.

2. Dates given for Biograph films are production dates; dates given for Edison films are copyright dates.

3. Jacobs, page 10.

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DETOURS IN FILM NARRATIVE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CUTTING

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For some time now the appearance of cross-cutting has been a problem for film historians. An earlier generation of historians traced it to the Brighton "school" (ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION, among other films) and the films of Edwin Porter. Many of them agreed that Porter discovered this form of editorial construction, relying on certain documents to suggest its presence in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1903). They were, however, unable to see the film itself, which was lost. Since its rediscovery, various investigators have made attempts to get to the bottom of the problem, but controversy still continues, for there now exist two contradictory versions of the film.

One of these versions employs cross-cutting, the other does not. Which one is closer to Porter's original? Champions for each version have not been lacking. Several years ago, for instance, readers of the French periodical CAHIERS DE LA CINEMATHEQUE opened its pages to find two separate articles on LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, each defending one of the two versions in terms that no doubt typify a controversy that has fascinated and challenged the historians of two continents.[1] Roman Gubern argued for the authenticity of what we shall call the Cross-Cut Version, finding it, if not a masterly instance of parallel editing, then at least an early example of it, and quite possibly the earliest. This is the version that can be seen in the Film Department of the Museum of Modern Art, and I will discuss its origins further on. Barthelmy Amengual, on the other hand, gave persuasive reasons for believing that the so-called Copyright Version - that is, the version of the film that in 1903 was deposited by the Edison Company at the Library of Congree for copyright - was authentic. I believe that this controversy is of the utmost importance, hinging as it does on the genesis of filmic expression, on the convergence of narrativity and cinema, and on the evolution of narrative constructions at which first Griffith and then other filmmakers would excel a few years later. For the sake of clarity, here (adapted from the one given by Roman Gubern) is a shot-by-shot breakdown of the two versions of the film which specifies the differences between them.

A Comparison of the Two Existing Versions of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN

1. Long shot of the fireman asleep. At his left appears a dream balloon showing a mother putting her child to bed. The fireman wakes up suddenly and anxiously walks about the room.

   Dissolve to

2. Close-up of a hand activating an automatic fire alarm.

   (Dissolve in the Copyright Version).

3. Long shot of the firemen in their sleeping quarters. Hearing the alarm, the men spring from their beds and slide down a fire pole placed in the center of the room, to the first floor.

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* English adaption by Martin Sopocy and Charles Musser.

Dissolve to

4. Long shot of the firehouse interior. The men jump into their fire engines which then approach the camera and exit offscreen right.

Dissolve to

5. Long shot of the firehouse exterior. The outside doors are flung open to let the fire engines emerge and, turning to the right, they exit offscreen right.

Dissolve to

6. Long shot of a suburban street. Eight fire engines race across the screen from right to left, passing a gethering of onlookers. (Although the camera remains stationary, there are jump cuts in the action, probably to shorten the distance between vehicles).

(Dissolve in the Copyright Version)

7. Long shot of four fire engines in succession racing down a street, moving from right to left. The camera follows the fourth one, panning to reveal the front of a burning house, where the firemen have already set to work.

COPYRIGHT VERSION Library of Congress, Washington.	CROSS-CUT VERSION Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Fade in	Fade in
8. Long shot of a room filled with smoke. The mother, in her nightgown, rises from her bed and goes to the window at the back of the room. She faints on her bed. The fireman enters through the door at right and breaks the window to let in air. The fireman lifts the woman into his arms and carries her through the window to the outside. <u>After a pause he reenters the room through the window, seizes the child and exits with it through the window. Finally two firemen come through the same window with a hose and extinguish the fire.</u>*	8. L.S. of room filled with smoke. Mother, in nightgown, gets up and goes to window at back of room. 9. L.S. of front exterior of the house; the woman appears at the upstairs window and calls for help. 10. L.S. of room (shot 8). The woman faints on the bed. 11. L.S. exterior (shot 9). A fireman pounds on the front door and runs into the house. 12. L.S. of the room. Fireman enters through the door at right and breaks the window to let in air.

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* I have underlined those portions of the action which are unmentioned in the description of the film printed in Edison's 1903 catalogue (see below). In the Cross-Cut Version these correspond to shots 9, 11, 13, part of 15, 16, 18, 20.

Dissolve to

9. L.S. of the front exterior of the house. The woman appears at the upstairs window and calls for help. A fireman pounds on the front door and runs into the house. Some firemen place a ladder against a window to rescue the victims, while others spray the house with water. The fireman carries the woman down the ladder to safety. Reviving, she pleads with him to save her child. He remounts the ladder and disappears into the room again, while the woman gives vent to her despair. He reappears with the child almost immediately and descends the ladder. The mother receives and hugs her child.

13. L.S. of the exterior of the house. Some firemen place a ladder against the window to rescue the victims, while other spray the house with water.

14. L.S. of the room. The fireman picks up the woman and carries her through to the outside.

15. L.S. of the exterior. Fireman carries the woman down the ladder to safety.

16. L.S. of the room. The fireman enters at the window and seizes the child.

17. L.S. of the exterior. The woman gives vent to her despair.

18. L.S. of the room. The fireman goes out of the window with the child.

19. L.S. of the exterior. The fireman emerges from the window with the child and descends the ladder. The mother receives and hugs her child.

20. L.S. of the room. Firemen come through the open window with a hose and extinguish the fire.

There is a real problem here. This is no mere question of attributing priority or authorship to some filmmaker, but of trying to determine the actual evolution of filmic expression: whether there was ever a time when filmmakers did not know how to express the simultaneity of two actions or whether this ability was inherent from the beginning; and of obtaining a clearer understanding of the relationship that exists between cinema and narrativity. And these, surely, are not the only problems whose resolution will depend on a clarification of the various stages through which filmic expression has passed. Yet, if parallel editing did not in fact make so early an appearance, by what means did early filmmakers express the simultaneity of two actions? In cinema as we now know it, this simultaneity can be expressed by at least four basic techniques.

1. Simultaneous actions coexisting in the same field: By a sufficiently wide shot or by using depth of field, two simultaneous actions can be shown taking place in the same field - or in effect the same field, for the latter might conceivably be enlarged by camera movement. Obviously this solution is impracticable as soon as the two actions occur at too great a distance from each other.

2. Simultaneous actions coexisting in the same frame: If for any reason the first solution is impracticable, the two actions might still be set in the same frame by such techniques as double exposure or split-screen. Porter does this in the opening shot of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.

3. Simultaneous actions presented in succession: Showing first one and then the other on the screen - that is, not showing the second until the first has been seen in its entirety - and establishing their simultaneity either by means of a title ("In the meantime ...") or in a narrator's commentary on the action. This is what Porter would have done if the Copyright Version significantly resembles the original release print. And later we will see that he did this in at least one other film.

4. Cross-cutting of simultaneous actions: By the sustained intercutting of two actions, A and B, presented successively but alternately on the screen, as: A-B-A-B-A-B, etc. This is what Porter would have done if the Cross-Cut Version corresponds to the original. It is the proceduro which, in a few years, Griffith would be following systematically.

These, then, are the techniques, and this is the question: Did LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN actually introduce cross-cutting? Which of the two versions is in fact the original? While the evidence that presently exists is insufficient to determine this for certain, we can at least give an account of the factors for and against the authenticity of each.

A) The Copyright Version (which can be seen at the Library of Congress):

Let us consider the possibility that the print sent to Washington for copyright does not correspond to the final version but merely represents the order in which the scenes were shot. This argument is sometimes heard, but it works both ways; for if some of the copyright prints consist obviously of unedited footage, others just as obviously represent a completed release print. Which leaves us where we were before, although the argument cannot be dismissed out of hand: the prints do disagree. Yet to prove that the Copyright Version is not authentic is not automatically to establish the authenticity of the Cross-Cut Version.[2]

It may be instructive to notice the incongruencies in the Cross-Cut Version. In shots 8 through 12 the following are to be found:

8. Interior. The window is closed.

9. Exterior. The woman opens the window.

10. Interior. The window is still closed.

11. Exterior. The window is open.

12. Interior. The window is closed. The fireman breaks it open with his axe.

In addition, both versions of the film present another instance of "illogicality" by showing specific action from two different viewpoints -

that is, by overlapping them in time. It is possible, however, that these "bad" cuts reproduce in miniature what, in the Copyright Version, may be the conscious technique of showing the rescue of a woman and her child first from the interior and then from the exterior. We find this example in shots 3 and 4:

3. L.S. of the firemen in their sleeping quarters. On being awakened by the alarm, the men jump up and slide down the fire pole to the first floor, all of them leaving the picture via the fire pole.

4. L.S. of firehouse. One by one the men enter the picture by sliding down the fire pole from the ceiling. They get into their fire engines which then move toward the camera, exiting off right.

Thus, in shot 3, all the firemen slide down the pole out of the picture below the floorline, while in shot 4 nevertheless we see each one of them come down through the hole in the ceiling. This is another factor which gives weight to the authenticity of the Copyright Version: it is a reasonable assumption that the editorial "mistake" made between shots 3 and 4 was duplicated between shots 8 and 9.

B) The Cross-Cut Version (which can be seen at the Museum of Modern Art):

Once again, let us keep in mind that even if it should be disproved that the Copyright Version is the original, it would not follow that the Cross-Cut Version is authentic. But what exactly are the origins of this other version? We learned from Charles Silver of the Museum of Modern Art's Film Study Center that the Museum acquired this copy through the intermediacy of the Pathé Company in 1944.[3] As for the authenticity of either version, until investigators with proof in hand have resolved this question, we have no choice but to confine ourselves to simple logic. Attentive study of another Porter film may bring us, if not a definitive answer, then at least the suggestion of one. Certain considerations, taken together, invite the conclusion that the Cross-Cut Version does not correspond to the original and that the Copyright Version may well be more accurate. What are these considerations?

First of all let us rephrase the question we are trying to answer: Was Porter really able to express the simultaneity of separate actions in any other way than by the successive presentation of these same actions on the screen? Is it reasonable, in other words, to suppose that he might have edited the rescue sequence by systematically applying the procedure of alternating scenes? I think it is not.

To see why it is not, let us look for a moment at another film by Porter, as well known and as important as LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1902-03): THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (1903). The scenario of this later film is somewhat ambiguous, allowing us, as we'll see further on, an interpretation that may be quite different from what Porter intended to express and which I think he did express. Indeed the ambiguity of the scenario is such that among the many studies that have been made of the film it is difficult to find a sound, or at least clearly stated, understanding of its temporality. If anything, the opposite has been the case, for the film

itself offers little help to those who approach it without some prior inkling of Porter's handling of temporality at this period.

And here we may be approaching an answer. Let us show the two possible interpretations of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY by using two synopses, each representing a different way of seeing the film. It may be useful to precede these synopses with the description of the film given in Edison's catalogue:[4]

Scene 1: Interior of railroad telegraph office. Two masked robbers enter and compel the operator to set the "signal block" to stop the approaching train, and make him write a fictitious order to the engineer to take water at this station, instead of "Red Lodge," the regular watering stop. The train comes to a standstill (seen through window of office): the conductor comes to the window, and the frightened operator delivers the order while the bandits crouch out of sight, at the same time keeping him covered with their revolvers. As soon as the conductor leaves, they fall upon the operator, bind and gag him, and hastily depart to catch the moving train.

Scene 2: Railwoad water tower. The bandits are hiding behind the tank as the train, under the false order, stops to take water. Just before she pulls out they stealthily board the train between the express car and the tender.

Scene 3: Interior of express car. Messenger is busily engaged. An unusual sound alarms him. He goes to the door, peeps through the keyhole and discovers two men trying to break in. He starts back bewildered, but, quickly recovering, he hastily locks the strong box containing the valuables and throws the key through the open side door. Drawing his revolver, he crouches behind a desk. In the meantime the two robbers have succeeded in breaking in the door and enter cautiously. The messenger opens fire, and a desperate pistol duel takes place in which the messenger is killed. One of the robbers stands watch while the other tries to open the treasure box. Finding it locked, he vainly searches the messenger for the key, and blows the safe open with dynamite. Securing the valuables and mail bags they leave the car.

Scene 4: This thrilling scene shows the tender and interior of the locomotive cab, while the train is running forty miles an hour. While two of the bandits have been robbing the mail car, two others climb over the tender. One of them holds up the engineer while the other covers the fireman, who seizes a coal shovel and climbs up on the tender, where a desperate fight takes place. They struggle fiercely all over the tank and narrowly escape being hurled over the side of the tender. Finally they fall, with the robber on top. He seizes a lump of coal, and strikes the fireman on the head until he becomes senseless. He then hurls the body from the swiftly moving train. The bandits then compel the engineer to bring the train to a stop.

Scene 5: Shows the train coming to a stop. The engineer leaves the locomotive, uncouples it from the train, and pulls ahead about 100 feet while the robbers hold their pistols to his face.



Scene 1

GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY



Scene 6



Scene 7



Scene 10



Scene 11



Scene 14



Scene 6: Exterior scene showing train. The bandits compel the passengers to leave the coaches, "hands up", and line up along the tracks. One of the robbers covers them with a revolver in each hand, while the others relieve the passengers of their valuables. A passenger attempts to escape, and is instantly shot down. Securing everything of value, the band terrorize the passengers by firing their revolvers in the air, while they make their escape to the locomotive.

Scene 7: The desperadoes board the locomotive with this booty, compel the engineer to start, and disappear in the distance.

Scene 8: The robbers bring the engine to a stop several miles from the scene of the "hold up", and take to the mountains.

Scene 9: A beautiful scene in a valley. The bandits come down the side of a hill, across a narrow stream, mounting their horses, and make for the wilderness.

Scene 10: Interior of telegraph office. The operator lies bound and gagged on the floor. After struggling to his feet, he leans on the table, and telegraphs for assistance by manipulating the key with his chin, and then faints from exhaustion. His little daughter enters with his dinner pail. She cuts the rope, throws a glass of water in his face and restores him to consciousness, and, recalling his thrilling experience, he rushes out to give the alarm.

Scene 11: Interior of a typical Western dance hall. Shows a number of men and women in a lively quadrille. A "tenderfoot" is quickly spotted and pushed to the center of the hall, and compelled to do a jig, while bystanders amuse themselves by shooting dangerously close to his feet. Suddenly the door opens and the half-dead telegraph operator staggers in. The dance breaks up in confusion. The men secure their rifles and hastily leave the room.

Scene 12: Shows the mounted robbers dashing down a rugged hill at a terrific pace, followed closely by a large posse, both parties firing as they ride. One of the desperadoes is shot and plunges headlong from his horse. Staggering to his feet, he fires at the nearest pursuer, only to be shot dead a moment later.

Scene 13: The three remaining bandits, thinking they have eluded the pursuers, have dismounted from their horses, and after carefully surveying their surroundings, they start to examine the contents of the mail pouches. They are so grossly engaged in their work that they do not realize the approaching danger until too late. The pursuers, having left their horses, steal noiselessly down upon them until they are completely surrounded. A desperate battle then takes place, and after a brave stand all the robbers and some of the posse bite the dust.

Scene 14: A life-size (close up) picture of Barnes, leader of the outlaw band, taking aim and firing point-blank at the audience. The resulting excitement is great. This scene can be used to begin or end the picture.

Here is the first of the two interpretations it is possible to make of the film:

As the train pulls into the station, four bandits attack the telegraph operator and knock him unconscious. Having tied him up they board the train which has stopped to take on water. When it is once again in motion, two of them hold up the mail car while the other two take control of the locomotive and halt the train. The passengers are forced off the train and robbed at gunpoint. The bandits return to the locomotive, which has been uncoupled from the rest of the train, and use it to reach their horses, which await them in the underbrush. They then continue their getaway on horseback. At this moment the telegrapher revives and is untied. He runs to warn the posse-to-be, who are dancing in a saloon. Hearing of the robbery all dash out in pursuit. Shortly afterwards the bandits are overtaken by the posse and shot dead as they divide the loot.

If we compare this synopsis to the actual cutting of the film, we must admit that the two apparently agree. Most viewers who see THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY take this interpretation of it; we projected the film for more than 200 students and not one of them disagreed with it. No doubt many who read this and who have seen the film would also agree with it. Indeed the vast majority of its original viewers may well have understood the film in this way, for in its temporal linearity it is still visibly influenced by the practices of literature. In the novel it is possible and even usual to express simultaneous actions by successive descriptions of these actions in the text. But for many reasons (among them, that cinematic time is always perceived as the present) in film it is difficult to express simultaneity by means of successiveness except by developing an alternating succession of bits of the two lines of action. THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY cries out for cross-cutting; a synopsis that would more satisfactorily render the temporality of its story-line is this one:

The four bandits subdue and tie up the telegraph operator, rob the train and escape in the locomotive to the hiding place of their horses, continuing their getaway on horseback. In the meantime the telegrapher has been revived and untied. On hearing the news, they had set out in pursuit of the bandits, and now, encountering them, they kill them as they divide the loot.[5]

Reading the two versions it becomes evident that the differences are essentially those of the tense of the verbs. Porter here shows us two simultaneous actions which unravel concurrently from shot 2 to shot 11 (see the catalogue description). Those lines of action which diverge in shot 1 converge again in shot 12. To express the simultaneity of these lines of action Porter might have inserted a title ("Meanwhile....") between shots 11 and 12, or he might have edited these lines of action by cross-cutting. He did neither, perhaps considering it unhelpful to add a title and perhaps being unfamiliar with the practice of cross-cutting. If the latter was the case, then we might have a strong and important perspective on the validity of one of the two versions of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, though more about that in a moment.

Porter could have made a more effective film by cross-cutting. Once we have understood the temporality of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY we see that the subject was ideally suited to that kind of construction. Griffith of course would later use it exactly this way, and if he had made this film around 1910 he might have edited the sequence of shots as follows: 1-2-3-10-4-5-6-7-11-8-9-12-13-(14). In any event, as the film stands it evinces a degree of cross-cutting that is close to zero.[6]

The point is that, working with a subject that was ideally suited to cross-cutting, Porter did not use it, and I think there is nothing of chance or coincidence in this. In fact, a few conclusions can be drawn from it which I submit as tentative for the time being.

- He did not use it because he had no knowledge of it, and this being the case, he could hardly have invented it the previous year in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.

- If Porter, whose business it was to see a good many films, was ignorant of cross-cutting, this could well mean that it did not exist at the time he made his film.

- Given the above, we can conclude that cross-cutting probably did not exist at the end of 1903 when THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY was released.

Even so, it would not be strictly correct to say that Porter had no grasp of the nature of cinematic time, as one French writer has done:

> "Porter did not fully understand the principles of narrative cinema, and there is a detail which proves this and which has strangely escaped the notice of film historians: in the first scene, the clock in the railroad station reads nine o'clock sharp. After the robbery has taken place, scene 10 shows a new shot of the station where the clock still reads nine o'clock sharp. This incoherency, attributable to the fact that the clock is painted on the backdrop, still reveals, more than carelessness or clumsiness, a deep misunderstanding of the nature of cinematographic time."[7]

Actually, however, when we return to the railroad station in shot 10 the assault on the telegrapher has only just been completed. That is to say, it could easily be no more than a few moments later when we are taken back to it, and I believe it is because of some such brief span of time that Porter thought it unnecessary to show an advance of the minute hand.

Returning once again to LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and pursuing the hypothesis that the Cross-Cut Version is a counterfeit, still, if it is one, how did it come into being? There is certainly one plausible answer: that the unedited negative was years afterwards recovered and the film reassembled by someone unfamiliar with the original version. This individual could have been following some sort of written description of the film, such as the one implicit in the so-called "Jamison continuity" given as an illustration in Lewis Jacob's THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM.

Indeed, one French writer, Jacques Deslandes, has accused Jacobs of having cut up the photographs of the plate at the Museum of Modern Art to make them conform to his thesis. And, whatever his intentions, the "Jamison continuity" reproduced by Jacobs does not correspond with the original plate.[8] There is only one change, but it is an important one: in the final "scene" the sequence of pictures is as follows (referring to the numbers attached to the frame enlargements printed below): 13-15-14-16. Thus, given the fact that THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM, published in 1939, contained the first printed reproduction of the "Jamison continuity", and the additional fact that the Cross-Cut Version came to the Museum of Modern Art just five years later, in 1944, it is understandable that some might see a connection between the two.[9]

At all events, the maker of the Cross-Cut Version, guided though he may have been by some unknown text, was certainly not following literally the detailed scenario of the film printed in Edison's 1903 catalogue, which is reproduced here from Jacobs's THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM:

Scene 1: The Fireman's Vision of an Imperiled Woman and Child
The fire chief is seated at his office desk. He has just finished reading his evening paper and has fallen asleep. The rays of an incandescent light rest upon his features with a subdued light, yet leaving his figure strongly silhouetted against the walls of his office. The fire chief is dreaming, and the vision of his dream appears in a circular portrait of the wall. It is a mother putting her baby to bed, and the impression is that he dreams of his own wife and child. He suddenly awakens and paces the floor in a nervous state of mind, doubtless thinking of the various people who may be in danger from fire at the moment.
Here we dissolve the picture to the second scene.

Scene 2: Close View of a New York Fire-Alarm Box
Shows lettering and every detail in the door and apparatus for turning in an alarm. A figure then steps in front of the box, hastily opens the door and pulls the hook, thus sending the electric current which alarms hundreds of firemen and brings to the scene of the fire the wonderful apparatus of a great city's Fire Department.
Again dissolving the picture, we show the third scene.

Scene 3: Sleeping Quarters
A row of beds, each containing a fireman peacefully sleeping, is shown. Instantly upon the ringing of the alarm the firemen leap from their beds and, putting on their clothes in the record time of five seconds, a grand rush is made for a large circular opening in the floor through the center of which runs a brass pole. The first fireman to reach the pole seizes it and, like a flash, disappears through the opening. He is instantly followed by the remainder of the force. This in itself makes a most stirring scene.
We again dissolve the scene to the interior of the apparatus house.

Scene 4: Interior of Engine House
Shows horses dashing from their stalls and being hitched to the apparatus. This is perhaps the most thrilling and in all the most wonderful of the

seven scenes of the series, it being absolutely the first moving picture ever made of a genuine interior hitch. As the men come down the pole and land upon the floor in lightning-like rapidity, six doors in the rear of the engine house, each heading a horse-stall, burst open simultaneously and a huge fire horse, with head erect and eager for the dash to the scene of the conflagration, rushes from each opening. Going immediately to their respective harness, they are hitched in the almost unbelievable time of five seconds and are ready for their dash to the fire. The men hastily scamper upon the trucks and hose carts and one by one the fire machines leave the house, drawn by eager, prancing horses. Here we again dissolve to the fifth scene.

Scene 5: Apparatus Leaving Engine House

We show a fine exterior view of the engine house, the great door swinging open and the apparatus coming out. This is the most imposing scene. The great horses leap to their work, the men adjust their fire hats and coats, and the smoke begins pouring from the engines as they pass our camera.
Here we dissolve and show the sixth scene.

Scene 6: Off to the Fire

In this scene we present the best fire run ever shown. Almost the entire fire department of the large city of Newark, New Jersey, was placed at our disposal, and we show countless pieces of apparatus, engines, hook-and-ladders, hose towers, hose carriages, etc., rushing down a broad street at top speed, the horses straining every nerve and evidently eager to make a record run. Great clouds of smoke pour from the stacks of the engines, thus giving an impression of genuineness to the entire series. Dissolving again we show the seventh scene.

Scene 7: Arrival at the Fire

In this wonderful scene we show the entire fire department as described above, arriving at the scene of action. An actual burning building is in the center foreground. On the right background the fire department is seen coming at great speed. Upon the arrival of the different apparatus, the engines are ordered to their places, hose is quickly run out from the carriages, ladders are adjusted to the windows, and streams of water are poured into the burning structure. At this crucial moment comes the great climax of the series. We dissolve to the interior of the building and show a bed chamber with a woman and child enveloped in flame and suffocating smoke. The woman rushes back and forth in the room endeavoring to escape, and in her desperation throws open the window and appeals to the crowd below. She is finally overcome by the smoke and falls upon the bed. At this moment the door is smashed in by an axe in the hands of a powerful fire hero. Rushing into the room, he tears the burning draperies from the window and smashes out the entire window frame, ordering his comrades to run up a ladder. Immediately the ladder appears, he seizes the prostrate form of the woman and throws it over his shoulders as if it were an infant and quickly descends to the ground. We now dissolve to the exterior of the burning building. The frantic mother having returned to consciousness, and clad only in her night clothes, is kneeling on the ground imploring the fireman to return for

her child. Volunteers are called for and the same fireman who rescued the mother quickly steps out and offers to return for the babe. He is given permission to once more enter the doomed building and without hesitation rushes up the ladder, enters the window and after a breathless wait, in which it appears he must have been overcome with smoke, he appears with the child in his arms and returns safely to the ground. The child, being released and upon seeing its mother, rushes to her and is clasped in her arms, thus making a most realistic and touching ending of the series.

Comparing this scenario to both existing versions of the film, one is surprised to find that it does not exactly correspond to either. Missing are shots 9-11-13, the first half of shot 15, as well as shots 16-18-20 in the Cross-Cut Version, and of course the corresponding parts of shots 8 and 9 in the Copyright Version.

Here is what LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN would look like if we follow the scenario in Edison's catalog while substituting a description of what is actually visible on the film in the Cross-Cut Version. The first seven shots being, as we know, practically identical in all versions, we shall go directly to:

Dissolve to

8. L.S. of a room filled with smoke. The mother, in her nightgown, rises from the bed and goes to the window at the rear wall of the room. She leans out the window, evidently to call for help. She then faints on her bed. The fireman enters at the door on the right and breaks the the windows to let in air. Carrying the woman in his arms the fireman exits through the window to the exterior.

Dissolve to

9. L.S. the front exterior of the house. The woman dramatically begs the fireman to save her child. The fireman goes back up the ladder and through the window as the mother expresses her despair. The fireman comes out with the child and descends the ladder. The mother receives and hugs her child.

As far as anyone knows, this version does not exist anywhere. It is of course possible that the film was edited this way, yet any attempt to establish that the original release print was not identical with the catalogue scenario should, however, offer to explain why the text, written in 1903 and so fond of details, says not a word about certain bits of action and describes suspense effects that simply do not exist in the Copyright Version. For it becomes impossible to claim that "after a breathless wait in which it appears that he must be overcome with smoke, he appears with the child in his arms," if one is referring to the Copyright Version, for in that version we saw him perform that rescue just a few moments earlier. If the catalogue is faithful to the original, then both of the existing versions of the film would have to be reedited to make them conform to it. Many writers believe that the catalogue is inaccurate, however. As

the French writer Barthelemy Amengual puts it: "It is obvious that the catalogue - primarily for the purpose of ballyhoo but certainly also with a view to furnishing adequate material to the lecturer for an 'artistic' commentary on the image - elaborates and embellishes on the visible action, adding pathos and suggesting details ... which might escape the notice of even a fairly perceptive eye; and most of all rationalizing it (to borrow a term from the psychology of dreams) by endowing it with a logic that is possibly more vigorous than the one it actually possesses."[10]

Let us go to the heart of the matter: Porter was apparently able to elaborate at least the initial stage of cross-cutting, a stage that was rudimentary but essential. He did not carry the construction to its logical conclusion, as Griffith would do several years later. It is this "preparatory" stage of cross-cutting that we find in the Copyright Version of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. This is also the stage of it that appears in the unique (for how long?) existing version of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY.[11] The final step into actual cross-cutting is one that Porter may have taken in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and did take, if the Cross-Cut Version is authentic. He might have done the same in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, whose shots could be combined as 1-2-3-10-4-5-6-7-11-8-9-12-13, as we saw earlier. This final step into cross-cutting, whoever took it, made possible such later feats of editing as Griffith's THE LONELY VILLA (1909) and THE LONEDALE OPERATOR (1911).

Let us briefly review this initial or "preparatory" stage of editing as developed in the Catalogue Version of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY. The Catalogue Version contains short overlaps which try to express simultaneity except that the interjoining of the series is made only after the complete (or nearly complete) exposition of each scene. It is much easier to see this when we examine THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, where this initial state of parallel editing is more easily discernible. Let us consider that the film contains two simultaneous lines of action: line-of-action A, the bandits; and line-of-action B, the telegraph operator and his surrogates, the posse. The film is constructed as follows: AB-A-B-AB-1, with the first AB containing only one element: "Scene" 1 (see the Edison Catalogue), just before the two lines of action diverge. Sequence A consists of shots 2 through 9 and shows us in these eight shots how the train is robbed and the bandits make their getaway. Sequence B, in two scenes (10 and 11), shows how the operator gets free and gives the alarm. Finally, sequence AB, containing scenes 12 and 13, shows how the operator's surrogates track the bandits down, followed by an insert (1), the close-up referred to in the catalogue as "Barnes, leader of the outlaw band," firing at the audience. This structure of AB-A-B-AB, simple though advanced for its time, forms the very rudiments of parallel editing. We cannot go so far as to use the term cross-cutting to describe this structure, for that would be proper only if the editing consisted of systematic alternation, which is not the case here. Of course the film's structure might also be read as follows: aB-A-B-Ab, where the opening and closing incidents of the sequence could be reduced in importance as properly belonging to the adjoining sequences until they are left out altogether, thus creating a structure worthy to be called a cross-cut sequence: B-A-B-A. But I think that doing so would be invalid for the reason that in those two sequences, the presence of both series

is essential to our understanding of the film. Actually, "alternation" is limited to the joint exposition of each of the two series A and B. In such a case I feel it is proper to speak of parallel editing though not of cross-cutting, the minimal requirement for which would be, in my opinion, a structure of four terms: A-B-A-B.[12] As previously mentioned, Griffith would make his speciality the systematic development of parallel editing by means of cross-cutting. Porter did not progress beyond its brink, either in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY or, as we'll see in what follows, in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, Catalogue or Copyright Versions.

Studying the latter one finds the alternation of two simultaneous lines of action organized much as they are in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY. But instead of AB-A-B-AB-1, we have AB-1-A-B-AB - a strikingly similar construction just the same. The only real difference between them is the different position of the 1 in each film. To illustrate:

AB: The two lines of action are united in the same shot, though by trick effect rather than by any real coexistence. The line of action "firemen" is represented by their chief, who sleeps and dreams, while the line of action "citizens in danger" is shown by his dream, which is pictured in the dream balloon (the people in the dream being to all appearances the ones who will later be seen in the burning house). This section consists only of the first scene of the film (see Edison Catalogue 1904).

1: Insert. This single shot consists of the film's second "scene", the close-up of the fire alarm box.

A: The firemen sequence. It includes scenes 3,4,5,6, and the first part of 7 in the Edison Catalogue description. Or, if we follow the versions given in this article of the Cross-Cut, Copyright and Catalogue versions, this sequence contains shots 3 through 7 inclusive.

B: The sequence "citizens in danger", consisting of the second part of the catalogue's scene 7, or, in our Copyright and Catalogue versions, the beginning of shot 8 (up to where the fireman comes through the door).

AB: The two lines of action converge, being the third portion of the catalogue's scene 7, or the last portion of shot 8 and the whole of shot 9 in the two film versions.[13]

If it should eventually be shown that the Cross-Cut Version is a fake, and the authenticity of the Copyright or Catalogue versions is established - and provided of course that the above breakdown into sequences is based on sound assumptions - it will then appear: 1) that THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY and LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN are constructed along identical principles, with the single difference of the placement of the 1 shot in each - co-presence, divergence, convergence; and 2) that they present a structure of parallelism much like the figure AB-A-B-AB though without actual cross-cutting. The first stage of cross-cutting would then appear to be the "literary" mode of expression by which Porter tried to express

the simultaneity of two series of events and beyond whose limits he, and probably other filmmakers of the period, could not go. Of the second stage of parallel editing we could say that it was inevitable that it should later be discovered and utilized, by someone else if not by Griffith.[14]

Postcript

Since this article was written I have had the opportunity to examine the recently discovered print referred to in footnote 3. During a visit to Washington in August 1978, Paul Spehr, of the Library of Congress, generously allowed me access to this print with its original perforations, which only the previous week Larry Karr, of the American Film Institute, had passed along to him for examination. As the film's perforations are not the standard ones and as it had suffered some shrinkage, the film had to be examined on a pair of reels. With the aid of a Steenbeck, however, I was able to view the duplicate negative made from this print. Needless to say I have been eagerly awaiting this chance to determine whether this copy, probably an early release print, corresponds with the Cross-Cut Version, the Copyright Version, or even the Catalogue Version. The answer is that does not correspond exactly with any of them!

Are we now to be obliged to juggle with one more version, which will have to be labelled the Recovered Version? Happily not. For this print roughly conforms to the Copyright Version. Their differences are, all things considered, minor. If this print can be authenticated it will give credence to the Copyright Version and for all purposes relegate the other two versions to oblivion; for just as in the Copyright Version, the recovered print includes bits of footage that do not appear in the Cross-Cut Version (whose unknown editor cut away the final moments of certain shots in order to smooth out the action which alternates between interior and exterior). For the Catalogue Version (which remains hypothetical, for not a foot of film has ever been found to support its existence), the missing portions are those of the rescue of the child as seen from the inside, and that of the mother as seen from the outside. Yet if it was possible to reedit the film by pruning away unwanted bits of shots, it is inadmissible that the opposite may have occurred: that a forger (whatever his intentions) might have taken a film that had been edited in a continuous manner (as in the Cross-Cut Version) and, after successfully unearthing the bits of shots missing from it, reedited it in a noncontinuous manner (to use a distinction of Tom Gunning's).

Everything leads to the conclusion that the recently recovered print is a release print of the epoch. The various tests it is undergoing will presently be completed, and from these more will be known on the matter. If it is determined that this print is original, we will have learned at least one thing: to put no faith in catalogue descriptions! It would not of course be the first time that a catalogue was guilty of misrepresentation, though it is still somewhat surprising to see how far, in this case, Edison's catalogue was allowed to go.

Let us return to the differences we noted between the Copyright Version and this recovered print. They are six in number but they concern only three aspects of the film, one of which (the second) is of minor importance, and one

other (the third) is external to the film; while the remaining one is for the moment inexplicable:

1st. The manner in which the shots are joined: the Copyright Version has a dissolve between each shot except in the case of the last two, which are as follows: the next-to-the-last shot ends with a fully densified image and the final shot begins with a fade-in. The recovered print (except in three cases) shows the first image fading out, followed, without any superimposition, by a gradual fade-in of the second image. The three other cases, between shots 3 and 4, 4 and 5, 6 and 7, show a clean cut between them with no fading. There are thus no superimposed fades in the recovered print.

2nd. A portion of shot 7 is missing in the recovered print. Here, in place of the tilt-up shot which rises from the view of the fire engine halted in front of the house to the upper portions of the house, there is a jumpcut. This is probably due to a break in the film which happened in the course of the numerous projections to which it was necessarily subjected.

3rd. The film is preceded by a title signed "Thomas A. Edison", which asserts the producer's rights:

> Patented March 14, 1893
>
> September 30, 1902
>
> This film is sold subject to the restriction that it shall not be used for duplicating or printing other films from it. Any use of it for those purposes is an infringement of the patents under which it is made and sold.

It remains to be explained how it happens that the shots of the film sent to the Copyright Office are connected by dissolves which are missing in the other, the presumed release print. This question must be left open for the present as I lack the materials needed to resolve it and as I believe that, in any case, its resolution will have no real bearing on the present study.

NOTES

1. Gubern, Roman: "David Wark Griffith et l'articulation cinématographique", CAHIERS DE LA CINEMATHEQUE, no. 17, Christmas 1975, and Amengual, Barthelemy: "THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN et la naissance du montage," same issue. Translated quotations from these articles are ours - C.M. and M.S.

2. Especially since, comparing the Cross-Cut Version to other films of the time, one can't help being surprised, if not actually astonished, by the editor's precocious skill. Such virtuosity seems unlikely in a filmmaker who never exhibited it again. Consider shot 17, whose sole function is to build suspense by getting the audience to identify with the frantic mother and her fear that the fireman may not be in time to save her child.

3. After this article was completed I obtained some additional information from Eileen Bowser, Curator of the Film Department at the Museum of Modern Art. Concerning the Cross-Cut Version of the film she writes, in a letter dated November 8, 1977: "No, I don't understand why Gubern assumes ours is an original print; I am sure we have never claimed that. We acquired a 35mm nitrate print from Pathé News Inc. in 1944 and have no knowledge of its previous history ... I am not completely convinced, but I am tending more and more to believe that the (Library of Congress Version) is the correct one ... We are considering the possibility of preparing a circulating program which would give both versions of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN for scholars to study."

   According to another source, who presently prefers to remain anonymous, another copy of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has recently been discovered, and it could well prove to be original since it has the small perforations characteristic of the epoch. This copy will soon be available for study and the truth may then be known once and for all.

4. Edison Catalogue of 1904 - C.M.

5. While researching a revision of this article, I located a study which exhibits a good understanding of the film's temporality: A. Nicholas Vardac's STAGE TO SCREEN: THEATRICAL METHOD FROM GARRICK TO GRIFFITH. In it Vardac describes the film in detail, including its temporal dimension: "three scenes follow a single pictorial continuity, showing three phases of the bandits' escape: the locomotive run, the race over the hills to the waiting horses, and finally the dash into the wilderness on horseback. This continuity is broken to flashback to the uncompleted line of action stemming from the original attack of the bandits upon the telegraph officer and their successful departure. The operator's daughter releases and revives him. He rushes out to give the alarm" - p. 183.

   I also found a similar description of the film by Adolph Zukor in THE PUBLIC IS NEVER WRONG: "Boarding the engine, the desperadoes force its driver to take them to a point several miles up the track, where they take to the mountains. Their horses are tethered in a valley. They mount hurriedly and ride into the wilderness. Now for the revolutionary flashback. In the telegraph office the bound-and-gagged operator struggles to his feet and calls for assistance by manipulating the telegraph key with his chin" - p. 26. By his own reckoning Zukor had seen the film almost a thousand times.

6. The Danish film ET DRAMA FRA RIDDERTIDEN, ELLER FOR EN KVINDES SKYLD (A DRAMA FROM THE AGE OF CHIVALRY, OR FOR A WOMAN'S SAKE), directed by Viggo Larsen in 1907, is interesting in this connection. A late example of pre-Griffith treatment of a suspense situation simultaneously located in the interior and exterior of the same building, it exhibits a structure that is hardly more advanced than that of the Copyright Version of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, and indeed is strikingly similar to it, despite its greater complexity. In the final episode of this 152-meter film, a jealous knight murders his rival by cutting the rope on which the latter is climbing to a rendezvous in the chamber of the woman they both love. The editing of the film presents the scene in this way: 1. Medium long shot. A room in the castle. The woman

kneels at prayer. Rising, she goes to the window and looks down at the ground below. Seeing something there, she begins to fasten bedsheets together into a rope. 2. M.L.S. The jealous knight is seen in a room on a lower floor of the castle. He looks out the window and opens it. 3. M.L.S. Same setting as 1. The woman finishes tying the sheets. She opens the window, attaches the joined sheets to the window's central pole, and lets the rope fall. 4. M.L.S. Same setting as 2. The jealous knight sees the rope fall directly in front of his window . He unsheathes his sword and cuts the rope of joined sheets. 5. M.L.S. Same as 1. The woman looks outdoors and is seized with horror. 6. M.L.S. Same as 2. The jealous knight exits at right. 7. M.L.S. The castle exterior, below the windows. The castle exterior, below the windows. The lover enters and looks upward. 8. M.L.S. Castle exterior, outside the woman's window. She lets the sheet fall along the wall. 9. M.L.S. Same as 7. The lover begins to climb the rope of sheets. 10. M.L.S. Castle exterior at a point between the woman's window and the ground. A body is seen falling. 11. M.L.S. Same as 8. The woman looks down and is seized with horror. 12. M.L.S. Same as 7. The lover's body lies on the ground as the sequence ends. More complex than the Copyright Version of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, the film's action originates in several interior and exterior locations at once. But as in the earlier film, it is the continguity of the locations that calls forth these complexities.

7. Gubern, p. 11 - C.M.

8. When I asked Jacobs why he had reversed the order of the stills, he responded, in a letter dated December 10, 1977: "Because the Edison Catalogue listed the order differently than the published photos, I followed the Catalogue order." This explanation seems somewhat inadequate, however, as there is, in fact, more alternation in the "Jamison continuity" as Jacobs gives it than is indicated in the catalogue scenario.

9. It should be made absolutely clear that the imputation in this context is of naive opinionation or a lapse in a methodology that was usually more rigorous, rather than of any conscious wrongdoing. Lewis Jacobs - a writer of such preeminence in his field that a later generation of historians stands squarely on his shoulders even while disagreeing with him - needs no defending. Yet I cannot resist commenting that, given the success of what might be called "the cross-cutting revolution" in having shaped and conditioned our basic concepts of film narrative, it would have taken a superhuman effort indeed to imagine in 1939 that footage of two simultaneous actions interrelated in a suspense situation would <u>not</u> have been cross-cut. Given, further, the closest thing to hard evidence that then existed - the Edison Catalogue which, to our hindsight anyway, certainly appears to imply some degree of cross-cutting - the no doubt independently arrived at assumption by both Jacobs and by the assembler of the Pathé print (at whatever date prior to 1944 he may have worked) that the original version must have been cross-cut was inevitable - M.S.

10. Amengual, p. 24.

11. There are some grounds for doubting the uniqueness of the version which I have seen at the Museum of Modern Art, and which is identical with the copies in the Canadian Film Institute at Toronto and in the Laval University Film Library at Quebec. Consider this description of the film by Jean Mitry in his

Histoire du cinéma, volume 1, page 240: "In the last scene we have lost sight of the pursuers but we see the bandits dividing up the booty in a clearing. The question that immediately comes to the viewer's mind is: 'Have they shaken the posse off?' At the same time, as if to answer the question, the camera pans slowly to the left, revealing the pursuers in the foreground. Hidden by tall trees from the bandits, they have just arrived and are dismounting. The last reverse angle shows the bandits in the foreground. The pursuers appear in the background on the right, moving towards the camera, and after a short struggle they capture the villains". In our copies there is no trace of the first shot Mitry describes, a pan with pursuers in the foreground; there is only the "reverse angle." Our bafflement mounts as a few lines later Mitry writes: "... the fourteen scenes in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY contains about thirty shots." This is totally mystifying. The three copies I have seen consist of fourteen scenes corresponding to as many shots, unless account is taken of the jumpcuts which can easily vary in number from one print to the next. We might almost assume he was mistaken except that Amengual, in "Clefs pour le cinéma" (Seghers, Paris, 1971, page 73), refers to the same pan shot.

12. Another fact to be taken into consideration relates to the type of continuities created by the kind of editing involved. In the terms of our analysis, parallel editing produces inter-sequential continuities and cross-cutting intra-sequential ones. We see this clearly in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, where there is continuity between the first and second sequences (between scenes 9 and 10) and between the second and third (scenes 11 and 12). In LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN the situation is less clear. First comes the "firemen" sequence, in which the fire alarm shot has been inserted. This sequence is linked to a scene of the rescue seen from the inside of the house, which in turn is linked either to a shot of the exterior in which we are shown the successful conclusion of the rescue (Catalogue Version), or to another shot of the same rescue, seen this time from the outside, but repeated (Copyright Version). The ambiguity is to be found in the contiguity of the last two sequences. A wall is the only thing that separates them.

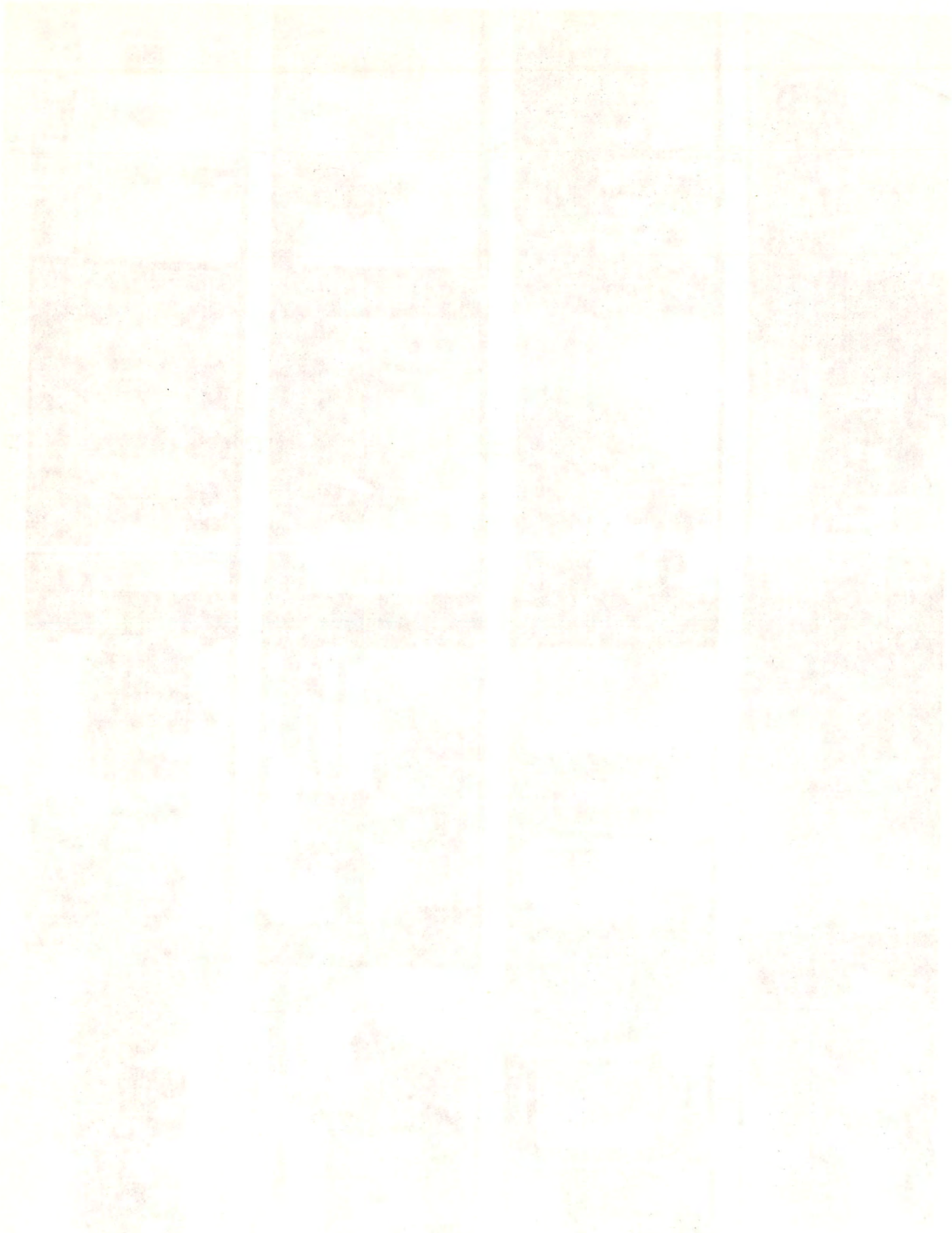
13. It may be objected that it is arbitrary to label the second sequence of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN as "1" instead of "B" and that this sequence is part of the line of action B, "citizens in danger," as the alarm was sounded by someone who was aware of the fire. Indeed, I felt some hesitation before eliminating this division which would have produced the sequence AB-B-A-B-AB. Of course, either way, the film's structure fails to go beyond the stage of parallel editing that just precedes cross-cutting. This is quite apparent in the Cross-Cut Version (whose authenticity is in question), which has a structure of AB-B (or 1)-AB-Ab-B-A-aB-A-aB-AB-aB, where the small letter signifies an intruding series for the shot in question - and, incidentally, brings us up once again to the problem of the parallel editing of contiguous events.

If we hesitate to identify "scene" 2 (the close-up of the fire alarm box) with the line of action B, this may well be because we sense that it is properly neither. If this shot had shown the mother in distress calling for help we could not hesitate to identify it with line-of-action B. On the other hand, if it were replaced with another shot showing a close-up of an alarm-receiver in the fire station, we would then have to identify it with line-of-action A. As neither is the case, I see no validity in identifying it with either one.

14. One further direction which research could take to validate one of the versions of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN would be that of the film's length. Edison's catalogue gives its length as 425 feet (with or without credits?), whereas the Copyright Version is 400 feet long without credits, and the Cross-Cut Version, again without the credits, is only 378 feet long. Converted to 16mm (in the ratio 2 to 5) these figures become 170, 160 and 151 feet. If the Catalogue's figure is correct, the Cross-Cut Version is much too shot, while the missing footage of the Copyright Version could conceivably be the credits.



LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (The Museum of Modern Art / Film Stills Archive)



TEMPORALITY AND NARRATIVITY IN EARLY CINEMA (1895-1908)[1]

André Gaudreault*

> But virtually the most important and most significant fact from this point of view is the assumption of an increasingly greater role in the twentieth century by the temporal art for which time is almost the fundamental (and sole) structural principle - the cinema.
>
> Vjaceslav V. Ivanov (1966)

Moving pictures tell stories so effectively that they seem always to have done it, but studying films of the early century permits us, partially at least, to discover how movie narrativity developed. Obviously cinema organizes narrative in various ways; Jancso or Resnais do not operate like Hitchcock or Lelouch, nor do they say the same things. Some filmmakers more or less consciously follow a narrative pattern inherited from long tradition. Others use their talents to subvert the same tradition. Basically, they all draw on similar raw material: shots, sequences, camera movements, characters, dialogue, etc. The differences rest in the assemblage of these ingredients. When one subverts narrative patterns, he necessarily recognizes their existence. Where do the patterns originate?

Despite its promise, film theory is thus far too young to provide ultimate answers to such a consequential question. Partial explanations exist, but much remains to be done. Within this field, besides the very necessary work of rendering early titles, dates and credits more accurately, a growing number of scholars have undertaken the consideration of theses advanced by earlier generations. Many of these previous assertions have served like screens to cloud our consciousness of what actually happened, to obscure the matter of how filmmakers really developed mainstream[2] narrative patterns we know today.

For these reasons, a careful scrutiny of film narrative origins is vital. The following paper seeks a better understanding of how early filmmakers expressed time.

Cinema and narrativity

Despite the usual representation of our earliest films as non-narrative productions, it is proposed here that narrative has been present since film's inception. The first films (1895-1910) evidenced formal elements of the type found in medieval literature[3] and already constituted a narrative pattern by presenting various expressive materials organized to tell a story. No-one would contest the fact that LA CHANSON DE ROLAND is an effective narrative. Of course the quality and character of early film narrativity varies. Some films are certainly not narrative; however our purpose is not to contrast

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what is narrative and what is not, but rather to compare two narrative forms which do not deny one another even though the later one became institutionalized at some point. The other pattern proceeds from what Tom Gunning has called "non-continuous style",[4] but it is erroneous to consider its qualities as exclusively constituting the ground from which the continuous style evolved.

What characteristics embody mainstream or "institutionalized" narrative form? The question cannot be completely answered for the moment. French scholars speak of transparent cinema (Bazin), narrative-representative cinema (Metz, Noguez), continuous narrative style, and linear cinema. Each expression partially accounts for some characteristics of a narrative form that transforms the screen into a transparent frame, providing its audience with a seemingly unmitigated access to reality. A characteristic of the form is its capacity to reproduce subject matter within a pattern of logic consistent with the logic of the world it records, excluding whatever elements might serve to break the narrative flow. The exposition frequently proceeds from a linear pattern which arranges its basic elements in a chain of indispensable, intentional links, all operating to further plot.

Such a narrative form began to develop around 1910, although accurate dating is perilous. A film like David Wark Griffith's THE MUSKETEERS OF PIG ALLEY (Biograph, 1912)[5] is particularly interesting in this regard. The thoughtful viewer will discern a system atypical either of much contemporary film or of earlier titles. Its fluidity of narrative flow contrasts with the greater rigidity of a previous period.

To our mind, the degree of narrative fluidity is an essential factor, since its character will prove basic to the narrative form of the ensuing decade. In fact, the valorization of such fluidity serves as a necessary condition for the development of an independent cinematic narrative.

One notices the absence of such flow in the very early films, although in the case of Louis Lumière's work, such an issue is disguised because each production is a one-shot film.[6] Thus, L'ARROSEUR ARROSE (Lumière, 1895) avoids almost every problem of narrative fluidity by staging all its action within a relatively short but continuous camera run: a mischievous boy puts his foot on a gardener's water hose. Puzzled by ths stoppage, the gardener imprudently looks into the nozzle. The boy removes his foot and the "waterer" is watered. The gardener pursues the boy who runs beyond screen frame, returns him to our view, and beats him. All the action unfolds in less than a minute, and problems of narrativity are avoided both because the conceptual model, the narrative anecdote, is so simply contained and because there is only a single shot. (We say "both" because obviously a one-shot film can pose narrative problems. Consider GARE DU NORD (Jean Rouch, 1964) which, in addition to an introductory shot and a concluding one (together less than a minute), is constituted by only one further shot[7] lasting at least fifteen minutes).[8] L'ARROSEUR ARROSE is not amenable to potential narrative manipulations because of its brevity and because of the isomorphism existing between the film's time-space ordering and the time-space reality it documents. In other words, the simplicity of the film comes from the camera's isolating such a singular, continous moment for its privileged audience. Inventors of the motion picture camera first created the shot, in its time the alpha and omega of film expression, and instituted the era of the one-shot film. Such homogeneity of cinematographic representa-

tion was insured by a linear structure operating in terms of an enclosure that permitted no exceptions. As one prepared for shooting, the minimal action-segments were scheduled to appear in a continuous visual field (however their framing might shift) and a continuous time sequence. The double mobility which characterizes film narrative had yet to materialize completely: mobility of objects depicted and mobility of time-space segmentation. All that was known was the mobility of objects depicted in the frame, a mobility possible because of the new invention which could seize, fix and reproduce movements of beings and of things. This was the era of what we can term, in the manner of Roman Gubern[9], "articulation from frame to frame". Scheduled for imminent appearance was the mobility of time-space segmentation: "articulation from shot to shot", the gathering of shots into a sequence.

Temporal Overlap

Within such a one-shot system, there is no danger of unmatched cuts or temporal overlap, that is the repetition of part of an action that concluded the previous shot. A condition for discontinuity is shot multiplicity, since juxtaposing shots from different angles necessarily poses this potential problem by introducing at least two vectors: space and time.

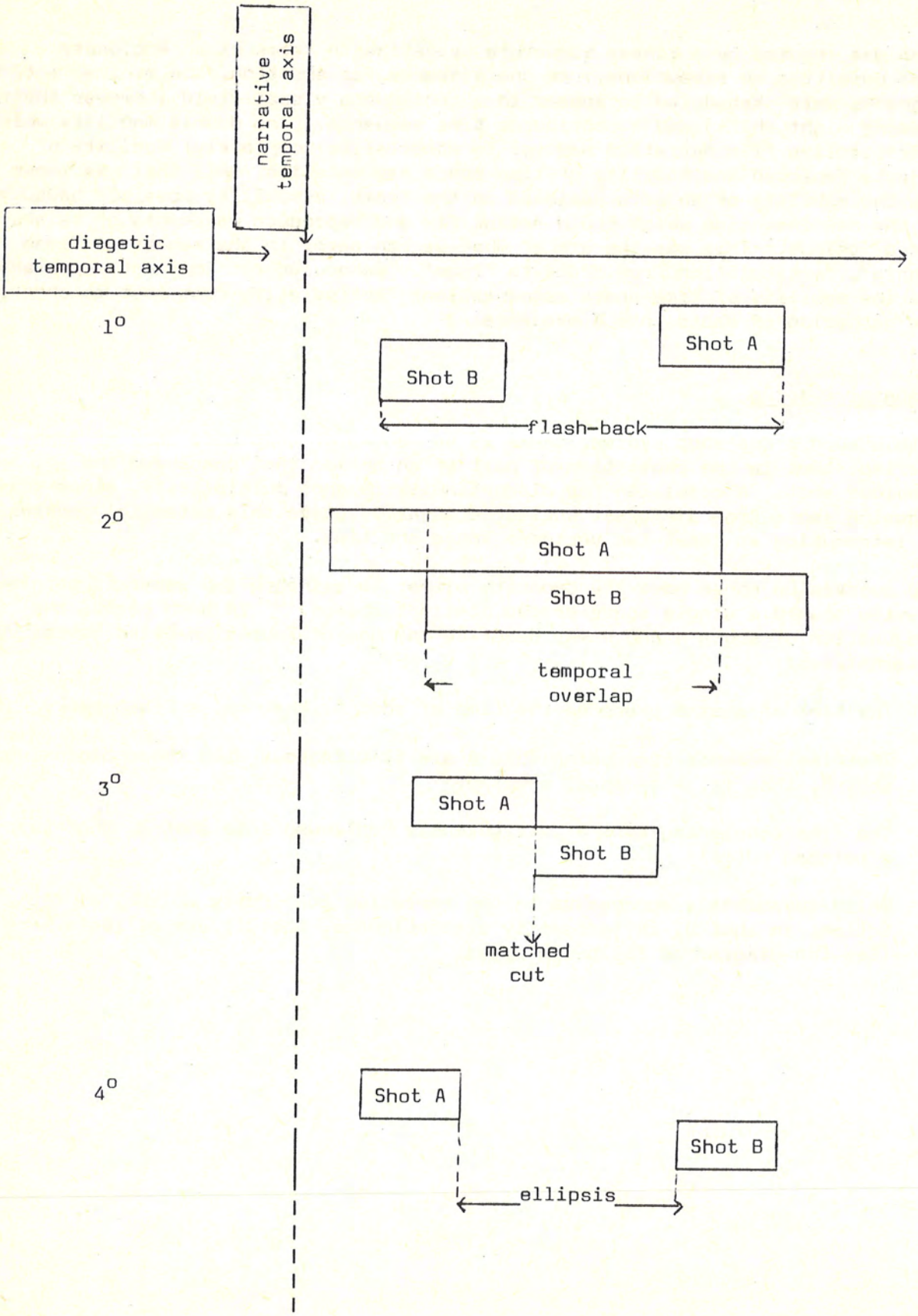
Two successive shots have the capacity either to evidence two separate points-of-view toward a single space or two distinct spaces.[10] In both cases, the conjunction of shots A and B may describe any one of four time-based narrative alternatives:

1. The time of shot B precedes the time of shot A, that is, a flash-back;

2. The final moments concluding shot A are simultaneous with those beginning shot B, that is, a temporal overlap;

3. The time concluding shot A is rigorously continued into shot B, that is, a matched cut;[11]

4. While immediately successive to the narrative continuity of shot A, the action, in shot B, is temporally discontinuous, that is, an ellipsis.[12] (See the diagram on following page).


narrative temporal axis
diegetic temporal axis
1º
Shot A
Shot B
flash-back
2º
Shot A
Shot B
temporal overlap
3º
Shot A
Shot B
matched cut
4º
Shot A
Shot B
ellipsis

Temporal overlap, when it is used to describe a single, continuous action, may disrupt an audience's sense of that continuity because of the repetition. The repeating action is felt as a kind of jump, obscuring the temporal fluidity. Except for rare occasions, time characteristically presses forward[13] in cinema; even in flashback, time is felt as a present, excepting perhaps the temporal overlap where, repeating some previous action, time seems contradicted.

The "technique"[14] of temporal overlap as investigated here disappeared from the screen for many years, returning only with different intentions on the part of Eisenstein, Resnais and others. Early films under our present consideration use temporal overlaps in an effort to resolve problems of spatial contiguity. As we will see, filmmakers in most cases have repeated action through editing so as to implicate characters displaced between two adjoining spaces, most often spaces separated by a wall. It is as if Griffith's subsequent, ubiquitous camera had yet to realize its powers. The camera did not know how to "go through" walls. The narrator, the storyteller, lacked omniscience, perhaps because he had not sufficiently developed a consciousness of his craft, an hypothesis we will examine later.

Although important films containing obvious examples of temporal overlap are often cited in movie histories, this convention has not been the object of close attention. Porter's LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (Edison, 1903) provides a good example, although in this case the phenomenon was obscured by the existence of one version that literally erased the film's principal example of temporal overlap. However even that version, which appears to us to be inconsistent with the original one,[15] includes at least two other examples that have always been passed over in silence, probably because they are less apparent. It is interesting that between the two possible versions of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, the one containing editing more compatible with "continuous style", has most often been used. Today that version seems the inauthentic one.

For the sake of clarification, here is a description of the editing of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. In that film, Porter shows us from the interior of a burning house a courageous fireman who unhesitatingly risks his life to perform a rescue.

A woman and her child, overwhelmed by smoke, fall inert onto a bed. A fireman enters the room by breaking the door. He goes to the window and calls for a ladder, throws the woman over his shoulder, and exits by the window. After a moment the fireman reappears at the window, enters, takes the child and again climbs out. Finally, two other firemen enter through the window and hose the flames. The shot concludes with a cut (not a fade-out) to black.

Had Porter's film ended here, the spectator would have been deprived of its "climax": on reaching ground, the woman implores the fireman to rescue her child still trapped in the room. Perhaps Porter added a last shot with the intention of showing us the mother's request. It runs more-or-less as long as what has just been described and permits us to witness, once again, the same action, this time from the exterior of the building, probably from an onlooker's point-of-view. Our systemic analysis of the film[15] convinced us that the simple co-presence of two different points of view toward one single event justified

their successive presentation, which produces a repetition of the action and finally a temporal overlap that today can only astonish.

In other words, the film's last shot again depicts, this time from another point of view, the action previously seen, yet in an original and incongruous fashion. An overlap of that length is rare among films of the time. Most examples with which we are familiar rather follow the pattern of two other instances in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. In shot 3 Porter shows us the firemen who, on hearing the alarm, jump from their beds and descend the pole leading to the ground floor; we see each fireman disappear. Shot 4 then reverts slightly; in succession each fireman appears on the ground floor, emerging from the ceiling hole. It is "unlikely" that at the moment when the last fireman is sliding down (end of shot 3), no other fireman has finished his descent (beginning of shot 4), one story lower.

Shots 4 and 5 give us another example of temporal overlap since shot 4 ends when the fire trucks have already exited (toward the camera which is probably situated near the firehouse doors) and shot 5 begins on an exterior view of the firehouse with the doors still closed. The men then open the door and trucks emerge "one more" time. What we judge significant is that the above-noted overlap and the one constituting the film's final two shots differ in terms of structural intention.

With respect to the earlier two examples, one can conjecture how a more continuous link between the two shots might have been accomplished. The simplest solution would have been to truncate the end of the initial shot (example: at shot 3, one could cut at the moment the fifth fireman disappears through the hole in the floor). Shot 4's beginning might be shortened so that the same fireman is first to descend the pole. At least, such a technique would follow customary practice today. In the case of shots 8 and 9, the solution would have differed. The temporal importance of the overlap works against continuity matching as an ideal answer, since this would deprive the audience of seeing, from interior, the rescue of the mother (beginning of shot 9).

In any case, the preceding action was assumed by the author of the Edison catalogue description which does not take into account overlapping action. Alternatively, the ideal solution seems to be the one chosen by the anonymous re-editor of the film from whom we have inherited today's non-authentic version conserved by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Here the camera successively passes from interior to exterior (and back again) throughout the unfolding of the drama described by shots 8 and 9. From these two shots, our "anonymous editor"[16] creates a new arrangement composed of thirteen segments. So as to avoid the two elements of action overlapping unreasonably, he has however adopted our initial solution (rejecting parts of shots) when matching several moments (not all, since the editing of the last shots preserves a few examples of slight overlaps, just as between shots 3 and 4). In other words, to the solutions of continuity and fluidity the later editor has added a solution of parallel editing, although it should be emphasized that the parallel editing solution is untypical of the period. Usually parallel editing is unnecessary to the narrative system of Porter and his contemporaries; its utility waits on "continuity filmmakers" to follow, Griffith particularly.

Examples

Temporal overlap in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN is well-known, but there are many other exemplary cases. Although narrative structure in Méliès films creates very few situations likely to produce action overlaps, his work is not exempt. His films rarely match two shots or present the crossing of contiguous spaces by a character. Méliès is even less likely to match two different points of view on a single action, but LE VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE (Star Film, 1902) and LE VOYAGE A TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE (Star Film, 1904) nevertheless present both phenomena. In the 1902 film, one shot shows the rocket heading through space (the sky) and landing in the eye of the anthropomorphic moon; the next shot locates us on the moon's surface where we again witness the arrival of the rocket. In LE VOYAGE A TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE the travellers' car crashes into the wall of an inn, breaks it, and enters the building. The next shot shows the interior of the inn before the accident. Customers are at a table; the wall is intact. After a few seconds, the car breaks in and passes through the room, smashing everything.

Two other films produced in 1907 by Star Film[17] involve examples of repeated action editing: LA DOUCHE D'EAU BOUILLANTE and LE MARIAGE DE VICTORINE. The action of the latter title takes place both outside and inside a house of which only two rooms are visible, kitchen and dining areas. They seem to be contiguous. The hosts wait impatiently for their meal, which must be served by Victorine, the maid; she is busy with her lover in the kitchen. This situation causes a few crosses of the characters from one room to another, and there is a temporal overlap, but the obvious disorder of the shots in the copy we have viewed (an American Film Institute/Library of Congress print) doesn't allow us to study it more thoroughly. Nevertheless it is interesting that, contrary to general opinion, Star Film seems to have reached a stage competitive with other companies of the time. Indeed, LE MARIAGE DE VICTORINE poses some elements, otherwise absent among previous Star Film, that are consistent parts of the cinematographic "conventions" of the time[18]: exterior locations (the lover rushes outside), close-up as concluding shot (in the AFI version this shot is not final, but the characters' gestures show it is so intended), mobility of the camera between shots, etc. LA DOUCHE D'EAU BOUILLANTE also provides examples of repeated action editing. Two robbers hear the host approaching and escape through a door at screen right. The host appears and also exits through the door. A next shot shows the adjacent room. The field is empty, and the two robbers enter and hide, after which the host enters. The same stratagem is repeated, but inversely, when all characters return to the first room.

Several other films of the period present similar cases of repeated action editing.

HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY (Edison, 1902)

At a restaurant, a man is turned out by the waiter who seizes him by the collar and impels him out of the visual field. The waiter takes the suitcase and throws it to him. The last action is taken from inside the restaurant. Then from exterior the waiter throws the man out and ejects the suitcase a "second" time.

A DISCORDANT NOTE (Biograph, 1903)

The first shot shows a character singing out-of-tune at a reception. Guests become enraged, grasp him and throw him against the background designed as a wall; we see him breaking through the paper flat's surface. The next shot takes us to the building exterior; the wall is momentarily whole, again the victim breaks through it and now he falls to the street.

THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN (Biograph, 1904)

Clearly flattered, a woman accepts a suitor's bouquet gift. A close-up shows her inhaling the flowers' scent, but the woman's gestures fail visually to match from shot to shot; rather, they repeat themselves.

THE STRENUOUS LIFE (OR ANTI-RACE SUICIDE)(Edison, 1904)

A father holds his new-born child, places him on a scale and mimes his happiness. The next shot, maintaining an identical visual axis, provides a close shot in which the same gestures are repeated.

THE FIREBUG (Biograph, 1905)

In the basement of a family house, a pyromaniac ignites a blaze. Hearing noise, the daughter goes downstairs to investigate. The pyromaniac kidnaps her and flees through a window. A servant sees the firebug fleeing with his captive and pursues the pair through the window. At that moment, the father arrives and undertakes putting out the fire. His wife enters and collapses, as does the maid. The husband carries his wife to the first floor. A following exterior shot shows smoke escaping through the basement window. Then the pyromaniac exits through the window a "second" time, fleeing with his hostage and followed by the servant. As the shot continues, we see the father carrying his wife from inside the house to the veranda and reviving her. The father reenters, secures a gun, and then joins the pursuit.

THE TUNNEL WORKERS (Biograph, 1906)

In the anteroom of an excavation site we see a heavy door in the background. As the manager passes through this door, a worker gestures his rage in an aside to the camera. (The manager has recently been discovered philandering with the worker's wife). The worker then exits through the same door. The next shot is a "reverse angle" from within the excavation, and we see the manager, followed by the worker, pass through the door a "second" time.

Temporal overlap and repetition of the action

With the help of these examples and what is presently known of early cinema, it is possible to distinguish three types of situations that facilitate any sort of temporal overlap. Only the first two examples implicate action-repetition, since the third one, we shall see, articulates two disjointed, although simultaneous, actions.

1. The spatial analysis of a single shot

When matching a long shot and a closer view of one single action, partial or full repetition of the movements may occur (THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN; THE STRENUOUS LIFE).

2. Crossing two contiguous spaces

When matching two shots with different fields representing two contiguous rooms or spaces, there may be partial or entire repetition of the action. This may happen either through character movement (A DISCORDANT NOTE) or by way of a shift in point of view independent of character movement (LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN).

3. The relationship between two simultaneous actions

When matching two shots showing two simultaneous actions occurring in non-contiguous spaces, there may be a temporal overlap without repetition of the action. Action A occurs in one space at the same moment that action B takes place elsewhere. For instance, following our analysis of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY,[15] the line of action presenting the robbery and the robbers' flight takes place apparently simultaneous with the release of the telegrapher and the saloon's scene, despite the successive presentation of these two lines of action. On a more limited dimension, the film instances another temporal overlap without repetition of action. Shot 3 (the robbery of the mail car) and shot 4 (the struggle of the locomotive) take place simultaneously but are shown successively. (The Edison catalogue specifies this).

The first two situations alone instance repetition of the action since only a single action is recorded in these cases. In order to obviate repeated action in these circumstances one would have to operate from a greater consciousness regarding manipulations possible through editing. Later film history provides only rare exceptions to the usual elimination of action overlap, for instance the Odessa Steps sequence (THE BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN, Eiseinstein, 1925) which repeats actions through editing. It is obvious that the descent of two hundred palace steps by the fleeing townspeople would have lasted a far shorter time. However, through editing, the sequence singles out identifiable, individual tragedies (e.g. the woman with the baby carriage) through repeated actions. Other examples include PERSONA (Bergman, 1966) which is somewhat peculiar. Alma's monologue is presented twice, consecutively. First, the camera shows Elizabeth's reactions alone; the second time we see only Alma. It is somewhat as if Bergman shot the material direct and then in reverse angle, choosing to present each point of view successively instead of alternating one with the other. In its own fashion, this film recalls the ending of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.[19]

Returning to our earlier examples, it may be remarked that characteristics of THE FIREBUG warrant closer attention. Action repetition is caused by factors other than the single temporal overlap; in its unfolding of events, the film presents a particular sort of inconsistency. At the moment we see the action

from outside, the time lapse between the servant's exit through the window and the father's exit on the balcony (five seconds) is incongruent with the time of the same action-segment as shown by the preceding shot: the time running from the servant's exit to the moment when the father has climbed the stairway from basement to first floor (fifty-five seconds), quantitatively a time discrepancy of one to eleven. To put it another way, judging by the logic of the exterior shot, there is insufficient time between the servant's window exit and the father's by way of the front door for the father to have undertaken to extinguish the flames, for the maid and wife to have arrived and fainted, and for the father to have climbed the stairway with his wife in his arms as we witnessed in the preceding shot. We might say there has been a kind of ellipsis during the second shot, between the exit of the servant and the exit of the father, except that - and this is important to the argument - there has been no shot change to justify such an ellipsis.

In passing, we may note that LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN presents similar "incongruities". In shot 8, taken from interior, the fireman takes the woman out of the room by the window, disappears down the ladder and returns in a few moments to save the child. In shot 9, which shows the same action in exterior, we see the fireman descend the ladder with the woman. She regains consciousness and supplicates the fireman to return to the room and save her child. Seen in shot 9, all this action obviously has insufficient time to unfold during the short lapse when the fireman has disappeared from the window in shot 8. The two films' examples demonstrate that early ellipses in cinema were sometimes produced through the manipulation of the unfolding action rather than by the manipulation of the images by editing. By our measure, this is one of the peculiar and unique aspects of early film.

Charles Musser has analyzed the relationship between shots 8 and 9 of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN as follows:

> "While, on one level, these two shots create a temporal repetition, on another level each has its own distinct and complementary temporality which taken together forms the whole. When the interior is shown everything that happens takes place in "real" time, while everything that takes place outside is extremely condensed. The reverse is true when the rescue is shown from the exterior. In keeping with theatrical conventions, whenever action takes place off screen, time is severely condensed."[20]

Amplified by analysis of THE FIREBUG and other films, Musser's observation leads us to conclude that, in a general way, early filmmakers were more or less consciously considering each shot as an autonomous, self-reliant unit; the shot's objective was to present, not a small <u>temporal</u> segment of the action but rather, the totality of an action unfolding in an homogenous <u>space</u>. Between unity of point of view and unity of temporal continuity, the former took precedent. Before releasing the camera to a subsequent space, everything occurring in the first location is necessarily shown. Spatial anchorage prevails over temporal logic. Stability, persistence and uniqueness of point of view remain so important that they supersede anachronism.

For such reasons, we strongly support Noël Burch's analysis of the same phenomenon in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.

> "However, the fact that once these two shots were filmed, it was decided to connect them in a manner implying an obvious non-linearity rather than disturb the unity of the spatial viewpoint, seems to me to say a great deal about the alterity of the relationship these early films entertained with the spectators who watched them. Does it not suggest that the feeling of being seated in a theatre in front of a screen had, for spectators then, a sort of priority over the feeling of being carried away by an imaginary time-flow, modelled on the semblance of linearity which ordinary time has for us?"[21]

We may note one additional factor that probably worked against interlacing shots or, minimally, smooth matches: the two shots were executed in very different places, probably miles distant: exterior on location, interior in a studio. It is remarkable enough that two such remote spots are joined by editing. We ought not to be astonished by the filmmaker's reticence to do anything more. Further, the shots were not merely remote locations but two different diegetic spaces. To our mind, all these factors worked against intercutting the two units or a simple matching-action continuity that might have been accomplished by trimming either joined end.

In fact, one cannot say such continuities were unknown to the filmmaker of THE FIREBUG, which presents a remarkable example between shots 7 and 8 of an extremely precise match, absent of overlap. At the moment the father struggles with the pyromaniac, an axial cut-in continues our view of the fight by moving from long to medium long shot. We may conjecture that it is from a gathering of various shots incorporating a single space (as in this case) that the conception of shot-autonomy begins to lose ground. By cuts and bridges between shots presenting a single and sole action under different angles, the filmmakers begin to regard the action unfolding on screen as equivalent to the continuous flow of the action depicted. Changing of angles provides the viewer with a better vantage on continuous, imperturbably proceeding action. It is the form of live television, where programs are recorded by various cameras that simultaneously cover an (actually continuous) action while a switcher, under a director's discretion, chooses whatever camera will be "on air" at any given moment.

Temporality in the foreground

In cases of simultaneous actions occurring in two distinct locations (for instance, two spaces separated by a wall), the conception of an action's inexorable unfolding has in 1907 yet to dominate the praxis of montage. Indeed, our example (LA DOUCHE D'EAU BOUILLANTE, LE MARIAGE DE VICTORINE)[22] are far from the unique. Produced or registered for copyright in 1907 with one exception the following films all present one or more examples of repeated action editing: TEDDY BEARS (Edison), HYPNOTIST'S REVENGE (Biograph), IF YOU HAD A WIFE LIKE THIS (Biograph), LOST IN THE ALPS (Edison), LA COURSE AUX POTIRONS (Gaumont), and RESCUED FROM AN EAGLE'S NEST (Edison, January 1908). So long as insistency of time remains dormant, temporal discrepancy is permitted. We must wait a short while before questions of time are almost obsessively put forward by, among others, D.W. Griffith who starts to direct in 1908. In most of Griffith's

films, temporality assumes dramatic significance for its own sake. The "last minute rescue" becomes a major innovation that implicates the very logic of film narrative since it emphasizes the time (last minute rescue), and several other "inventions" attributed to Griffith proceed "naturally" from the last minute rescue.

The notion of rescue implies two groups of characters opposed to one another on the level of action: rescuer(s) and threatened person(s).[23] When the threatening agent is not a natural force or object, it becomes a third character function. Moreover, rescuer and victim, remote from one another in order to engender suspense through a last-minute, nick of time arrival, operate in simultaneous time. Under such circumstances had a filmmaker not shown "genius" to "invent" or to hone parallel editing he might better have remained an actor. We do not wish to denigrate such cineastes as Griffith, but rather to reposition their work in the context that facilitated it. Parallel editing's infrequency during the chase film era (1903-1908) results largely from dominant story themes. A chase also implicates two action-motivated groups, but (in contrast to the last-minute rescue) its theme works on assumptions of proximity rather than distance: pursuer and pursued may be recorded within a single shot. By our reckoning, this is why in almost every chase film prior to 1908, we experience a series of shots in which, without variation, the pursued crosses the visual field and then within the same shot the pursuers appear chasing him. Filmmakers favored movement occurring in front of the camera over displacement of the camera between shots. All such films successively show various locations in which the chase occurs, each documenting the action just noted. In general each shot only concludes when every pursuer (including the eventual laggard one) has exited from the frame.[24]

Viewing these films, we cannot help but wonder at such reticence toward moving the camera before the screen has been emptied of action.[25] Perhaps this disinclination figures in the organization of shots for a film such as THE FIREBUG which really reproduces the same pattern. Everything occurring in the basement of the house has to be shown before the camera moves to the next location. However the effect is not identical in both cases. In a chase film there is no temporal overlap since the camera shifts location with the events. In THE FIREBUG, the camera points twice at the "same" space. Had there been no wall, one might see, from exterior, the father rushing down the stairway to the basement. Persistence toward refraining from cutting before everything has taken place within the shot (so as not to frustrate the audience?) has been brought to a point of absurdity. Thus, in THE POLICE DOGS (its French title is unknown), produced by Pathé apparently in 1907, a chase begins between a pack of dogs and a group of robbers. The film consists of successive shots showing the robbers fleeing while the pursuing dogs cross the visual field in pursuit. Each shot has its own geographic characteristics: a fence to jump over, a slope to descend. The comic point is that one obstacle is rather hard to overcome and a last dog proves repeatedly unsuccessful in his efforts; in fact, it takes him two or three times to succeed. The dog's attempt is so immoderately time-consuming that one almost forgets the central chase and the scene induces a comic effect while everything else is not in that mood at all. It is really impossible to be sure whether the filmmaker left this segment intact because of reticence at cutting in the middle of an action to which he chose not to return.

Two other period films present situations eminently favorable to cross-cutting. Their chases take place in automobiles and at some point a substantial distance separates pursuers and pursued. In both cases situations complicate when the pursued automobile has a breakdown. The films are THE ELOPEMENT (Biograph, 1907) and CATCHING A BURGLAR (Hepworth, 1908). Different from previous years' titles, these films sometimes show us shots in which only pursuer or pursued appears, for the other agent is too remote to share the camera's field. Yet there is no cross-cutting, even though a car breakdown would have fitted such a technique well. Difficulty in starting a car enjoins a suspenseful effect that might have been intensified by the simple act of inserting a single shot of the pursuers. Thus, in THE ELOPEMENT, the camera remains fixed until the pursued decide to continue on their way first by walking then by canoe. One can easily see that the device of isolating one of the groups within a certain number of shots (rather than the "classical" chase which always showed both the groups within each shot) is due more to the mechanization of transportation (because of the greater speeds) than to a different consciousness regarding possibilities of manipulation by editing or, simply, the mise-en-scène.

In counterpart, an insistence on temporality is a phenomenon which grows in importance during 1907. By the following year, many themes will emphasize story elements tied to temporality. Before directing, a film for which Griffith provided the script, OLD ISAACS THE PAWNBROKER (Biograph, 1908), is particularly interesting. It is the story of a young girl who first visits a charity, then a pawnbroker's shop seeking money to buy medicine for her poor, ill mother. The film is constructed in a parallel pattern; during the girl's searches, one inserted shot shows the gravely ill mother, thus emphasizing the emergency. It is easy to locate a kind of prototype for the last-minute rescue which Griffith soon develops in that pattern. Such insistence on "meanwhile" is really striking in its recurrence throughout Griffith's work, evident even before he began to direct.

In interior sets one also notices an increasing number of clocks that sometimes have roles to play. Thus in LOST IN THE ALPS (Edison, 1907), the mother worries about her tardy children although the clock shows 6:05 (she pointedly looks at it, calling our attention to the time). Later, one cannot ignore the clock's still indicating the same time when we return to the set. The fact that the clock is part of a painted flat insufficiently explains such discrepancy since a year later a film called FATHER'S LESSON (Hepworth, 1908) similarly presents a clock that seems painted onto the set but has moveable hands to indicate a different time whenever we return to that set (three times). We must conclude that Porter, who directed LOST IN THE ALPS, placed little importance on such details, even when the clock plays a role; the earlier GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (Edison, 1903) has an interior set with a clock that from one episode to another also shows the same hour. In contast, in THE TIRED TAILOR'S DREAM (Biograph, 1907) the clock, which has a very important role, indicates different times from one scene to the next. A man enters and orders his suit to be ready at 5:00 (the clock indicates 4:00). By an axial cut-in the clock, like the tailor who has fallen asleep in his chair, disappears from the field of the camera: the objects animate and the suit is assembled by itself as if by magic. Then we return to the long shot; the clock now shows 5:00. The tailor wakes up, happy at finishing the suit in time.

The Suspence Notion

For parallel editing (one of the most important narrative devices of cinema) to become systematic, emphasis had to be placed on the physical separation of two conflicting groups converging toward a single place at a single moment. In the construction of the narrative system we are studying, the use of such a device has been useful, if not indispensable. To create a strong identification between the screen and the audience, pretending to the reality of the action, facilitating a strong emotion on the part of the spectator, making the suspense plausible, increasing the efficiency of the close-up, a consistent universe had to be shaped. This was an essential condition. The last-minute rescue, as a basic structure for the construction of a narrative, required it. One cannot hold an audience breathless without withholding the issue of the drama before a particular moment. Porter, who probably had no intention of constructing suspense, provides a contrasting example. In shot 8 of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, we attend the rescue of the mother and her child, seen from the interior. In shot 9, whatever the wishes of the anonymous author of the film's description, there can be no suspense since no-one has any doubt about the outcome of the drama. We only re-see an accomplished action and we know, at the moment when the mother supplicates the fireman to save her child, that the fire will injure no-one; the child will be safe. On seeing the film, the anguish referred to by the anonymous writer cannot materialize.

> "We now dissolve to the exterior of the burning building. The frantic mother having returned to consciousness, and clad only in her night clothes, is kneeling on the ground imploring the fireman to return for her child. Volunteers are called for and the same fireman who rescued the mother quickly steps out and offers to return the babe. He is given permission to once more enter the doomed building and without hesitation rushes up the ladder, enters the window and after a breathless wait, in which it appears he must have been overcome with smoke, he appears with the child in his arms and returns safely to the ground."[26]

Griffith seizes on suspense and models it almost always in a last-minute rescue pattern. He will elaborate parallel editing which necessarily needs a kind of spatio-temporal coherence, despite obvious complexities (many locations, many acting groups), complexity that, as we have said, the "classical" chase film (1903-1906) avoided by reason of its very character. The recent viewing of films made in 1907 confirms an hypothesis that filmmakers of that period, whatever the exceptions, systematically avoided complicating the structures of their films, perhaps so as not to mislead the audience.[27] The most frequent examples of parallel editing (or any similar editing structure) or cross-cutting before Griffith appears to be justified almost exclusively by what is present inside the frame. This is the case with point-of-view shots such as GRANDMA'S READING GLASS (Smith, 1900) and CE QUE JE VOIS DE MON SIXIEME (Pathé, 1901) when, in close-up (composed inside a circular matte), we can see various objects viewed by the characters while using a magnifying glass or telescope. It is equally true with films such as A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE (Biograph, 1903) and INQUISITIVE BOOTS (Hepworth, 1905) in which we see, inside a keyhole matte, various scenes as if viewed from a hotel corridor. Among the chase films, camera displacement is similarly justified diegetically by the unfolding of events; since the protagonists are moving, the camera has to shift ground

from shot to shot. In all such cases, however, the camera does not serve a narrative function per se; rather, its presence in each location is justified by the pro-filmic event. It is principally among Griffith's films that justifications for camera displacement assume a narrative dimension. This seems to be the moment when filmmakers start to become conscious of the narrative potential in an instrument previously consigned to recording the single movement of beings and things.[28]

Thus, at the beginning of the century, two different narrative patterns succeed one another. The first articulates shots in a relatively discontinuous fashion, while the second tries to inscribe, in the images' series, a continuous homogenous narrative that provides an illusion of telling itself. Without proposing causal relationships, one may yet remark on the likenesses between the first pattern of film exposition and, as we noted at the beginning of this paper, medieval literature. Early cinema retained a principal characteristic of presenting successions of more-or-less autonomous tableaux. Each element (shot) was not necessarily an instrument of progression, even as late as the chase film. Temporal continuity did not assume dominating importance; rather often, the relation between shots was imprecise, even operating in a repetitive mode. All this said, it is worthwhile calling attention to the apparent likeness between such a pattern of narration and that of medieval literature. The following quotation by Erich Auerbach concerning LA CHANSON DE ROLAND applies with equal accuracy to many films produced early in the century.

> "Whether one comprehensive representation is replaced by a reiterative enumeration of individual scenes similar in form and progess; whether one intense action is replaced by a repetition of the same action, beginning at the same starting point time and again; or whether finally, instead of a process of complex and periodic development, we have repeated returns to the starting point, each one proceeding to elaborate a different element or motif: in all cases rationally organized condensations are avoided in favor of a halting, spasmodic, juxtapositive, and pro- and retrogressive method in which causal, modal, and even temporal relations are obscured. (...) Time and again there is a new start; every resumption is complete in itself and independent; the next is simply juxtaposed to it, and the relation between the two is often left hanging."[29]

Some authors have gone so far as to identify repeated action editing with the parataxic device often in medieval literature. Considering, among other matters, distances separating the materiality of the linguistic sign from that of the moving picture, we would not venture so far, yet it is fascinating to discover such apparent isomorphism, probably the result of a common attitude shared among Middle Age authors and early filmmakers as both confronted temporality: a parameter no narrative form can elude.

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NOTES

1. Lately, we have discussed some of our thesis with David Levy, a colleague from Montreal with whom we are preparing a book on Edwin S. Porter's work. These discussions have been very useful to the development of positions in the following paper.

2. Noël Burch himself discusses the Institutional Mode of Representation, which he defines as follows. "...set of (written or unwritten) directives which has been historically interiorized by directors and technicians as the irreducible base of 'film language' within the Institution and which has remained a constant over the past fifty years, independent of the vast stylistic changes which have taken place." CORRECTION PLEASE, leaflet to accompany the film with the same name, directed by Burch in 1978-79, p. 3.

3. As precisely established by Tom Gunning, "Le style non-continu du cinéma des premiers temps", LES CAHIERS DE LA CINEMATHEQUE, n. 29 (Hiver 1979), Perpignan, and Charles Musser, "The Early Cinema of Edwin Porter", CINEMA JOURNAL (Fall 1979). This paper returns to the subject at a later stage.

4. Loq. cit.

5. 1895-1915 film titles are followed, between parentheses, by the production company and year of production or copyright. Among more recent films, the director's name replaces the production company.

6. Georges Sadoul suggests that the Lumières probably joined four single-shot films on the same subject: a fire exercise. These films would be SORTIE DE LA POMPE, MISE EN BATTERIE, ATTAQUE DU FEU and SAUVETAGE. Obviously the Lumière brothers or their employees began at some point to join their films and soon afterward probably produced multishot titles. In support of our own position, we refer only to the first of the Lumière productions (1895-97), those which initially marked the cinema as an institution.

7. It is tempting to consider this a one-shot sequence. However, the sequence considered is made up of more than one shot since the introductory shot is necessarily a part of it.

8. We should note further that this very long shot (probably unique) is undoubtely made up of two segments. We suspect that Rouch takes advantage of the blackened image in the elevator to join them, effacing the editmark on the soundtrack. This is done to compensate for limits on the camera's film capacity.

9. Roman Gubern, "D.W. Griffith et l'articulation cinèmatographique", LES CAHIERS DE LA CINEMATHEQUE no. 17 (Décembre 1975), p. 8. Obviously, the word "articulation" carries different denotations from those in linguistics.

10. To support our demonstration, we will schematize. For a fuller elaboration of spatio-temporal relationships between shots, see Noël Burch, THEORY OF FILM PRACTICE (New York: Praeger, 1973), pp. 3-16.

11. In order to provide an impression of rigorous continuity, the editor sometimes makes a minimal action overlap (a few images only) or a short ellipsis. Such cuts are made to give the audience an illusion of continuity. For this reason, we include them in our third category.

12. François Baby uses another term "anamorphosis" to characterize such a cut" ... which (forces) the spectator himself to reconstitute a number of missing elements between two segments." See "Jacques Godbout rencontre IXE-13 ou du texte au film: quelles transformations?", ETUDES LITTERAIRES (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, août 1979), p. 289.

13. Here we refer only to short flashbacks. The longer, more important flashback appears more justified and does not suggest impatience, probably, among other reasons, because it serves to explain unfolding action.

14. Although it is correct to speak of "technique" in some cases, we must remember that many such practices did not have as an explicit goal what we now call temporal overlap.

15. The reader is referred to our "Detours in Film Narrative: the Development of Cross-Cutting", CINEMA JOURNAL (Fall 1979).

16. So far no-one knows when and why this re-editing was done. It seems unlikely to have taken place before 1910.

17. "Star Film" is more appropriate than "Méliès" since it appears that these two films were directed by a Méliès employee. See John Frazer ARTIFICIALLY ARRANGED SCENES: THE FILMS OF GEORGES MELIES (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979).

18. Moreover, it is possible that the original version of that film might have contained a kind of parallel editing.

19. We will avoid the precedent of Robert Gessner who saw in the Porter film "a prefiguration of LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD", (Resnais, 1961) in "Porter and the Creation of Cinematic Motion", JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF CINEMATOLOGISTS v.2 (1962).

20. Musser, p. 32-33.

21. Noël Burch, "Porter or Ambivalence", SCREEN v. 19, n.4 (Winter 1978-79), p. 104.

22. See above.

23. It may be noted in passing that these two groups are somewhat like pursuers and pursued of the chase films that just had their time in the sun (1903-1908).

24. Films showing such a structure include THE ESCAPED LUNATIC (Biograph, 1903), PERSONAL (Biograph, 1904), THE LOST CHILD (Biograph, 1904), THE MANIAC CHASE (Edison, 1904), STOLEN BY GYPSIES (Edison, 1905).

25. The research referred to in footnote 1 has suggested one possible explanation for that apparent reluctance. In a 1904 deposition, Edwin Porter declared that because it was the policy of the Edison studio to attempt to market those longer

films in parts as well as in complete versions, he would turn out each of the separate scenes so that it contained what he described as "a fitting and attractive beginning and end". The idea was that each of the separate shots would be reasonably complete and not dependent for its appeal on its position in a sequence. For a more elaborate account of this phenomenon, see David Levy's article in FILM BEFORE GRIFFITH, John Fell, ed. To be published by University of California Press.

26. 1903 Edison catalogue quoted by Lewis Jacobs, THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM (New York: Teachers College Press, 1968), pp. 40-41.

27. Although our separation between 1900-1906 and 1907 may appear arbitrary, it corresponds to a certain reality. In January 1980 we viewed a substantial part of the existing films of 1907 from all the world, thanks to Eileen Bowser and Jon Gartenberg of the Museum of Modern Art (New York), who organized and prepared a series of such viewings for scholars. Two years previously, the museum organized a similar screening of 1900-1906 films.

28. As the reader can see, our analysis concentrates on the American films of the period. More American films are, indeed, available today, but we will surely have to consider those from elsewhere as they are unearthed. The few Pathé titles of 1906-1907 we could see show a relatively good mastery of temporality. LE CHEVAL EMBALLE and I FETCH THE BREAD (French title unknown) show early evidence of parallelism or alternation of simultaneous actions.

29. Eric Auerbach, MIMESIS (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), p. 91.

THE NON-CONTINUOUS STYLE OF EARLY FILM (1900-1906)

Tom Gunning - USA

This paper can only be seen as a starting point. In it, I have tried to organise some overviews that have occurred to me while recently viewing over 500 fictional films from the period 1900-1906. The vast majority of these were made in the United States, and of these, most were produced by either the American Mutoscope and Biograph Co. or the Edison Film Co. However, from the sampling of English and French films I have seen from the same period, I think that most of the observations I make have international application. But the ideas put forth here are definitely preliminary theories to be tested against further film viewing. Similarly, my ideas about the relation between film and other contemporary popular arts calls for further research.

1. Single Shots and Separate Shots

At least in the United States, the majority of fictional films made between 1900-1906 consisted of a brief gag or dramatic situation filmed in a single shot. Although the idea of using several shots to tell a continuous story had already appeared on both sides of the ocean before the turn of the century (Méliès' CENDRILLON: White's LOVE AND WAR), these films remained the exception instead of the rule until about 1906. In fact initially many multi-shot films were copyrighted in the United States as a series of individual films, each shot of the narrative carrying its own title. For instance Biograph's THE DOWNWARD PATH is broken into five single shot parts, bearing the following titles: 1) THE FRESH BOOK AGENT; 2) THE ELOPEMENT; 3) THE NEW SOUBRETTE; 4) THE GIRL WHO WENT ASTRAY; 5) THE SUICIDE.

Since Biograph films were most often devised for use both as projected films and as Mutoscopes shown in peep show devices, this division might have been designed specifically for the peep show exploitation. The motive for the division then might have been both technical and financial (one can imagine the willingness of a customer to follow down the path of Mutoscopes from the fresh book agent to the suicide, dropping pennies all the way). But in any case, Biograph continued this practice of breaking up and subtitling multi-shot films until as late as September 1903. At that date the film THE PIONEERS was broken into the following sections: RESCUE OF A CHILD FROM INDIANS; FIRING THE CABIN; DISCOVERY OF BODIES; INDIANS LEAVING BALD MOUNTAIN; TRAPPERS CROSSING BALD MOUNTAIN.

This apparent reluctance to conceive of a film as a single whole, existing over several shots, is also seen in the early adaptations Edison and Biograph made of famous plays and operas. Instead of presenting a condensed narrative, certain dramatic highlights were filmed with no real attempt to construct a narrative continuity from them. Biograph, for instance, filmed five parts of the famous temperance play, TEN NIGHTS IN A BARROOM (1901). Each part was separately titled: MURDER OF WILLIE; THE FATAL BLOW; VISION OF MARY; DEATH OF LITTLE MARY; DEATH OF SLADE. However, even when viewed together, the films tell no continuous story and remain incomprehensible to anyone who

isn't familiar with the play. Edison's film of PARSIFAL from 1904 (although more elaborate) takes a similar approach. No coherent narrative is developed; one sees highlights of an already famous work. As late as July 1905, the Biograph Company presented THE DUEL SCENE FROM MACBETH as a self-contained entity.[1]

This hesitation before the development of a continuous narrative form finds several manifestations during this period and is the subject of this paper. While it is true that we find during this period the roots of the later film style that stressed the illusion of a continuous narrative, there are films and elements of films that seem to point in another direction. For me, these elements form what I have termed a "non-continuous style", which maintains the separateness of its component parts, instead of absorbing them into an illusion of a continuous narrative flow. We can convert this abstract terminology into a specific experience with a description of Biograph's THE FOUR SEASONS (1904). This four shot film presents a series of silhouettes, each incorporating the name of a season. For instance, the silhouette labelled "Spring" shows a mother holding a baby, while "Autumn" shows an older woman putting on make-up. Similar in conception is Edison's THE SEVEN AGES (somewhat based on Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man"). The film presents the life of (presumably) the same man through seven periods: Infancy, Playmates, Schoomates, Lovers, Soldier, Judge, Second Childhood. Although the Edison film has the continuity of a single character, it makes no attempt to develop a narrative and instead presents fairly static images of the successive stages of his life, a series of separate tableaux possibly even inspired by a series of prints on the same theme.

As I already pointed out this development of a narrative form that maintains a sense of each shot as a discreet part of a series rather than as a phase of continuous flow, appears alongside the first development of a continuous style. The development of the chase film particularly with such films as PERSONAL (1904) and THE MANIAC CHASE (1904), seems to lay the foundations of a continuous flowing narrative. However, the early part of our period seems dominated by this non-continuous aesthetic with the chase film really becoming strong only around 1904. In fact I think that several stylistic aspects of films from this period that appear as anomalies to us today can actually be seen as elements of this "non-continuous style".

2. The "Non-Continuous Style" and Contemporary Popular Arts

In order to fully explore the basis of the "non-continuous style" a great deal of research into early film's relation to contemporary popular arts is needed. The belief that early film derived primarily from the established narrative arts of literature or drama is misleading. During this early period particularly, film was in a closer relation to less lofty arts and took many of its ideas of style from them.

Among the popular arts that film shows a strong symbiotic relation with are: comic strips, political cartoons, magic lantern slides, popular songs and

vaudeville. Film's borrowings from comic strips embrace both form and content. Foxy Grandpa, Happy Hooligan, Buster Brown and The Katzenjammer Kids are some of the characters from comic strips found in films made by the Edison and Biograph companies. Likewise, such films as Biograph's ON TO BROOKLYN (1903) and Edison's TERRIBLE TEDDY, THE GRIZZLY KING (1901) seems to be filmic visualisations of contemporary political cartoons. It also seems likely that film borrowed certain basic narrative ideas from the comic strip. Although certain comic strips during this period were evolving a great sophistication in portraying continuity of action,[3] the idea of resolving narrative action into a series of static panels may have influenced the "non-continuous style".

The influence of Magic Lantern shows was similar. A number of films from the period are nearly exact replicas of Magic Lantern series. For instance, Edison produced a single shot film in 1902 entitled ROCK OF AGES. The film consists of a superimposition of a woman clinging to a large cross over a background of turbulent water. The film directly corresponds to a "dissolving view" magic lantern slide set titled "Simply To Thy Cross I Cling" offered in The Supplementary Catalogue of Economic Slides of the Kliene Optical Company in 1903. In fact the same catalogue offers a slide series titled "Shakespeare's Seven Ages" which seems to correspond closely to the Edison Seven Ages. As with the comic strip, it would seem that the influence of the Magic Lantern show may have supported the "non-continuous style". The conception of narration through a series of static images, which early film could borrow from the Magic Lantern Show, seems to have been a barrier to developing a continuous style.

During this period the Magic Lantern Slide was often used as a song slide, a visual illustration accompanying popular songs. At points, films also served this purpose. Many early films took their titles and plots from popular songs (e.g. WAITING AT THE CHURCH, Edison 1906; UNDER THE BAMBOO TREE Biograph 1905). Biograph's EVERYBODY WORKS BUT FATHER (1905) was actually designed to serve as a moving picture "song slide" accompaniment to Lew Dickstader's song of that title. Edison's ON A GOOD OLD 5¢ TROLLEY RIDE (1905) included lyrics and music in its subtitles. This dependence of films on a performance of a song may have discouraged the development of a strong free-flowing narrative line.

Probably the strongest influence on early film, and the one that most encourages the "non-continuous style", was vaudeville. Film during this period had a stronger relation to vaudeville than to legitimate theatre. And this relation permeated every phase of film. First of all, most of the early short films were either exact reproductions of vaudeville acts, or adaptations of them. In fact in a film like Biograph's WAITING FOR BILL (1903) (to take one example), one wonders whether the painted backdrop the actors stand before is intended as a representation (unconvincing) of a forest, or as a rather convincing representation of a vaudeville stage.

Portrayal of vaudeville and burlesque backstage life and even performances on stage are common subjects in films of this era. But as important as the

borrowings from, and portrayals of vaudeville is the fact that in the majority of cases these films were shown in vaudeville theatres as part of a vaudeville program. In both Edison's UNCLE JOSH AT THE PICTURE SHOW (1902), and Biograph's STORY THE BIOGRAPH TOLD (1904) we see films projected as part of a vaudeville program, complete with announcement cards. This presentation of films as a discreet part within a variety structure must have influenced the "non-continuous style" of film. A variety structure, as defined by Brooks MacNamara, is founded on the principle that "there is no transfer of information from one act to another".[4] This format of presentation may have encouraged film producers to think of their films as a series of loosely connected "turns", rather than a tightly woven narrative. It is interesting that the decline of the "non-continuous style" and rise of the chase film, seems to coincide with the rise of the nickle film theatre and consequent decline of importance of the vaudeville theatre for film producers.

3. Elements of the "Non-Continuous Style"

Besides the static format of such films as SEVEN AGES and THE FOUR SEASONS, what other elements of early film can be related to the "non-continuous style"? I have observed some seven aspects of early film that strike us today as anomalies. I believe they strike us this way precisely because they interfere with the illusion of continuity we have grown to accept as a necessary part of film style. These seven "anomalies" define for me the "non-continuous style" of early film. They are: the engagement of the audience by the actor; two shot films with a bold ellipsis in action; repeated action edits; the anthology format; the mixture of documentary and fictional footage; the use of the tableau; and the use of introductory shots. I will describe and analyse each of these.

A. The Actor's Engagement of the Audience:

The tradition of addressing the audience comes primarily from the stage, particularly melodrama, comedy, and vaudeville. It strikes us as an anomaly in film today because it became a taboo when film tried to establish its fictions as occurring in an autonomous world, and effaced any reference to either the recording camera, or the watching audience.[5] In fact, in comedy such asides were never eliminated from the days of Fatty Arbuckle and Charlie Chaplin through to those of Bob Hope. During the period we are investigating, it is a common performance trait in all sorts of films. Most often it is a comic aside (e.g. HAPPY HOOLIGAN'S APRIL FOOL, Edison 1901; TIED TO HER APRON STRINGS, Biograph 1903). But just as often, it is an erotic device, with the glance of a semi-undressed girl provocatively acknowledging the voyeurism of the onlooker (e.g. FROM SHOW GIRL TO BURLESQUE QUEEN, Biograph 1903, HER NEW PARTY GOWN, Biograph 1903).

The relation this technique has to the "non-continuous style" is also the reason it later became banned from most fictional films. The off-screen glance became one of the most basic means of knitting together a sense of continuity of the fictional world of a film. When an off-screen glance is

directed to the witnessing audience, it tends to destroy the concept of the film's fictional world and replace it with a direct relation to the audience. This is seen most clearly in Edison's BURLESQUE SUICIDE (1902) in which an actor framed at the waist begins to fire a gun at his temple, then stops. He then points directly at the audience laughing at the way he has disappointed our expectations.

B. The Ellipsis of the Two-Shot Film:

Although I am not sure how common this format is, two films by Edwin Porter clearly show its relation to the "non-continuous style". The films are THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MCKEENE and ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER (both Edison, 1901). In both of these films the second shot develops the action of the first, but leaves a gap in the action wide enough that a sense of discontinuity is created. In both films, also, the second shot is in a radically different style than the first.

In THE FINISH OF BRIDGET MCKEENE, the first shot shows a theatrical set of a kitchen. Bridget (comically acted) can not get the stove started and so throws kerosene on it. An explosion results and we last see Bridget rising towards the ceiling. In the next shot, rather than showing the immediate result of the explosion (as G.A. Smith apparently did in MARY JANE'S MISHAP, 1902[6]), we see a drawing of Bridget's tombstone. The effect of this ellipsis is very comical and the device derives part of its power from the lack of continuity, which is heightened by the change from photographic recording to graphics.

ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER is very similar. The first shot is of a set of a hotel room with a large sign by the gas lamp saying: Don't blow out the gas. A rube enters and does just that. The second shot is nearly documentary in its style and contrasts with the vaudeville-theatricality of the set and acting in the first shot. It is a street shot of a hearse passing. Again the gap in the action and the change in style of presentation creates a comic discontinuity. Here Porter depends so much on the viewer to make sense of his two rather disparate images that it almost seems a prefiguration of Kuleshov's later editing experiments.

C. Repeated Action Edits:

This is perhaps the most frequently found and most interesting of the "anomalies" which a concept of a "non-continuous style" can absorb. Since it can only appear in multiple shot films involving action which moves from shot to shot, it represents the intersection of the "non-continuous" and the continuous styles. This anomaly consists of carrying an action over an edit, but instead of creating an illusion of continuous action and time, some action is repeated in the second shot which was completed in the first. The most famous (and controversal) appearance of this editing style is in the Library

of Congress print of Porter's THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN(Edison 1903), However, it is not necessary to deal here with the controversy surrounding the various prints of that film, since the technique is common in films from this period. To take films from another studio, it appears clearly in Biograph's A DISCORDANT NOTE; NEXT (both 1903); A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED; and THE FIREBUG (both 1905).

The example from THE FIREBUG is particularly clear. We see the firebug set a fire in a basement of a house and then escape through a basement window, abducting the daughter of the house's owner. Several men then enter the basement, discover the firebug's evil deed and then crawl through the same window after him. The next shot cuts to an exterior view of the house with the basement window visible. However, instead of seeing the pursuers crawl through it, we first see the repeated action of the firebug exiting with the daughter and then the pursuers appear.

Charles Musser has discussed this technique in his paper on Edwin Porter which is being distributed to this symposium. He points out that it involves a clearly defined spatial relation between shots with a rather undefined temporal relationship and quite plausibly relates it to the narrative style of Magic Lantern shows. In any case, it demonstrates that even in multiple shot films with a sense of continuous action there was a kind of resistance to an easy flow of continuity. Paradoxically from such edits we get a sense of shots as interlocking yet remaining somehow independent. Curiously, there are cases of edits during this period that do present a continuous flow of action over an edit without any repeats. These can be found in Biograph's OFF HIS BEAT (1903), and ESCAPED LUNATIC (1905) (as well as in Edison's exact duplicate of this last film, THE MANIAC CHASE, 1905). It does not seem, therefore, that continuity edits had not occurred to film-makers. Rather, the style of continuity had not established complete hegemony over film editing.

D. The Anthology Format:

What I term the anthology format is a way of organising a film of multiple shots in such a way that each shot seems to function as a separate entity, although they are joined by a common theme or a slight thread of a story. A film in the anthology format applies something similar to the variety structure to its combination of shots; little information is carried from shot to shot. The common theme or plot thread merely serves to make the movement from one shot to the next possible. The independence of each shot is not really absorbed into a continuous narrative.

The films I described at the beginning of this paper, THE FOUR SEASONS and THE SEVEN AGES would be fairly pure examples of this format. Slightly more complicated examples would be the keyhole films, such as Biograph's A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE (1903), and Hepworth's INQUISITIVE BOOTS (1905). In both these films a series of shots are presented as scenes within various hotel rooms witnessed by a voyeur through the keyhole. The films proceed through a series

of two-shot sequences, first presenting the voyeur in a set of a hotel hallway peering through the keyhole. In the following shot we see the scene inside the hotel room, masked by a keyhole shaped frame. There is no interaction between the incidents in the various rooms. Until the final shots, there is no interaction between the voyeur and the scene witnessed, other than the act of looking.

In both films the device of the voyeur allows the films to present an anthology of unrelated glimpses. The narrative thread in both films is slight and serves mainly as a motive to move from one keyhole to the next. In the Biograph film the peekers are a woman and a detective searching for a philandering husband, while in the Hepworth film it is simply a nosey bootblack. The Biograph film presents a series of domestic or slightly comic scenes. On the other hand, the Hepworth film becomes almost surreal with a series of absurd views; a man dressing as a woman; a woman rocking a pig in a cradle; a man with six toes using a handsaw to dispose of the extraneous one.[7] The final shots in both films lead to an interaction between voyeur and the interior scene. In A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE, the woman finds and bursts in upon her husband and another woman, while INQUISITIVE BOOTS ends with the bootblack being squirted through the keyhole by guests that notice his inquisite eye. The films are fascinating in several respects, including their role in the development of the POV shot. We can also see that here the anthology format reproduces the experience of a patron at a peepshow, moving from one private glimpse at a self-contained scene to the next.

Another type of anthology film would be the semi-narrative travelogues that are common during this period. Clearly on the borderline betweeen narrative and documentary, such films as AN ENGLISHMAN'S TRIP FROM LONDON TO PARIS (1904), THE EUROPEAN REST CURE (Edison 1904), HONEYMOON AT NIAGARA FALLS (Edison 1906), and THE POLICEMAN'S TOUR OF THE WORLD (Pathe 1906), all use a narrative thread to hold together documentary views of famous sights. What narrative there is simply serves to move from one sight to the next, without any real development of plot or character.

E. Transition from Documentary to Staged Shots:

Two of the travelogue films mentioned above contain another "anomaly" of early film that seems consistent with the "non-continuous style": the often startling juxtaposition of highly artificial scenes played against painted backdrops with other scenes filmed in a realistic documentary style at real locations. In both Edison's EUROPEAN REST CURE and Pathe's A POLICEMAN'S TOUR OF THE WORLD, realistic panoramas of ships and ports clash with painted backdrops of the Sphinx and other landmarks. Although I don't want to side-track by observations into speculation on audience psychology, it seems unlikely to me that even early audiences did not notice this enormous change in style. This combination of highly contrasting material seems to me another element of the "non-continuous style".

This combination of documentary and staged footage is often found during this period. I believe more is involved here than the combination of location

footage with studio shot scenes. These films contain two different styles of filming, two different modes of presentation. Clear examples of this practice are found in two fascinating Biograph films from 1906, THE TUNNEL WORKERS and THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK. These films combine documentary footage of construction work on a tunnel superstructure and skyscraper girders with staged narrative scenes. Rather than attempting to blend the two types of material, the films seem to accent their differences. In THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, the documentary section of the film functions as a kind of prologue. The first five shots show workers on a framework of girders. Two of these shots are panoramas of the work and the skyline of the city. In the fifth shot the workers wave at the camera as it pans with them as they cling to an enormous hook of a moving crane. In the sixth shot the thread of the story begins on the same location, but the theatrical gestures of the actors and their lack of acknowledgement of the camera clearly marks the transition from documentary prologue to narrative body.

THE TUNNEL WORKERS is even more curious, since it begins with a studio shot which introduces the narrative situation with extremely melodramatic acting gestures. Then the narrative development is suspended for the next three documentary shots which contain none of the film's characters. This three shot rupture of the narrative is introduced by a title which stresses its documentary rather than fiction nature: "Superstructure of the Pennsylvania Tunnel between New York and Long Island - the greatest engineering feat the world has ever known." Again the workers being filmed as they enter the tunnel acknowledge the camera, although their suspicious stares and smirks contrast with the friendly waves of THE SKYSCRAPERS. In the fifth shot we return to the narrative with a cardboard set of the tunnel interior. Although the producers may not have expected this return to artificiality to be noticed by the audience, the fact remains that no attempt was made to integrate the documentary shots into a continuous flow of the narrative.

F. Tableaux

Tableaux, the presentation of static, often allegorical scenes in multiple shot films is another anomaly of early films. Allegorical tableaux form the main content of such films as Edison's THE MARTYRED PRESIDENTS (1901) and THE CONGRESS OF NATIONS (1900). They seem derived from allegorical Magic Lantern slides or the presentation of posed tableau vivants in a variety structure. What is particularly interesting in terms of the "non-continuous style" is the use of allegorical tableaux in narrative films, since they constitute shots "outside" the narrative, an editorial comment outside the ordinary space and time of the narrative. The similar use of tableaux in stage melodramas is a likely source for this.

Such allegorical scenes continue to appear as epilogues in films long past the primitive period (the most famous being the allegorical endings of such films as BIRTH OF A NATION (1915) and INTOLERANCE (1916). However, in films of this early period, they sometimes appear in positions that interfere with the continuous flow of the narrative. If the shot order of the Library of Congress paper print of THE KLEPTOMANIAC (1904) is correct, we find the following situation. An allegorical scene of justice (filmed against a

background) tipping her scales towards the weight of gold is introduced by a subtitle announcing "tableau". This shot precedes a court scene where a rich woman is excused for shoplifting and interrupts an otherwise realistic narrative.

The use of the tableau in Edison's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN (1903) is even more intriguing in terms of the "non-continuous style". In the Library of Congress print, the last scene is The Death of Uncle Tom. A black background above the dying figure of Uncle Tom serves to introduce a series of allegorical images, culminating with a prefiguration of Lincoln liberating the slaves. The position of this tableau as the epilogue of the film seems consistent with later practice. However, a non-continuous element enters when one realises that the previous shot of the film showed Marks avenging the death of Uncle Tom by killing his murderer Simon Legree. The sense of a tableau shot as a non-continuous element, somehow outside the narrative, here has lifted it out of its logical place in the narrative order of events.

G. The Introductory Shot

One of the best known anomalies of early film is the medium close-up of "Barnes, leader of the outlaw band", firing at the audience in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (Edison, 1903). As is well known, the Edison catalogue announced that this shot could be used either to begin or end the film. This idea of a free floating image usable as either prologue or epilogue is an example of the non-continuous use of certain close shots in early film. Eventually, the position of these shots seems to have become fixed at the beginning of films. This use of a nearly non-narrative introductory shot of characters outside of any narrative development, seems an element of the "non-continuous style".

Edison's THE WHOLE DAM FAMILY AND THE DAM DOG (1905) consists almost entirely of such introductory shots. The first seven shots of this nine shot film introduce each member of the family (and the dog) framed at the chest within a kind of semi-circular iris. The eighth shot shows the family seated at the dinner table. Only in the ninth and final shot does any narrative action take place as the dog pulls the table cloth and supper off the table.

Such introductory shots are extremely common as the first shot of multiple shot films. Almost always shot from a quite close camera position and against a neutral background, they introduce the main character of the film outside of any narrative action. Films which include introductory shots are Biograph's THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN (1904) (which has two introductory shots, one of each of the title characters); THE FIREBUG (1905); THE HORSE THIEF (1905); THE PAYMASTER (1905); NO WEDDING BELLS FOR HIM (1905); THE FOX HUNT (1905); THE JOLLY MONKS OF MALABAR (1905); THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING JEWEL CASKET (1905); THE VILLAGE CUT-UP (1906), and ANOTHER NAME WAS MAUDE (1906). They are also found in British Gaumont's RAID ON A COINER'S DEN (1904); Hepworth's RESCUED BY ROVER (1905), and Edison's THE TERRIBLE KIDS (1904).

It seems possible to me that the use of introductory shots may be derived from contemporary comic strips which often carried a title panel with a picture of the main character. It is also interesting that the use of introductory shots comes in the latter part of our period, of necessity appearing only in the multiple shot films. They are often a non-continuous element in films that are otherwise evolving towards a continuous style (e.g. RESCUED BY ROVER). The replacement of introductory shots of characters by establishing shots of a locale in later films is a clear signal of the triumph of the continuous style, which values the placing of the action in a continuous spatial and temporal whole above all else.

4. Some Final Comments

My attempt has been to survey a number of anomalies in fictional films made between 1900-1906 without seeing them as unintentional mistakes or examples of a primitive awkwardness. Rather I have chosen to examine them as elements of a filmic style that did not hold the illusion of a continuous narrative as its primary aim. However, I could not claim that these elements form an organic style. Few, if any, films contain all of them. Some of the elements, such as the ellipsis of the two shot film, rarely appear after 1903. Others (e.g. the introductory shots) only begin to appear around that time. Rather they are scattered indications of conception of film that was probably never consciously articulated, and which was more or less replaced by the desire for continuity. They strike us now as odd relics of a vanished culture.

To a large extent, elements of the "non-continuous style" can be related to the literary technique of parataxis, in which sentences and phrases are joined independently, without subordination. It is well known that parataxis is the common style of much early narrative, particularly heroic epics. It is interesting that early film narrative would employ a filmic equivalent of this literary style.

It must be admitted that film, like all arts, employs non-continuous elements throughout its history. Certainly they are not uniquely confined to this early period. Certain film genres - such as musical comedies - still use a somewhat non-continuous variety format. Quite a few films have documentary prologues similar to that of THE SKYSCRAPERS - Phil Karlson's PHENIX CITY STORY and Elia Kazan's WILD RIVER, to mention two examples. Similar, particularly during the thirties, it was common to give shots of the leading character as a kind of illustration of the credits, which could be related to the use of introductory shots.

However, during this period, these elements seem more prevalent and sketch out an alternative conception of filmic form. The "non-continuous style" appears like a phantom behind the development of more familiar style continuity.

Footnotes

1. This can be related to the practice in vaudeville of presenting excerpts - famous monologues or dramatic scenes - of famous plays as part of a variety show.

2. In fact, the film is slightly more complicated than my description. It includes an additional shot titled "What Age?" of a pitiful old maid. Also, several of the sequences consist of two shots, a further, and then a closer, view of the character.

3. Particularly Windsor McCay, as John Fell has shown in his book, Film and the Narrative Tradition.

4. Brooks McNamara, "Popular Scenography" in THE DRAMA REVIEW vol. 18, no. 1 (t-61), March 1974, p. 19.

5. One finds the film reviewer of THE NEW YORK DRAMATIC MIRROR (Frank Woods) trying to convince film reviewers that actors should never look at the camera in his reviews during 1910.

6. Unfortunately, I have never seen this film myself and have to rely on Jean Mitry's description in his Histoire du Cinema I.

7. When viewing INQUISITIVE BOOTS, it is hard to resist memories of the Hotel des Folies-Dramatiques sequence in Jean Cocteau's BLOOD OF A POET. Was INQUISITIVE BOOTS (or an imitation) a film Cocteau saw in his youth?

8. Since the Library of Congress prints have remained unaltered since they were deposited for copyright, one can generally assume they are more accurate than other prints which may have been recut. In Lewis Jacobs' description of THE KLEPTOMANIAC in his RISE OF THE AMERICAN FILM, the tableau scene is the last shot of the film. However, his descriptions have often been found inaccurate.

9. The print at the Museum of Modern Art places this tableau scene at a more logical place, before Tom's death is avenged. However, a contemporary description of the film in the 1903 catalogue for the Kliene Optical Company affirms the order of the LOC print:

> "Scene 13,Legrees home. Mark avenges the death of St. Clare and Uncle Tom.
>
> Scene 14, Death of Uncle Tom. Tableau."

Clearly, at some point the MOMA print was corrected of this anomaly of the "non-continuous style". I am indebted to Charles Musser and Jon Gartenberg for pointing this print difference out to me.

EROTIC TENDENCIES IN FILM, 1900-1906

John Hagan

One of the main attractions at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago was the unveiling of Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope, a peep-show machine which could show a film with a maximum length of about ninety seconds. On April 14, 1894, the Kinetoscope made its commercial debut in New York. This event was followed two weeks later by what may have been the first recorded protest against a film, the work in question being Edison's DOLORITA IN THE PASSION DANCE. This film, which went on to hold the box office record for peep-show machines at Atlantic City's Boardwalk, consisted of an Americanized version of a North African dance which had been popular at the Columbian Exposition.

Other protests followed. Soon afterwards, a pantomime of a bride's wedding night preparations was closed by order of a New York judge who denounced it as an "outrage upon public decency." Senator Bradley of New Jersey expressed shock at a film in which the Spanish dancer Carmencita revealed her ankles. The proprietor of the New Jersey parlor in which the film was being shown was ordered to replace it immediately with something more suitable. Similarly, the owner of the Kinetoscope parlor on the Boardwalk was asked by legal authorities not to show the film of Dolorita's dance. In light of this, he cancelled orders from the Kinetoscope Company for films of a similar nature.

Some officials found the erotic elements of these pictures to be only one indication of their general vulgarity and attempted to stop the burgeoning film industry altogether. In 1895, the Mayor of New York tried to shut all nickelodeons as immoral places of amusement and in this and other states heavy license fees were charged in the attempt to curb the growth of the movies. These large-scale attempts did not prove very effective and action against particular films continued. A film of Fatima, another "exotic dancer" who had appeared at the Columbian Exposition, fell victim to the whims of a censor who placed a stencil - - which, in the felicitous words of Knight and Alpert, "resembled two New England fences" - - over the offending portions of the dancer's anatomy.[1]

The Edison studio was not above exploiting the erotic nature of Dolorita's dance. A Kinetoscope exhibitor, looking for a film suited to the tastes of his copper town audience, received this reply to an inquiry in 1896: "We are confident that the Dolorita PASSION DANCE would be as exciting as you desire. In fact, we will not show it in <u>our</u> parlor. You speak of the class of trade which wants something of this character. We think this will certainly answer your purposes. A man in Buffalo has one of these films and informs us that he frequently has forty or fifty men waiting in line to see it. We do not send out films for inspection."[2]

Edison's Vitascope, which made its debut in April 1896, was considered an improvement over the Kinetoscope since it actually projected figures upon a screen. One of the early Vitascope movies showed what may have been the screen's first kiss. THE WIDOW JONES, then a hit on Broadway, had as a highlight a prolonged kiss between the actors May Irwin and John C. Rice. This

moment was photographed on fifty feet of film and released under the title of THE MAY IRWIN-JOHN C. RICE KISS. However, when the film reached Chicago in June 1896, Herbert S. Stone, publisher of the literary magazine THE CHAP BOOK, did not hesitate to denounce it: "Now I want to smash the VITASCOPE. The name of the thing is in itself a horror. Its manifestations are worse ...Whole scenes are enacted on the screen. La Loie [Loie Fuller] dances, elevated trains come and go, and the whole thing is...a pretty toy for that great child, the public ...When only life size, it [the Irwin-Rice stage embrace] was pronounced beastly ...Magnified to Gargantuan proportions and repeated three times over, it is absolutely disgusting ...The immorality of living pictures and bronze statues is nothing to this."

In speaking of "living pictures," Stone is referring to the stage tableaux which were by then common in the theatre in both America and Europe. Throughout the nineteenth century in London, despite censorship and licensing laws, there existed music hall spectacles known as "poses plastiques," "tableaux vivants," or "Living Statuary" in which girls in revealing tights posed for such depictions as NYMPHS BATHING or DIANA THE HUNTRESS. In America, as far back as the Civil War period, troupes of models appeared in Living Pictures at New York theatres on programs with vocalists and minstrel acts. Many early French films, in which attractive girls posed in tableaux, were inspired in part by the tableaux vivants popular in French casinos and music halls. American movies of this period were also influenced by the tableaux vivants and American newspapers contained comparisons between the motion picture and the Living Pictures.

Many of the erotic aspects of early cinema could be found previously in some form in European and American popular theatre. For example, in English supper clubs during the first half of the nineteenth century, caricatures of divorce cases were staged in which female witnesses, usually comics in drag, would be called upon to offer evidence. They would then present their salacious testimony to a lecherous judge. When the trial was over, the platform would be cleared for an exhibition of Poses Plastiques. Along with burlesque comedy, these supper clubs formed the basis of English music halls of the 1850s and '60s. In France, Pathé produced a considerable number of erotic films during the last years of the nineteenth century which had their origins in paintings, picture post-cards and music hall pantomimes. These films included scenes of women undressing for bed; tableaux of women posing as mythical or historical figures; dramas of infidelity. The early American cinema drew its erotic elements both from these French films and from its own vaudeville tradition.

American vaudeville began about 1870 and had its roots in both European entertainment and in the institutionalization of such established American amusements as the minstrel show, the circus and the traveling player troupes. Vaudeville, as eclectic as it was derivative, consisted of diverse forms of entertainment enacted by performers who could present a routine within the short amount of time allotted to each act. In America, vaudeville grew rapidly between 1870 and 1915. Considering the eclectic nature of vaudeville, it is not surprising that the motion picture - - short and to the point - - soon became a staple of vaudeville programs. Just as the first Kinetoscopes

had included vaudeville performers as subjects, vaudeville soon began to include the movies.[3] As if reflecting both its varied origins and the heterogeneous natures of the societies which it in some sense mirrored, early cinema often did not deal with eroticism explicitly and neatly but instead reflected the eroticism which subtly permeates society's humor and drama: which is intertwined with its ethical, ethnic and class concerns.

For my purposes, I would define the erotic elements in film as those elements which explicitly or implicitly deal with sexual desire or appeal. Such elements can take several forms, many of them not obvious and not easy to discuss adequately in a paper of limited length and scope. Some film critics -- the most celebrated being Parker Tyler -- have analyzed in detail the mythological and psychoanalytic aspects of cinema as a popular art -- that is, an art which reflects, in symbolic forms which need to be deciphered like a dream, the subconscious sexual and social beliefs of the masses.[4] This type of analysis might be kept in mind when looking at the early films under consideration here, even the most innocent of them, with their reams of suggestive imagery: the depiction, for instance, of innocent but seductive young girls; or of women who are magically transformed or dismembered.

Consider, for example, the possible significance of the robber as a sexual bandit -- "stealing" a man's wife in A MODERN SAPPHO or hiding beneath the bed of young girls in THE GIRLS, THE BURGLAR AND THE RAT. These films have a certain erotic quality which is absent from more explicit films since, by not making eroticism explicit, they unconsciously suggest its ambiguity and secrecy.

I do not mean to suggest, by the way, that the film routines, often based on stage routines, in which erotic elements appear are used only in relation to women. Men, as well as women, are seen being dismembered or eyed by huge insects or with their clothes askew. In these instances, it is the manner in which the routine is presented which is pertinent: the particular "allure" which characterizes most of the women as opposed to the men.

There are a number of ways in the early cinema in which women are depicted in what might be said to be a sensual manner. For instance, young women are shown as being essentially innocent but naughty and vivacious: enjoying a holiday away from academic regimentation (BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS, Edison 1905); gigglingly posing for a perhaps deceptively genteel man with a camera (TOO MUCH JOHNSON, 1900)[5]; attacking, spiritedly and without any real sense of outrage, a man hiding under their bed but then losing their courage when they see a rat (THE GIRLS, THE BURGLAR AND THE RAT, 1905).[6]

Women in these early films are often vulnerable or the victims of attack (e.g. UNPROTECTED FEMALE, 1903; THE FIRE BUG, 1905). Frequently, they are the victims of adulterous love affairs. In THE DIVORCE (1903) and in TWO ARDENT LOVERS (1903), a wife finds her husband having an affair with another woman. In THOSE WEDDING BELLS SHALL NOT RING OUT (1900), a woman holding a baby arrives at a wedding and shoots the groom -- who is obviously the father of her child. On the lighter side, when the bigamist is brought to court and prosecuted in THE BIGAMIST's TRIAL (1905), one wife kicks her heels with delight while the other wives attack the hapless, oft-times married husband. As in THE GIRLS, THE BURGLAR AND THE RAT and many other films, morality

and mischief coalesce: to those posing a threat to the virtue of women, justice is administered with a heavy but playful hand.

Some women are actually licentious. In A MODERN SAPPHO (1905), a woman is kissing her husband in the hall of their home when they are interrupted by a burglar who assaults the husband and then carries the delighted wife upstairs. In THE SOCIETY PALMIST (1905), women visit a fortune teller and, after they pay him (is this a ruse or is he a gigolo?), he begins to kiss them until his irate wife jumps out from behind a curtain. In ROOMS FOR GENTLEMEN ONLY (1905), a woman sneaks into a man's room by hiding herself in his trunk. Other women are schemingly seductive. For example, in FEMALE CROOK AND HER VICTIM (1905), a woman robs a man by falling seductively against him. She then raises her dress to hide the man's wallet, providing the audience with a glimpse of her leg. Still other women are contemptuous of traditional morality - - a morality which was frequently personified by the Salvation Army. In SOUBRETTES IN A BACHELOR'S FLAT (1900), a young woman mockingly dresses as a Salvation Army member; in BLESSING FROM ABOVE (1904), a Salvation Army woman is hit with flour. One finds a similar situation in THE CHORUS GIRL AND THE SALVATION ARMY LASSIE (1904).[7]

The female characters in these movies are often completely unaware of their mildly, and often amusingly, erotic actions. For instance, in THE SLEEPY SOUBRETTE (1905), a girl's legs are slowly revealed as she moves in her sleep. Some women seem unaware of the erotic aspects of their otherwise practical behavior: the tightrope walker who removes her clothes to balance herself better in THE STRENUOUS LIFE (1904); the woman in ATHLETIC GIRL AND THE BURGLAR (1905) who takes off her dress in order to exercise; the woman in MUST BE IN BED BEFORE 10 (1903) who undresses before retiring for the night. On the other hand, some characters seem aware of not only their actions, but of the audience as well. The woman who looks into the camera as she removes her clothes in FROM SHOWGIRL TO BURLESQUE QUEEN (1905) in effect acknowledges the voyeuristic response of the audience.

Voyeurism is also evident in such "keyhole films" as THROUGH THE KEYHOLE IN THE DOOR (1900), PEEPING TOM IN THE DRESSING ROOM (1905) and HE WENT INTO THE WRONG BATH HOUSE (1905). A particularly bizarre example of this "genre" is INQUISITIVE BOOTS, an early British film in which a man looking through the keyholes of various rooms sees such things as another man dressed in female attire and a woman mothering a pig. The keyhole film, of course, has long been a staple of pornographic cinema although the erotic appeal of the films listed above is, to put it mildly, considerably different than it is in more hard-core fare.

In these early films, there is an almost fetishistic attention paid to certain objects, especially women's legs. The plots at times acknowledge this, as in IT'S A SHAME TO TAKE THE MONEY (1905) where the action centers around a policeman and a shoeshine boy getting to look at a woman's legs. In other pictures, though, one finds provacatively active legs introduced in a sly fashion and incidental to the plot. In THE ELOPERS WHO DIDN'T ELOPE (1904), the legs of the bride-to-be are seen kicking wildly as she is transported from

the site of her thwarted attempt to elope. In THE PRIMA DONNA UNDERSTUDY (1905), an actress' understudy (it might even be her maid) is carried away kicking after she has been discovered trying on the star's stockings. A psychoanalytic and mythopoeic critic more daring than myself might propose that in each of these films a woman subconsciously simulates orgasmic movements after having been frustrated in her attempt to gain erotic pleasure - - in one case, the pleasure of a honeymoon; in the other, the pleasure of wearing exotic and forbidden garments.

In each of these two films, an emphasis is placed upon the woman's legs to the extent that they come to seem almost separate from her as a person. This is made explicit in other works in which women's legs literally become objects. In such films as FOUR BEAUTIFUL PAIRS OF LEGS (1904), THE SHOCKING STOCKINGS (1904) and 2 A.M. IN THE SUBWAY (1905), the jokes centre around the fact that the attractive pairs of women's legs that we see are, in fact, artificial ones such as those found in clothing stores for display purposes. One occasionally even comes across undergarments exhibited in a dramatic film. This may have been done less for atmospheric purposes than to provide a little titillation for the viewer - - consider, for instance, the pair of stockings which hangs prominently but gratuitously upon the clothesline in THE STRENUOUS LIFE (1904).

Trick effects were often used to display women in an erotic fashion: the merging of several women into one in a number of Méliès' films as well as in THREE GIRLS INTO ONE and PIERROT'S PROBLEM (1900), to cite a few examples; conversely, the "dismantling" of a woman in THE WAY TO SELL CORSETS (1904) in which, when the woman suddenly becomes a mannequin, she is taken apart and her clothes removed; the evocation of a beautiful woman by an opium user in TOUR DE MONDE DE POLICIER (Pathé, 1905); a nude seductress' transformation into a skeleton in TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY (1900; perhaps based on Méliès' similar 1898 film). In all of these films, "magic" is used to touch upon the mystique of women: multiplying or dissecting their allure; transforming them into sensual fantasies or harbingers of misery.

It is curious how films made on the same set, and around the same theme, treat eroticism differently. For instance, the same bathhouse serves as the site for various kinds of mildly erotic misadventures in A POOR PLACE FOR LOVE MAKING, ON THE BEACH AT BRIGHTON and HE WENT INTO THE WRONG BATH HOUSE (all 1905). In a crude way, these films made on the same set utilize, through variations on the same basic plot, the tinge of eroticism, and the sensual aura which characterize a place like a bathhouse. Or consider A MODERN SAPPHO, POMPEY'S HONEY GIRL and LOVE'S PERFIDY (all 1905). All three films use the same set, which provides for one character to enter through a door in the background while another character stands unseen in the foreground. Although the plot changes from film to film, each film uses this specially designed two-area set in order to develop a narrative which centers around sexual infidelity.

Three other 1905 films, all made on one day and with the same actors, involve variations on the theme of seduction. In TEASING, a man is seen advancing towards a woman on a couch, pulling her arms back as she flirtatiously teases him; he finally gives her a lingering kiss. In ALWAYS ROOM FOR ONE MORE,

the same actors go through essentially the same actions but this time on a chair and, in UNLUCKY AT CARDS, LUCKY AT LOVE, they repeat their amorous behavior while sitting on a table. These three slightly risque pictures resemble the most blatant pornographic movies in the attempt of both types of film to make the most common physical attractions seem unique by varying the locales in which, and the objects upon which, such attractions are manifested.

Sometimes, however, films made on the same set and around the same theme - - and on or about the same day - - have completely different meanings. For instance, KISS ME! (1904) seems to have been made only to display some tantalizing posters of a woman, while COMMITTEE ON ART uses the same posters, this time not for purposes of tantalization but rather to show the moral outrage engendered by the posters. Comparably, in SAILORS ASHORE (1904), girls are carried through the windows of a building for an obviously lascivious purpose while, in A FIRE IN A BURLESQUE THEATRE, equally raunchy girls are carried through the same windows but this time for a more honorable, even noble, reason: they are being rescued.

Erotic films at times resemble other films which are not erotic. For instance, Edison's 1902 BURLESQUE SUICIDE is a close shot of a rotund man taking a drink, then pretending to kill himself, and finally pointing at the camera and laughing. In a similar film, THE WINE OPENER (1905), the viewer is not the butt of a joke this time but rather the object of a flirtation: the film consists of a close shot of a laughing woman, her dress slipping off her shoulder, looking into the camera as she opens a bottle and then drinks wine. Both pictures would seem to fall into that category of film known as the facial. In her history of British cinema, Rachel Low observes that filmmakers began to use close-ups in the late 1890s in the production of "facials". In these films, which were based on vaudeville routines, an actor with a comical expression would be seen in a tight shot doing something amusing.

The close-up was a device used many times to increase the erotic quality of a film. Besides the examples already noted, one might mention THE TROUBLESOME FLY (1903) which consists entirely of a close-up of a woman's feet with a fly hovering over them; or A PIPE DREAM (1905) in which a woman in close-up smokes a cigarette (opium?) and then, as she smiles seductively, imagines that she is holding a passionate young man in her hand. At one point, she looks into the camera - - as if making the audience conspirators in her naughty fantasy.

The close-up also provided a means by which early films could display to full advantage the novelty (and naughtiness) of the silhouette. For instance, in SILHOUETTE SCENE (1903), a woman standing before her home sees her husband inside the house kissing the maid behind a window shade. This kiss, shown as a silhouette, is seen in close-up through a rather awkward inset of the silhouette within the window frame.

Perhaps the film that most dramatically uses the close-up to increase the sense of both voyeurism and eroticism is THE GAY SHOE CLERK (Edison) and his female customer, to a close-up of his hands tying her shoe; the film then cuts to a long-shot of him kissing her. In effect, the sudden change in camera position from a long to close shot indicates, even hypostatizes, the intense erotic desire which the characters have come to feel for each other.

FOOTNOTES

1. The erotic appeal of the dancer was also put to good use in many fictional films of the period. One of the most interesting is the "trick film" ANIMATED PICTURE STUDIO (1903) since a rumor persists that the dancer in the film is Isadora Duncan. However, I once attended a showing during which one of the original Duncan Dancers slowly approached the screen as the film was being projected and, standing eye to eye with the tiny image of the dancer, began protesting vociferously that "No! No! It's Not Her!"

2. A comparable mixture of propriety and prurience can be found in the Biograph Bulletin for LIFTING THE LID (1905), in which it is stated that the film is "somewhat spicy, but is unobjectionable in every way..." See Kemp Niver's BIOGRAPH BULLETINS 1896-1908 (Los Angeles: Locare Research Group, 1971).

3. The factual information found in this paper has been compiled largely from the sources listed in the Bibliography. As regards eroticism in early cinema, several of these sources also contain a good deal of information which fell beyond the scope of this paper.

4. Among Tyler's writings, see particularly THE HOLLYWOOD HALLUCINATION (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944). Note also Stan Brakhage's discussion of how Méliès "drew upon the whole mythic history of women," which can be found in Brakhage's FILM BIOGRAPHIES (Berkeley: Turtle Island, 1977).

5. One finds this same combination of innocence and flirtatious naughtiness in the behavior of young girls being photographed for the non-fictional early film BRIGHTON SCENES AT AMUSEMENT PARK.

6. Many of the films mentioned in this paper are not being shown at the FIAF conference since they are of little consequence except as illustrations of certain points which I wish to raise. Except where noted, all of the films mentioned in this paper were made at Biograph. Unless otherwise indicated, the dates shown are the years of both production and copyright except for the Biograph films copyrighted in 1902, in which case the films may have been made earlier.

7. Traditional morality was also satirized in the character of the hedonistic monk - - see, for instance, THE SIMPLE LIFE (1905) or WINE, WOMEN AND SONG (1905).

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SIMULTANEOUS ACTION IN FILM, 1900-1906

John Hagan - USA

The early cinema employed a number of types of simultaneous action. On a very basic level, this could involve having a number of simple, incidental actions taking place at the same time within a shot in order to make it seem more realistic and less theatrically structured. This might be achieved through something as elementary as having extras walk in different directions in the foreground of a shot, as is found in the 1903 Biograph film A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.[1] Another rudimentary use of simultaneity can be found in many chase films - such as the early British picture THE CHICKEN THIEF - in which a number of actions occur within a shot but with all of these actions functioning as elements within, and subservient to, the chase itself.

There were, of course, also other types of simultaneity. Many early trick films, such as those of G.A. Smith in England or of Méliès and Zecca in France, incorporated a dream or fantasy which was meant to be experienced by both the character and the audience as occurring at the same time as the film's more realistic action. This effect could be achieved through double exposure, by insetting one shot within another, and through optical projection or mattes. Early examples include Smith's SANTA CLAUS (1898), Zecca's HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME (1901) and Méliès' TUNNELLING THE ENGLISH CHANNEL (1907), in which Méliès also used a cross-sectional set to present simultaneous action.

The insertion of one film into another was not a device used only to depict a dream or fantasy or fantastic experience. In THE BOASTER, an early British film, the character's boast is visualised on a screen behind him - a sort of mental projection - as he "speaks". In UNCLE JOSH AT THE MOVING PICTURE SHOW (Edison, 1902), Uncle Josh and the movie that he is watching are shown simultaneously. Another type of simultaneity can be found in the "combination film" in which one film is printed over another in order to create a new film - for instance, A NYMPH OF THE WAVES (1900) in which a shot of a woman is superimposed on a shot of the ocean. A semblance of simultaneity was also achieved in such trick films as TWENTIETH CENTURY TRAMP, OR HAPPY HOOLIGAN AND HIS AIRSHIP (Edison, 1902) in which a sense of movement through the air was created by placing the tramp in his airship above a moving panorama of the city.

Not all simultaneous activity in early cinema occurred within the shot. Charles Musser has drawn attention to Porter's THE TRAMP'S DREAM (1901) in which the tramp dreams that he is being attacked by a dog although the next shot reveals that he is actually being shaken by a policemen. Musser suggests that what one finds here is a "metaphorical" shot relationship which reinforces the film's simultaneity of action.[2] However, I would prefer to concentrate for the most part on films in which the simultaneous activity occurs within the shot itself.

In numerous films, often involving one person spying on another in a different room, separate actions are performed on each side of a door or partition; all of this is seen within the shot. Such films include THROUGH THE KEYHOLE IN THE DOOR (1900), IN A MANICURE PARLOR (1902), A JOKE AT THE FRENCH BALL (1904) and PEEPING TOM IN THE DRESSING ROOM (1905). Perhaps the most spatially complex of the "keyhole films", in which the characters are separated by a door with a keyhole, is DOWN THE HOTEL CORRIDOR (1902). Here the characters in the shot not only simultaneously look through keyholes in the doors which divide the screen space, but also eventually start moving simultaneously as they frantically dart all at once through several doors and in various directions.

Simultaneity is achieved through elaborate staging in films like THE BRIDAL CHAMBER (1905), in which there are three distinct areas of action: the bedroom at the left, the front desk in the middle, and the staircase on the right. The characters' constant movement in all directions from one area to another creates a sort of interaction between these otherwise separate levels of the set and this contributes to the film's sense of frenzy. The movies' use of multiple playing areas for simultaneous action had precedents in the theatre. For instance, when the play FORBIDDEN FRUIT was first produced in 1876, adjoining rooms, sometimes with a corridor between them, were visible on the stage so that parallel actions could easily be depicted. In a production of UNDER THE GASLIGHT nine years earlier, the approach of a train seems to have been concurrent with the attempt of a character locked in a house to get to the tracks in time to rescue a man tied there.[3]

THE BRIDAL CHAMBER utilizes a space that is obviously derived from the stage, photographed at a distance so that all areas of action can be seen simultaneously. A somewhat different, perhaps more interesting, use of space can be discovered in several 1905 films that take place in either a train or train station. The earliest of these pictures, THE DEADWOOD SLEEPER, shows the interior of a train's sleeping car department, with bunk beds, into and out of which people move, situated on either side of the corridor. A TRIP TO SALT LAKE CITY uses the same set while A REUBEN IN THE SUBWAY and 2 A.M. IN THE SUBWAY in a sense transfer these spatial proportions to an area outside the train so that what now is seen is not characters moving in and out of stationary beds on both sides of a corridor but rather characters moving in and out of trains which are themselves moving in and out of tunnels on either side of the platform. These latter two films thus provide a sense of frenzy that could not be conveyed within the static sets of the other films mentioned. A REUBEN IN THE SUBWAY is particularly striking in its use of foreground and background space and in its shifts of attention, through staging, among the many actions occurring simultaneously. It might parenthetically be noted that the use of simultaneous actions at different depths within a shot can be found in some early documentary-style films. Even such a brilliant fantasist as Méliès took care to make his illusions "realistic" by presenting them amidst a flurry of activity in <u>trompe-l'oeil</u> space.

Sometimes more than one picture was filmed on a set that obviously had been designed to emphasize simultaneity of action. For instance, the set used for BETWEEN THE DANCES, A BALLROOM TRAGEDY and UNDER A BAMBOO TREE is designed to accommodate and draw attention to the separate activities taking place in the left-foreground and right-background areas. This set is used for dramatic purposes in the first two films and for comic effect in the third. All three pictures were filmed within a day of each other in 1905, which seems to have been an especially fruitful year at Biograph for the building of inventive sets.

A similar setting is used for three other 1905 films: A MODERN SAPPHO, LOVE'S PERFIDY and POMPEY'S HONEY GIRL. In each of these pictures, a character suddenly enters through a door in left-background and is unaware of the scandalous behaviour of the character in right foreground. LOVE'S PERFIDY substitutes a mirror for the door in the background, creating the illusion of an even greater depth of space and thus accentuating the distinction between parallel foreground and background actions.

A comparable division of space occurs in an exterior, natural space in THE FIREBUG (1905), in which men hunt the pyromaniac in the upper left-background of the frame while he hides in the lower right-foreground with the girl whom he has kidnapped. The first shot in TOM, TOM, THE PIPER'S SON (1905) goes one step further, in a sense, in the use of exterior space by having various carnival acts performed in the foreground and background of the shot, simultaneous with other acts being performed in the upper and lower areas.

In many of the comic films in which simultaneous action is used, the humor comes in part from the connection between two actions - a connection of which the performer of one of the actions is usually unaware since the joke involves one person spying or playing a trick upon the other. In THE BROADWAY MASSAGE PARLOR (1905), however, the humor is derived not only from the connection between two actions but from an actual visual parallel between them. The massage parlor consists of two rooms, both of which are seen within the shot. Two young women arrive at the parlor and, while one exercises in the outer room, the other simultaneously engages in exercise of another sort; she and the proprietor kiss in the inner office. When the proprietor's wife discovers them, she reprimands her husband in the inner room while one young woman screams at the other in the outer room.

Another type of simultaneity arises when one action is seen from two different perspectives, sometimes with an overlap of action due to faulty editing. For instance, in A DISCORDANT NOTE (1903), there is a cut from the interior to the exterior of a building as a man is being thrown through a window. However, Musser has warned that what appears to be a cut on movement to a different viewpoint in such films as JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (Edison, 1902) and Porter's THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1903) may actually have been intended not as another view of the same action but as a temporally successive shot.

There are still other means through which some sense of simultaneity can be achieved. For instance, the early British film A MIDWINTER NIGHT'S DREAM involves various, not immediately obvious, types of simultaneity. Its narrative is constructed as much through a dream-within-a-dream format, and through panning and dissolves between objects and characters, as it is through editing. Through these cinematic devices, the film tends to provide an experience which, to use now standard terminology, is as much vertical as it is horizontal; as much concerned with the creaton of mood as it is with the progression of narrative. Camera movement, dissolves and even editing are here used to link a series of images which, like a dream, seem to exist outside of time and which are simultaneous to the extent that they are not part of a cinematic temporal structure.

Footnotes

[1] Except where noted, all of the films mentioned in this papor were made at Biograph. Unless otherwise indicated, the dates shown are the years of both production and copyright except for the Biograph films copyrighted in 1902, in which case the films may have been made earlier.

[2] See Musser's paper on Porter which has been written for this FIAF conference.

[3] See A. Nicholas Vardac, Stage to Screen (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968) and John Fell, Film and the Narrative Tradition (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974).

RE-CONSTITUTED NEWSREELS, RE-ENACTMENTS AND THE AMERICAN NARRATIVE FILM

David Levy - CANADA

The paradoxical dominion of the theatre over the cinema was to go so far as the production of reconstituted news reels; which, however, only goes to emphasize the basic character of the cinema as that of art. (Jean Cassou)

Among the more fascinating trends in American fiction and borderline non-fiction film produced in the period 1900-1906 was the systematic displacement for narrative purposes of trompe d'oeil effects and mimetic stage modes by a newsreel aesthetic. Unfortunately, the tradition of describing the rise of the narrative film in terms of initial appearances of isolated techniques, such as camera movement, close-ups, parallel editing and so on, has tended to obscure the full character of the phenomenon. A range of attempts at producing fake actuality film footage constituted its earliest manifestation.

Fred J. Balshofer has described how the Lubin company, a former employer, "faked championship bouts by using matched doubles for the boxers and staging the round-by-round action from newspaper accounts." In 1906, Balshofer worked on the production of a one-reel re-enactment of the 26 January shooting of Stanford White by Harry K. Thaw. Later in the same year, he tried his hand at an unsuccessful reproduction of the San Francisco earthquake and fire:

> ... we staged tumbling buildings made from cardboard profiles, but even with the smoke that we used for effects and the silhouettes of the cardboard buildings, the scenes looked like fakes.[2]

Faking, duping and pirating were Lubin specialities, and the association of the reconstituted newsreel with those activities has perhaps induced scholars to dismiss it as simply another of the cinematographic perversion that accompanied the formative years of film art. But the phenomenon poses some interesting questions for film historians. And in this paper I will attempt, in a preliminary way, to outline some of its major features and to show how they were absorbed into the style of the screen narratives.

In 1900, fiction film produced in the United States consisted mostly of short one-shot 'scenes' featuring some stage turn or trick effect. Social and optical havoc comprise the main appeal of Edison studio productions like WHY JONES DISCHARGED HIS CLERKS, WHY MRS. JONES GOT HER DIVORCE, CHING LING FOO OUTDONE, FAUST AND MARGUERITE, THE MAGICIAN, and THE MYSTIC SWING. The recurring stop-motion effect one sees in these films was, of course, a two-shot achievement, the point of the trick being that audiences would perceive a continuous action that appeared to defy the laws of nature.

The films of that year were of two general types: those, like AN ARTIST'S DREAM, that possessed a direct theatrical appeal knowingly played out for audience amusement; and others, like DULL RAZOR, in which the action is self-contained and casts the audience in something of a voyeuristic relationship. Both these qualities, present in a range of period stage spectacle, are combined

in a remake of the Rice-Irwin kiss, registered 9 March, 1900 and featuring a more attractive couple. Here the man twice winks at the camera while the woman appears unaware of its presence.

In all these works one finds a curiously persistent insinuation of realistic detail. Amid the devils and disappearances of AN ARTIST'S DREAM there is, at the right of the frame, a portrait hanging over a bureau with a lamp on it. DULL RAZOR is a waist-up shot of a man whose shaving routine is being frustrated by an ineffective blade. A small mirror is propped up against a milk bottle. The closeness of the shot encourages our attention to these details, as well as to the birds in the wallpaper pattern behind him.

If MAUD'S NAUGHTY BROTHER was typical, the typical is, from a historical standpoint, of smaller interest than certain anomalous works registered that year. THE CLOWN AND THE ALCHEMIST, for one, contains none of the realism referred to above. Listed as an Edison film, its rigid symmetricality and frantic mechanical action, its leering cauldron visage set in the centre of the frame and its abstract personae somehow set it apart. The figures in the American films generally appear in period dress, and represent social recognizable types - mothers, fathers, brothers, salesmen and rubes - subject to the rules of cause and effect, however primitive, in reasonably realistic settings.

Edison's STORM AT SEA, on the other hand, registered 9 August 1900, is very suggestive of the shape of much cinema to come. Two male figures appear on the deck of a ship tossing in rough seas. There are three shots - possibly breaks in the original footage - of them clinging to a deck railing. This is followed by a cutaway to the churning ocean waters and a tilt-up to capture a heavily clouded sky. A cut back to the sea completes the action. Whether or not there are in fact breaks in the film, the intention to communicate not only the <u>discontinuity</u> of point-of-view by linking shots in actuality style, but also the drama of the cameraman's presence, is quite clear.

By 1906, the motion picture narrative has not simply increased in length, as for example Biograph's 21-shot THE FOX HUNT. In NURSE WANTED, DR. DIPPY'S SANATORIUM and THE LONE HIGHWAYMAN, voyeuristic and realistic features have come to the foreground, optical trickery and direct stage appeal have more or less disappeared. Put another way, the style of STORM AT SEA has driven the style of THE CLOWN AND THE ALCHEMIST from the screen. More precisely, we discover within the recurrent chase format a predominance of actuality composition marked by a strong concern for action at the edges and especially in the corners of the frame, a conscious use of image depth and volume combined with non-eyelevel angles of view, and the attempt at simulating the random movement of anonymous figures, as for example the department store scene in Porter's THE KLEPTOMANIAC (1905). Biograph's THE TUNNEL WORKERS employs the synthesis of actuality footage and staging seen in EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ, WITH PANORAMA OF AUBURN PRISON (1901) and THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1902), but here we find that the Mélièsian dissolve has been replaced by the abrupt newsreel-style cut. In fact by 1903 dissolves have been abandoned as a method of linking shots. Apart from this, there does not appear to have been any very great attention paid to editing technique in the period. In chase films like RAFFLES THE DOG (1905) and STOLEN BY GYPSIES (1905), the

action generally begins in the depth at the top of the frame and the shot is held until all the participants have left the frame out of one of the bottom corners. The empty scene brings on the cut. Edison's MANIAC CHASE (1904) provides two good examples of matching cuts on action and one of a dummy substitute stop motion effect.

There is much evidence that the directors of the period experienced greater difficulty managing actuality effects in interiors : THAW-WHITE TRAGEDY (1906) CONVICT'S BRIDE (1906) and HARRY THAW IN THE TOMBS (1906) mostly rely on a topical association. Also, the stage blocking of action and the melodramatic posturing of stock types persist.

The favourite account of what happened in the American cinema before D.W. Griffith began his career at Biograph centres on the work of Edwin S. Porter. Together with THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY has been singled out for contributing a crucial - if not the crucial - technical discovery, that "the single shot, recording an incomplete piece of action, is the unit of which films must be constructed."

Setting aside the fact that editing of that type does not appear in any of the films produced in 1903, the joining together of separate strips of action footage to construct fluid if relatively brief actuality narrative had been demonstrated in a number of Edison newsreels turned out before 1903, as for example ADMIRAL DEWEY AT STATE HOUSE, BOSTON (1899), THE 'ABBOT' AND CRESCEUS RACE (1901), TAKING MCKINLEY'S BODY FROM THE TRAIN AT CANTON, OHIO (1901), and THE BURNING OF DURLAND'S RIDING ACADEMY (1902). But more importantly, the 1904 Edison catalogue description of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY promoted its audience appeal in terms of a very different sort of technical triumph "It has been posed and acted in faithful duplication of the genuine 'Hold Ups' made famous by various outlaw bands of the far West". (my emphasis)[4]

By 1903, the year in which Porter filmed his great classic, the faithful duplication, which is to say the application of newsreel styles to staged topical narratives referred to as reconstituted newsreels, re-enactments and reproductions, had been reasonably well-established by American producers. Most of the films registered in the United States between 1897 and 1903 were actualities of one kind or another[5], and the aesthetic influence on the new medium of its self-declared role as eye-witness news reporters was considerable.

When the motion picture first appeared on the American scene, newspapers and magazines had not yet begun to carry photographic coverage of the events of the day. Half-tone photographs were first printed by speed presses in 1897, but publishers, fearing that their readers would dismiss the half-tones as cheap substitutes for the hand-drawn illustration, held back. It didn't matter that most of the illustrations that appeared in their publications were copies of photographs. When 'The Maine' exploded in Havana harbour in February 1898, what were called the first published 'photographs' of the event came out in the New York World. But they were in fact hand drawings based on photographs.[6]

For their part, early film producers were quick to realise that one didn't have to be at the scene of an event with a camera in order to capitalize on the popular demand for topical material. The manufacture of Spanish-American war footage and fake championship prizefights are among the better-known examples of the practice. Later ones include Boer war scenes fought in New Jersey scenery, a table-top Boxer Rebellion naval action, Russo-Japanese war episodes prison escapes, executions, a coronation, murders, robberies, natural disasters and Biograph's 1905 version of POTEMKIN, entitled MUTINY ON THE BLACK SEA.[7]

The earliest surviving staged actuality was registered in two parts by the Edison studio on 25 October 1897. In the first, entitled AMBULANCE CALL, a horse-drawn ambulance leaves itsgarage, turns left toward the camera and exits the frame at the bottom left hand corner. In AMBULANCE AT THE ACCIDENT, apparently the second part, an ambulance arrives to attend to a figure lying on a tramway track.

Most of what remains of the sham Spanish-American war material was likewise registered by the Edison Company. CAPTURE OF TRENCHES AT CANDABA (1899), CUBAN AMBUSH (1898), FILIPINOS RETREAT FROM TRENCHES (1899), ROUT OF FILIPINOS (1899), SHOOTING OF CAPTURED INSURGENTS (1898), SKIRMISH OF ROUGH RIDERS (1899) U.S. INFANTRY SUPPORTED BY ROUGH RIDERS AT EL CANEY (1899) and U.S. TROOPS AND RED CROSS IN THE TRENCHES BEFORE CALOOCAN (1899) offer side views of trenches being overrun, of officers who look uncertainly at the camera, of flags raised, flags lowered and flags waving in the wind. Edison's WRECK OF THE BATTLESHIP 'MAINE', registered 21st April, 1898, has been described as footage shot from the deck of a ship circling the actual wreck.[8] And this may indeed be what one sees.

While the war was officially over by December 1898, what seems the most interesting of these fake battle films was registered on 22 September 1899. Entitled THE EARLY MORNING ATTACK, this four-shot fabrication of a company of U.S. troops moving up a wooded hill against a white-uniformed foe, being driven back and finally escorting a party of prisoners off to some stockade contains a reverse angle in shot 2. and a matching cut of sorts in shot 4. Above all, its integration of narrative line and newsreel method is very effective.

Edwin (Edward) Hill Amet's bathtub re-creation of the sinking of Cercera's fleet is supposed to have deceived even the experts. Others knew they were being had, they just didn't always know when. In response to a reader's query, the March 1900 issue of THE OPTICAL LANTERN JOURNAL AND PHOTOGRAPH ENLARGER, a British trade journal, offered the following advice on how to tell genuine war film from the ersatz:

> Sham War Cinematographic Films - A correspondent asks us how he is to know real from sham war films, seeing that several subjects are made at home from life models? The subject lends itself so well to life model work that one has to a great extent to rely on common sense; for instance, in one film we have heard about, there is hand-to-hand encounter between the Boers and the British, all realistic in its way, but the effect is somewhat spoilt by reason of the fringe of audience appearing on the picture occasionally. Thus, when one sees gentlemen with tall hats,

> accompanied by ladies apparently looking on, common sense would at once pronounce the film of the sham order. The same may be said of soldiers lying and firing from behind 'earthworks' composed of nicely arranged straw.[10]

In May of the same year, a Rochester newspaper, the Democrat and Chronicle, challenged the authenticity of a piece of film purporting to show American troops charging Philippine rebels. The writer reasoned that in order to have obtained the footage, the cameraman had to place himself in the direct line of fire.[11]

But as THE EARLY MORNING ATTACK suggests and much film history confirms, when direct topical association is subordinated to a familiar narrative structure, the manufactured effect of a cameraman at the scene of an actual event takes on an unexpected persuasive power. On 28 November 189-, Edison registered an early example of what by 1904 would be the major paradigm of American fiction film. Called LOVE AND WAR, it was produced by James White and was supposedly based on an actual happening related to the Spanish-American war. Its four shots told the story of a young man going off to war, getting wounded, arriving at a field hospital and being welcomed home at last.[12]

In 1893 a New York amateur photographer by the name of Alexander Black had begun producing lantern slide shows. In a magazine article Black wrote two years later, he described the advantages of his 'picture plays' in terms that turned out to be rather prophetic as far as the narrative film is concerned. "Not only," he said, "could I <u>pass from one fictitious scene to another</u>, but I could introduce <u>the backgrounds of real life</u>." (My emphasis)[13]

<u>The Fake Newsreel: Origins</u>

The topical re-construction was neither a purely American invention nor one lifted from more cunning Europeans. By the turn of the century, British producers including R.W. Paul, the Sheffield Photo Company, Gaumont, Mitchell and Kenyon, and James Williamson were also busy filming fake front line war action which they advertised as <u>Dramatic Representations of Current Events</u>. Paul's 1902 catalogue informed prospective buyers that his Boer war reproductions had been "arranged under the supervision of an experienced military officer from the front." [14]

W.K.L. Dickson, then working for the British subsidiary of Biograph, provided the most intensive on the spot coverage of the war. A detailed account of his experiences was recorded in a series of dated dispatches that arrived in England with his films. They were published by Unwin in 1901 under the title THE BIOGRAPH IN BATTLE. In it Dickson noted the occasional frustration created by military officers. On the other hand, high-ranking officials were usually extremely co-operative. They would go so far as to volunteer secret battle plans which permitted the cameraman to set up his equipment at the right place beforehand. At times they would delay an action so as to allow Dickson to get his machine into position.[15]

But such assistance didn't solve all the problems. In a dispatch dated 14 December 1899, Dickson wrote:

> We have made every effort to get a photograph of the Boer position, and the effect of the ... shots, by means of the telephoto, but we were forced to give it up owing to the haze and the indistinctness which made it impossible to focus properly.[16]

As we know, others found other ways of overcoming such difficulty.

In 1897, Georges Méliès produced some reconstructed scenes from the Greco-Turkish war. In May of the following year, he manufactured two reproductions of the sinking of the 'Maine', A VIEW OF THE WRECK OF THE 'MAINE', and DIVERS AT WORK ON THE 'MAINE'. Presumably these were done for the American market. A print of the former has not been preserved and as a consequence there is no way of telling the relation, if any, it may have borne to Edison's WRECK OF THE BATTLESHIP 'MAINE', registered the previous month.

In 1896, Francis Doublier, a Lumière employee, assembled a short and very profitable little story film he called L'AFFAIRE DREYFUS. People actually believed that this was a filming of the famous case. [18]

Writing on Méliès' L'AFFAIRE DREYFUS (1899), Barry Salt has noted the staging in depth in a courtroom scene and in one of the street scenes.

> In these scenes, apparently unique in Méliès work ... bystanders and observers of the action fill the space between the principle actors from the upper background to the bottom foreground <u>in a way that copies framing occuring in actuality footage of the period.</u> (My emphasis)[19]

Salt's equation of actuality framing with a "purely cinematographic angle" is worth keeping in mind.

<u>Classification</u>

"Some fakes", said Raymond Fielding in his book on the American newsreel "were virtually impossible to detect and expose without evidence and testimony."[20] This may, in part, be why the fake newsreel has tended with evident uneasiness to be grouped with straight news footage. In compiling the volume MOTION PICTURES FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PAPER PRINT COLLECTION 1894-1912, Kemp Niver took a step forward by listing a fair number of these films in three distinct categories called REPRODUCTIONS. Edison's AMBULANCE CALL (1897) is the earliest title, and the phenomenon apparently disappeared after Biograph's TENDERLOIN TRAGEDY (1907). Some of the items included in these categories turn up in others as well. AMBULANCE CALL is also down as a Drama <u>and</u> a Documentary; TENDERLOIN TRAGEDY is also listed as a Drama; THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN appears only in the Documentary category; Biograph's AN EXECUTION BY HANGING (1905) is both a Reproduction <u>and</u> a Newsreel.[21]

Some footage registered by Biograph 15 September 1905 and called THE BOER WAR presents an interesting taxonomic dilemma.

> The film was photographed from several camera positions, and shows what appears to be authentic combat action. If the action was staged, however, it was done very well, inasmuch as the deployment of weapons and personnel shows a definite knowledge of technique.[22]

Some of the problem may be in its undramatic character, which is to say, lack of focused events, of what might be construed as a 'story'. Further research might determine whether it represents some of the footage Dickson shot in South Africa.

One explanation for the virtual disappearance of the re-constructed news event in 1907 is that camera equipment was by that date lightweight enough to permit an operator to be present at newsworthy happenings without having to rely on newspaper accounts.[23]

Close to the heart of the whole affair is the formal dichotomy traditionally described by the opposition of Lumière's hard-core train to Méliès' soft-core rocket. The categories Newsreel, Documentary, Drama and Reproduction do not appear to have been very firmly fixed as production models by early film producers. And because the methods employed in one needed to cross no very strong boundaries to be used in another, there was a lot of two-way traffic across a weak ontological frontier.

This is partly reflected in the fact that one encounters different types of re-construction, not simply fake newsreel material as such. A screening of a large sample revealed three basic differences; style, topicality and length. There are table-top miniaturizations and events re-created through stage techniques as well as examples that resemble actuality footage. In many cases the films were registered for copyright, and presumably produced within weeks of the actual event. In others, there is a lag of months or years. Biograph's notoriously erratic copyright practices would account for some of the discrepancy. In one instance, the production and registration dates anticipate the actual event by a month! Predictably, as we go from 1900 to 1904, films increase in length, though this not a general characteristic of the later examples.

Style

Compositional features, the exclusive use of the cut for joining shots and period detail identify the newsreel aesthetic. The last of these is clearly the weakest of the indicators. Some re-enactments of the far West done after THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY - COWBOYS AND INDIANS FORDING A RIVER (1904), BRUSH BETWEEN COWBOYS AND INDIANS (1904), and WESTERN STAGECOACH HOLDUP (1904) - appear, like it, to have been inspired by a literary and stage vogue of the era, though they contain the compositional features of actuality material.

Richard Sanderson, in his 1961 study of the development of film techniques

between 1897-1904, identified a number of them. His major conclusion was that a range of camera techniques including panning, tracking and dolly movements, tilts, long, medium and close shots of the same subject, reverse angles and continuity editing emerged accidentally from the efforts of early newsreel cameramen, working with unwieldy equipment in conditions over which they had limited control, to capture an actual event as it unfolded around them. That early fake newsreel producers had made an equally sophisticated analysis is evident in the sham Spanish-American war footage as well as in a number of short Edison Boer War films registered in April 1900. Titles include CAPTURE OF THE BOER BATTERY BY THE BRITISH, CHARGE OF BOER CAVALRY, CAPTURE OF BOER BATTERY, BOERS BRINGING IN BRITISH PRISONERS, ENGLISH LANCERS CHARGING, RED CROSS AMBULANCE ON BATTLEFIELD, BATTLE OF MAFEKING, and BOER COMMISSARY TRAIN TREKKING.

Patterns or arced and diagonal movement from out of the frame depth recur, with figures, animals and vehicles occasionally cut off at the bottom of the frame. In CAPTURE OF BOER BATTERY BY THE BRITISH, a horse passes in front of and very close to the camera, almost entirely blocking the view. In CAPTURE OF BOER BATTERY, a soldier crosses the horizontal space of the frame very close to the camera. In CHARGE OF BOER CAVALRY, a sizeable group of riders gallop from the background depth right at the camera passing extremely close to it on either side; following a slight break in the print, the rear end of one of the animals fills most of the frame.

These effects required very precise staging to take into account the camera's fixed field of view from high angles. And while they contain no camera movement, they are otherwise remarkable for the choice of angle and camera positions. On occasion the superb restraint of the nicely anonymous performers is shattered by an uncontrollable grin. The films, each between 25 and 45 feet (16mm) were clearly the deliberate result of an equally deliberate analysis. Whoever did them possessed a fine sense, not only of the features of the newsreel look, but also of how to achieve a credible stylized facsimile.

The Biograph sports film, MEADOWBROOK STEEPLECHASE produced in 1903, contains some comparable effects. Only here the drama of horses galloping toward and past the camera is both heightened by the skilful editing of action footage shot from different angles, and in part diminished by the absence of the chase format. And in a sense it might be difficult to determine whether that kind of screen action was invented by newsreel producers for its entertainment values or by the creators of film fiction for its actuality values.

As for the miniaturizations, Edison's table-top re-enactment of a Boxer rebellion naval episode, BOMBARDMENT OF TAKU FORTS BY THE ALLIED FLEETS, registered 16 August 1900 seems the most intriguing. The horizontal movements of the tiny attacking craft have been arranged in different planes to deliberately simulate depth. And there are 'shots' of the 'action' from four slightly altered camera positions, one of which contains some jerky pan movements. Here much of the fundamental intention of the fake newsreel is laid bare: to re-create, what we have referred to as the drama of the cameraman's presence, i.e. the photographic subjectivity through which the event was captured on film.

SAMPSON-SCHLEY CONTROVERSY (1901) and BATTLE OF CHEMULPO BAY (1904) employ a synthesis of theatrical staging - a fake naval artillery piece on a painted destroyer deck - and a newsreel angle. The latter, however, seems something of an anomalous case. A little more typical of this period are films like THE BATTLE OF THE YALU (1904), SKIRMISH BETWEEN RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE ADVANCE GUARDS (1904) and THE HERO OF LIAO YANG (1904), which feature greater length, narrative continuity and a mastery of actuality style, with a reduced dependence on topical event.

Topicality

Edison's Boer war films were all registered within a two-week period, 14-28 April 1900. In that month The New York Times carried occasional front page stories about the war, while inside the paper the Eden Musée regularly advertised its cinematograph shows on the theatre page. By the summer the last set battles of the war had been fought; twenty years of sporadic guerilla activity would follow.[26]

BOMBARDMENT OF TAKU FORTS, BY THE ALLIED FLEETS was registered for copyright 16 August 1900, two days after the lifting of the 55-day seige on the foreign legations in Peking. The seige began 20 June. Biograph registered two Boxer films on 19 August 1903, THE FORBIDDEN CITY, PEKIN and GENERAL CHAFEE IN PEKIN, i.e. three years later. Otherwise, American film producers adopted the hands off approach of their government.[27] In Britain, Mitchell and Kenyon released four Boxer re-enactments in July 1900. James Williams released his 230-foot film about the breaking of the seige, ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION, in October 1900.[28]

Registered for copyright 15 August, 1901, Edison's SAMPSON-SCHLEY CONTROVERSY followed the event it purports to depict - Commodore William S. Schley's destruction of Admiral Cervera's fleet as it attempted to run the blockade of Santiago harbour, for which Schley's immediate superior Admiral William T. Sampson, through jealous subterfuge took full credit - by a little over three years.

Edison's re-enactment of the execution of Leon Czolgosz, President McKinley's assassin, is in its way the most interesting example of a film producer attempting to make the most of a topical event. McKinley arrived in Buffalo, New York, 4 September 1901, to deliver an address at the Pan-American Exposition the following day. Amid the Spanish-style architecture created to play up the Latin-American angle, McKinley extolled the virtues of a new communal age-in-the-making through the advances of modern technology. The buildings of the exposition were studded with light bulbs, the first use of electricity for display lighting. Power for the display, which included the 405-foot Electric Tower with its 35,000 light bulbs, came from Niagara Falls. All considered, it might have seemed doubly patriotic to execute the killer of a popular American president with electricity.

Mortally wounded at the Temple of Music on 6 September 1901 at 4.07 p.m., McKinley died of gangrene and medical bungling in the early hours of 14 September. Czolgosz was indicted two days later, steadfastly refusing all the while to be coerced into an admission that his act had been the product of a conspiracy.

The trial began on 23 September 1901. Found guilty the next day, he was executed a month later.[29]

The prison walls are in the background. Shot 2. continues the pan, from the same angle and camera position, of the prison walls after the train has passed. Stationary freight and passenger cars stand in the foreground. Shot 3. from a new angle, cuts to an interior of the prison. To the left of the frame there is a cluttered electric company pole whose wires lead into the prison. Camera pans left to right to reveal the buildings inside the walls. Shot 4 dissolves to the interior of a prison building, Czolgosz waits at the bars of his cell. Four uniformed guards approach. Czolgosz shrinks back into his cell. They enter the cell to fetch him, and lead him out by the arm. His right trouser leg has been slit. Shot 5 dissolves to the execution chamber. The electric chair stands on a platform, on its arms a tray of empty glasses which apparently contained refreshment for the witnesses who inspect the apparatus. A guard enters and removes the tray. Czolgosz is brought in from the right and secured in the chair. A blindfold is fixed over his eyes and a device to carry the current placed on his head. The warden gives the signal, Czolgosz heaves three times and is pronounced dead.

The use of camera movement and dissolves communicates an impression of temporal simultaneity; a train passing the place of the execution in the night. And indeed, it has been suggested that Edison filmed the exterior at the moment of the execution. As for the film's probable impact, one can make some reasonable guesses by placing it within a chronology of Edison films related to the fatal McKinley visit to the fair. It is worth noting that between 6 September and 14 September, McKinley lay dying, and that he was buried on 19 September. The dates of the following are copyright registration dates: 14 August PANORAMIC VIEW OF ELECTRIC TOWER FROM A BALLOON (H7634); 11 September PRESIDENT MCKINLEY REVIEWING THE TROOPS AT THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION (H8588), PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S SPEECH AT THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION (H8589), MOB OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE OF MUSIC AT THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION (H8590), 21 September PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S FUNERAL CORTEGE AT BUFFALO, N.Y. (H8914), PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S FUNERAL CORTEGE AT WASHINGTON (H8915), 25 September FUNERAL LEAVING THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE AND CHURCH AT CANTON, OHIO (H9015), PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE AT CANTON, OHIO, (H9016), 26 September ARRIVAL OF MCKINLEY'S TRAIN AT CANTON, OHIO (H9082), TAKING MCKINLEY'S BODY FROM THE TRAIN AT CANTON, OHIO (H9083), MCKINLEY'S FUNERAL ENTERING WESTLAWN CEMETERY, CANTON (9084), PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AT CANTON STATION (H9085), 7 October THE MARTYRED PRESIDENT (H941) 17 October PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION BY NIGHT, 9 November EXECUTION OF CZOLGOSZ WITH PANORAMA OF AUBURN PRISON (H10605), 11 November PANORAMA OF ESPLANADE BY NIGHT (H10633).

Taken together the films suggest that the Edison company was really scrambling to exploit the event much in the way a TV news crew does today. Apparently, Biograph didn't do nearly as well. The larger narrative contained in the separate pieces was probably never even considered. Perhaps 1901, before the film rental exchanges and the network of nickelodeons, was much too soon even to assemble the six pieces of film shot in Canton into a single package.

On 24 February of the following year, Edison registered CAPTURE OF THE BIDDLE BROTHERS, based on an event that had occurred the previous month.

> The public throughout the world is acquainted with the sensational capture of the Biddle Brothers and Mrs. Stoffel, who through the aid of Mrs. Stoffel, escaped from the Pittsburg jail on January 30th 1902. Our picture, which is a perfect reproduction of the capture, is realistic and exciting.[32]

On two separate days, 23 and 24 March 1904, Biograph registered a superb little film they called THE BATTLE OF THE YALU, supposedly a Russo-Japanese war re-enactment. But according to the history books, the actual battle began on 26 April and lasted until 1st May. While there is no river to be seen in it, the film does predict the Japanese victory and concludes with a scene that in fact concluded the battle.[33]

The Battle of Chemulpo Bay, which permitted the Japanese to land troops at the Korean port, occurred on 9 February 1904. The Edison version was copyrighted on 12 April 1904.

Length

Style, as we have seen, appears to have been determined by the nature of the event; miniaturization and stage devices were employed in reproduction of naval battles but not in any other type of military encounter. When the films get longer, both those elements are subordinated to newsreel features.

Joining the nine separate pieces of Boer war footage and adding some individualized relationship of the sort seen on American screens since 1896 would give us an approximation of, say, Griffith's THE BATTLE (1911), with its war scenes that hardly anyone has ever described as sham. Aesthetic and technical reasons have tended to be given for the delay of the long film, when economic and cultural conditions appear to have played an equal if not larger role.

The earliest examples were straight photographic reproductions of a chosen subject, a prize fight or a stagework like The Passion Play, filmed in its entirety. The commercial appeal of these subjects served as license for the length of the films that recorded them. Initially, the longer narrative motion picture posed a chicken-and-egg problem; length could only be justified by commercial appeal, but commercial appeal required the solution of the narrative problem of linking related actions occurring in the physically or dramatically connected scenes of a longer film. In 1904, the Edison company continued to offer longer films for sale in parts, as a hedge of sorts.[34]

Two films help to illustrate the issue. Ed Porter's 55-foot (16mm) one-shot CAPTURE OF THE BIDDLE BROTHERS (1902) contains the newsreel qualities of action moving toward the camera from the background depth and movement from behind a high-angled camera. But it also employs a duel-like sham war film structure in order to reproduce the capture in one shot; the opposing forces meet for their gun battle on a snow-covered rural highway head-on. Biograph's marvellous 217-foot (16mm), five-shot BATTLE OF THE YALU (1904), credited to Billy Bitzer, contains all the elements of newsreel style subordinated to the

needs of a fragile narrative. Here we find the features of style, topicality and length on the point of a significant departure from the demands of the fake newsreel. The Biograph film approximates in actuality-style, the chase-and-shoot-out structure of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, released a mere three months previously. And both films could trace their ancestry back to THE EARLY MORNING ATTACK (1899). Despite its overtly coherent story, BATTLE OF THE YALU was registered in four parts, and presumably offered for sale that way.[35]

Through the features of length, narrative continuity and the joining of actuality-style shots in newsreel fashion, the Bitzer film embodies the merger of a fictional and dramatic structure common to stage pieces of the period with certain coverage strategies - angles of view, changes of camera position and camera distance - of the newsreel. The values of fictional structure appear, in fact, to eliminate the requirement of a strong topical source.

Development

Out of the stylistic variety of reconstructed topical incidents produced in America between 1900-1906 one style evolved in which a range of elements including miniaturization, stop-motion and stage gesture were subject to the extremely rigorous constraints of a particular kind of illusion we still call realism. Topicality more or less lost all of its organizational values, except those of promotional license; to take one case, Biograph's THE BLACK HAND (1906) contains this title:

> Levying the Blackmail
> A Clever Arrest
> Actually as made by the New York
> Detectives

And temporal duration begins its extension toward the form that has come to be known as feature length.

By 1907, the year in which the fake actuality disappeared, newsreel production in America apparently came to an abrupt halt as well.

> The record pertaining to the newsreel type of film affords some surprise. The entries for these are rather profuse and important from 1896 to 1907, after which there are practically no entries during the period under consideration (1894-1912). It is clear that by 1908 fictional entertainment had become an almost exclusive business within the industry.[36]

A few years later, the precise date is uncertain, Pathé conventionalised their newsreel production by initiating the distribution of exclusively topical items on a regular basis. Pathé's American-produced edition was first seen in the United States on 8 August, 1911.[37]

The fake newsreel did not, however entirely vanish after those dates.

Apparently, much of the newsreel coverage of World War 1 was faked.[38] On the other hand, many of the features of re-constructed actualities were absorbed into the longer story films that began to appear in 1904, films like MANIAC CHASE (1904), the opening and closing sequences of EUROPEAN REST CURE (1904), THE SUBURBANITE (1904), THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN (1904), and THE MOONSHINER (1904). Griffith's LONELY VILLA (1909), which introduced the switchback as an extension of coverage strategy, was based on a newspaper story about a robbery at an isolated country manor.

And in a sense 'Pop' Lubin's perfunctory copies of the major hits of 1904, as for example his GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY and NEW VERSION OF 'PERSONAL' not only stated a historical fact but contributed to a developing preconception of what a movie ought to be.

The influence of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, then, does not appear to have been its use of an isolated story telling technique as much as its demonstration of the narrative values of applying certain stylized newsreel features to the dominant literary and stage forms.

That synthesis seems the real subject of THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY, Porter's own 1905 re-make of his more famous screen triumph. Employing a narrow gauge railroad train and some adolescent robbers, Porter produced a witty primer on the basic narrative film style of the period.

Led by a pretty Calamity Jane-type bandit, the gang of hapless horsemen direct their ponies with great incompetence toward and past the camera in a parody of what by 1905 was a stereotyped filmic gesture. An excessive use of panning movements captures the approaching train, the departing bandits and the pursuit. The celebrated parallelism of the original is absent, but there is a nice opening shot of the interior of the robbers' cabin framed like an exterior, i.e. without the foreground space one sees in the interior shots of these films.

The young passengers in the open cars 'knew' how to be robbed; no doubt they had seen the movie. Porter filmed this scene from an angle that approximated the original, minus the murder. And while there is no gunplay at all, when the robbers depart the commandeered train engine and scurry down the incline, it's done in that much-discussed pan.

Summary

A comparison of Porter's DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND (1906) and Méliès' BARON MUNCHAUSEN'S DREAM (1911) - hallucinations in the original French title - reveals the use of the same basic illusionistic devices for quite distinct stylistic ends. The Porter film, reflecting a subordination of trompe d'oeil techniques to topical themes and effects, focuses on the psychological distress of the alcoholic. For Méliès, the subject was only another occasion for optical amusement. Here were two very different brands of illusionism, one of which was quickly discarded by American producers.

This larger development was not the result of one inspired producer simply adding a technique here and another abandoning one there. Rather, the process

appears to have been a systematic one involving the displacement of one cluster of features by another. At the same time, we do not find anything like the sorts of distinct temporal markers employed in traditional attempts at accounting for the change, an approach that Jean-Luc Comolli has referred to as "the fetishization of the first time."

In 1904, the production of short one-shot 'story' films characterized by the use of little image depth, stage composition, canvas sets, horizontal movement, dissolves and trick stop-motion effects has declined in favour of longer multi-shot films featuring the use of image depth, actuality composition, real locales, diagonal movement toward and away from the camera, cuts to link shots and the use of stop motion exclusively for purposes of realism, as for example Biograph's EXECUTION BY HANGING (1905).

In the age of P.T. Barum and his 'Curiosities', the pornographic allure of the peep show perhaps encouraged the production for kinetoscope displays of the sort of mild eroticism found in TRAPEZE DISROBING ACT (1901), THE PHYSICAL CULTURE GIRL (1903) and LITTLE LILLIAN, TOE DANSEUSE (1903). In the latter, stop-motion puts Little Lillian through three costume changes. HINDOO FAKIR (1902), produced on the same oriental palace set six months earlier, features a comparable mix of visual hoodwinks and lightweight thrills. However, with the emerging dominance of the newsreel aesthetic the fantasy realm of optical and erotic delights was eliminated by the constraints of visual and moral realism. In effect, the one-shot-fixed-camera domain of the private imagination was not to follow the motion picture out of the peep show and onto the public screen.

Clearly, the phenomenon was too widespread to have been accidental, and too strong to be explained away as the work of international plagiarists. Newsreel style was not necessitated by the formal demands of the longer film, nor did it disappear when strong topical sources were abandoned. The intent seemed the reverse; to provide fictional structure with a topical aura.

Though early film producers were essentially preoccupied with market problems rather than with aesthetic ones, their solutions of necessity imposed certain formal choices which appear to have owed a very small debt to the conditions of industrial competition in which they were made. For one thing, the strong pressures toward standardization, to which the motion picture as an economic and cultural fact would be subject, lay in the future.

The notion of inevitability, an off-shoot of the metaphor of biological growth, tells us very little. As does that other metaphor, drawn from Victorian culture, of Ed Porter as the blazing fireman who rescued the motion picture from the cold flames of oblivion.

There is a rational explanation and a good place to begin would be the socio-aesthetic process that transformed the shameful sham into the dominant mode of screen realism.

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8. Niver, p. 273.

9. Terry Ramsaye. A Million and One Nights, 1926, p. 391.

10. As cited by Joseph H. North in his doctoral dissertation entitled The Early Development of the Motion Picture 1887-1909, Cornell University, 1949, published by Arno Press, 1973, p. 112.

11. Cited by George Pratt in 'No Magic, No Mystery, No Sleight of Hand', Image, 8 (Dec. 1959), p. 206.

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14. Rachael Low and Roger Manvell. The History of the British Film, 1896-1906, London 1948, p. 68-70.

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17. Paul Hammond, Marvellous Méliès, London, Gordon Fraser, 1974. See Filmography, p. 136-137 for other Méliès reproductions.

18. Francis Doublier. Reminiscences of an Early Motion Picture Operator. Image, June 1956, p. 134 as cited by Fielding, p. 38.

19. Barry Salt, The Early Development of Film Form. Film Form, Vol. 1, no. 1, Spring 1976, p. 91-92.

20. Fielding, p. 14.

21. In a letter dated 27 December 1977, Mr. Niver informed me that the term Reproduction was used in those cases where the event had occurred prior to the production of the film.

22. Niver, Motion Picture from the Library of Congress, p. 239.

23. Kemp Niver in the letter referred to above.

24. Richard Arlo Sanderson. 'A Historical Study of the Development of American Motion Picture Content and Techniques Prior to 1904'. University of Southern California, 1961. (Doctoral dissertation).

25. Terry Ramsaye credits these films to James White. Robert Gessner in 'Porter and the Creation of Cinematic Motion, 'Journal of the Society of Cinematologists, Vol. 2, 1962, p. 2, says they were the work of Porter.

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27. Richard O'Connor, The Spirit Soldiers, New York 1973.

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29. Walter Lord. The Good Years, New York 1964.

30. Fielding, p. 49.

31. See Walls, p. 72.

32. Edison Catalogue, 1902, p. 93.

33. Christopher Martin. The Russo-Japanese War, New York 1967.

34. Edison Catalogue Supplement, 1904. I am indebted to Paul Spehr of the Library of Congress for bringing this fact to my attention.

35. Walls, p. 6.

36. Walls, p. viii.

37. Fielding, p. 71.

38. p. 96-97.

THE 'FAKE' TRAIN ROBBERY:

POSTSCRIPT - Spring, 1981

It was at one time my intention, an intention I discussed with David Francis in the fall of 1980, to do a major re-write of my paper for publication in these proceedings. But almost as soon as I set to work I realized that the result, based on the many discoveries made since the summer of 1978, would have turned out to be much more than a re-write, it would have been a totally different paper and as such would have misrepresented the occasion of the original. I have therefore decided to allow the original to stand, largely for that reason but also because the basic thesis is, I believe, essentially correct if somewhat primitive in the formulation given to it three years ago. I would, however, like to correct some obvious errors of fact and conception.

1. Copyright records at the Edison National Historic Site do not as yet permit an accurate listing of Edison house productions or who turned them out, before the spring of 1903. To that problem we must add the fact that the company did not copyright all of its releases. Of the 727 titles listed in the September, 1902 edition of Edison Films, only 330 had been properly registered. Until the conclusion of an unsuccessful Edison patent infringement suit against Biograph in March, 1902, the latter held back on its copyrighting activity. Moreover, a number of the films Edison did copyright in the period were the work of other companies, like Vitagraph, or footage sold to the company by free-lance cameramen. However, the difficulties involved in positively identifying the producing company or director responsible for a particular film do not prevent one from drawing reasonable conclusions about the character of the dominant production trends in the period.

2. I find the original analysis of the news fakes based on the categories style, topicality and length less and less meaningful, particularly as regards my description of the process of absorption of the compositional style of the fake actuality into the fictional narrative. Film length posed an industrial question unrelated to style or subject matter. By the latter part of 1904, production companies were turning out fictional subjects in a length that approximated the duration of a vaudeville act. One reason for this trend may have been the business was more and more attracting small-time business men with little or no experience in showmanship. They would have required from the producing outfits material in pretty complete form. An experienced showman would not have needed to be told how to handle the shorter lengths of Boer War and McKinley footage. Here, as in other aspects of the new industry, what was technically possible also needed to be commercially desirable.

3. While the Spanish-American War concluded in Cuba with the 1898 Battle of Santiago Bay it continued in the Philippines. Most of Edison's fakes of that series of conflicts were based on action in the Pacific.

4. Edison's LOVE AND WAR was a story -song picture and was not intended for exhibition as a group of newsy scenes from the Spanish-American War.

5. James White was in fact the 'general' who sent the Edison company's Boer War armies out to do battle on a green meadow in New Jersey.

6. As it happened, the Biograph company did acquire a Boxer Rebellion fake of their own. Filmed in China, it was registered in April, 1902 as SIXTH CAVALRY ASSAULTING SOUTH GATE OF PEKIN. In 1901, the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show incorporated a version of the events in China into an act called The Rescue at Pekin. Boer War and Spanish-American War scenes were also part of that world-famous amusement phenomenon in the period. The military subject matter replaced the frontier spectacles that had been the staple of the show's reputation. With the frontier era officially declared over, many Americans were looking beyond their borders for 'new' frontiers abroad.

7. The Thaw-White films of 1906 were the work of the Biograph company. The following year Lubin completed a longer version of his own called THE UNWRITTEN LAW, subtitled "A Timely Drama Based on the White-Thaw Case". It became something of a cause célèbre and was banned in a few places.

8. THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY was not simply a nanistic version of the 1903 hit. What Porter did was to arrange the elements of the train heist story with its miniaturized gang into a 'chase' picture, something that THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY was not. Done in a tableaux style not all that different from the method employed in UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, the chase action in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY was implied, like the action between the panels of a comic strip; the pursuit of the robbers was a one-scene, one-shot affair. THE LITTLE TRAIN ROBBERY was produced near the height of the American chase picture vogue, though it was not a trend the Edison studio introduced to the industry. Their first chase film, HOW A FRENCH NOBLEMAN GOT A WIFE THROUGH THE NEW YORK HERALD PERSONAL COLUMNS, was the result of competitive pressure from the Biograph vaudeville house hit, PERSONAL.

9. Sigmund Lubin's reputation as little more than a screen pirate probably originated in the writings of Terry Ramsaye who in turn picked it up from Edison people like patent attorney Frank Dyer. For sheer dishonesty and ruthless buccaneering the Wizard of Menlo Park and his hired hands were more than a match for anyone. One of the Edison studio's best pictures in the period, CAPTURE OF THE 'YEGG' BANK BURGLARS, was essentially a re-make of Lubin's THE BOLD BANK ROBBERY.

10. The brilliant continuity cutting I saw in Edison's STORM AT SEA was in fact the work of Time operating through the agency of Wear & Tear.

11. The notion that the fake newsreel was a technical solution to the problem of bulky unwieldy cameras is incorrect. As Dickson discovered on his trip to South Africa to film Boer War scenes, being there was no guarantee of obtaining sufficiently thrilling footage. Mostly the fakes dramatized the medium's bogus promise to capture, simply and mechanically, actual life on celluloid.

12. In 1915 D.W. Griffith's elaborate historical re-enactment, BIRTH OF A NATION, with its stars in close-up, melodramatics and fake newsreel techniques, persuaded many doubters that the motion picture was an art form. Indeed what is most striking today about Eisenstein's films like OCTOBER and POTEMKIN is less their fabled montage than their powerful documentary aura.

David Levy
Montreal
May, 1981.

THE EARLY CINEMA OF EDWIN PORTER

Charles Musser - USA

We are celebrating the 75th anniversary of Edwin Porter's LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN which was completed and copyrighted in January of 1903 and THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY which was copyrighted in December of the same year. Porter's reputation has come to rest on these two films, with the first seen as a cinematic breakthrough and the second as its confirmation. It was Terry Ramsaye, seconded by Lewis Jacobs, who seems to have selected the earlier film, to have emphasized its essential importance to the development of American and world cinema. Since then, it has become the center of controversy, a controversy further complicated by two conflicting versions of the film - one version at the Museum of Modern Art which contains 15 shots and another in the paperprint collection at the Library of Congress with nine. Only slightly simplified, a French School of film historians, led by George Sadoul, has generally discounted the significance of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN while an American School has, with even greater consistency, made extravagent assertions that have been repeated until accepted as fact:

Terry Ramsaye (1926):

> There have been tiny, trivial efforts to use the screen to tell a story, exemplified by Cecil Hepworth's RESCUED BY ROVER, the adventures of a little girl and a dog, photographed in London, and THE BURGLAR ON THE ROOF made by Blackton and Smith of Vitagraph. They were mere episodes.
>
> Now in the Edison studios, where the art of the film was born, and also where it was best bulwarked against the distractions of the fight for existence, came the emergence of the narrative idea.
>
> James H. White was in charge of Edison's "Kinetograph Department" and Edwin S. Porter, becoming a cameraman, was the chief fabricator of picture material. Between them evolved a five hundred foot subject entitled THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.[1*]

Lewis Jacobs (1939):

> If George Méliès was the first to "push cinema towards a 'theatrical way', as he claimed, then Edwin Porter was the first to push cinema towards the cinematic way. Generally acknowledged today as the father of the story film, he made more than fictional contributions to movie tradition. It was Porter who discovered that the art of motion pictures depends on the continuity of shots, not on the shots alone.

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* American Film Historians have read the post-WWI American dominance of the film industry into the pre-war state of world cinema.

> Not content with Méliès' artificially arranged scenes, Porter distinguished the movies from other theatrical forms and gave them the invention of editing. Almost all motion picture developments since Porter's discovery spring from the principle of editing which is the basis of motion picture artistry.....
>
> By 1902, Porter had a long list of films to his credit. But neither he nor other American producers had yet learned to tell a story. They were still busy with elementary one-shot news events, with humorous bits, with vaudeville skits and local topics. None of these productions stood out from the general. Porter therefore concocted a scheme that was as startling as it was different: a mother and child were to be caught in a burning building and rescued at the last moment by the fire department. Tame though such a plot sounds to us today, it was then revolutionary.[2]

A. Nicholas Vardac (1949):

> The photoplay, a series of situations pictorially developed not only to tell a story but so interlaced that this story became cinematically dramatic, had not found significant expression prior to 1902. It came in that year with Edwin Porter's THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.[3]

Jack Spears (1970):

> Edwin Porter was the father of the story film. LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN is the motion picture in which the principles of modern film editing were first applied - i.e., by combining and arranging shots in a unified sequence, Porter built suspense, increased dramatic intensity and made transitions fluid.[4]

These film historians share a number of methodological weaknesses, many of which can be found in the work of their French colleagues. It is these assumptions which have determined the parameters of the debate, allowing the controversy to develop in the first place. Like many 'landmark' films LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has been extracted from its historical/cultural context. Ramsaye and Jacobs presented us with a <u>romantic</u> concept of a 'primitive artist' whose revolutionary insights (strokes of genius) led to the story film (the beginnings of narrative cinema) and the invention of editing. They not only ignored the context of world cinema and of popular entertainment, but Porter's prior development as a filmmaker. George Sadoul, by placing LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN in the context of international cinema while continuing to ignore the dynamic of Porter's own development, could dismiss Porter as an imitator of G. A. Smith and Frederick Williamson. Accusing Porter of imitating Williamson's FIRE!

Sadoul passed over the context of popular entertainment and presented us with a mechanistic or genetic analysis of the development of cinema.

Jacobs and Sadoul share one major assumption - that editing, defined as a concept of continuity, was discovered by one or another of the film pioneers.* This reads history backwards. Editing as continuity is a cultural concept that was first articulated by Lev Kuleshov in the early 1920s. While we may retrospectively recognize that G. A. Smith's GRANDMA'S LOOKING GLASS (1900) contains many of the basic procedures found in narrative cinema including spatial/temporal continuity, the fragmentation of space within a scene (breaking the theatrical presidium), interpolated close-ups, the point of view shot, the use of mattes and even parallel editing; this does not mean that Smith or his contemporaries understood this to be so.** What was being discovered in 1901-03 were very specific strategies with extremely limited applications. Taken as a group, these strategies were not yet part of a coherent system. Directors like Porter developed or adopted certain strategies often to abandon them sometime later. It was an inventive period with each director using a range of strategies which, taken as a whole, were less than the sum-total of strategies then being used. Thus, to understand the development of early cinema as a dynamic, the historian must be less concerned with the development of procedures and must look more closely at the accumulation of specific strategies. The purpose of this article then is to outline the nature of Porter's own development as a filmmaker through LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and then to focus on the film itself: to reconsider the two conflicting versions, to analyse the film's structure and to suggest a few ways in which the film might be seen in the context of popular culture.

Porter began his career as a filmmaker by taking actuality footage using the snap-shot strategies and conventionalized panoramas employed by Lumiére. By 1898, Porter was producing trick films à la Méliès, probably beginning with THE CAVALIER'S DREAM and his own version of Méliès' THE VANISHING LADY (both copyrighted December 16, 1898). These were followed by AN ANIMATED LUNCH, FAUST AND MARGUERITE, CHING LING FOO OUTDONE, AN ARTIST'S DREAM, THE MYSTIC SWING, THE CLOWN AND THE ALCHEMIST, THE ENCHANTED DRAWING, etc. Most of these titles implied that the films were of French origin; some used titles of recently released Méliès films, encouraging confusion and no doubt intending to mislead prospective purchasers. The situations, the sets and the types of substitutions all cultivated a French look, imitating 'the films from Paris' down to the hotel keeper's French goatee in STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A NEW YORK DRUMMER (1899). These films were included in the Edison Catalogue along with duped Méliès films such as CINDRELLA, UP-TO-DATE SURGERY, LITTLE RED

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* Sadoul shares the same romantic notion, substituting 'The Brighton School' of Smith and Williamson for Porter.

**As the Warrick Catalogue describes Smith's intentions: "The concept is to produce on the screen the various objects as they appear to Willie while looking through the glass."[5] This editorial strategy is also self-reflexive.

RIDING HOOD, ROBINSON CRUSOE, THE HUMAN FLY and A TRIP TO THE MOON.*

These 'one-shot' trick films are actually made up of a succession of takes which are shot from a single camera position in a way that gives the illusion of a single, uninterrupted temporal continuity. This was the first spatial/temporal articulation of the cinema, functioning as a sleight of hand on the part of the magician/filmmaker.** At first Porter used this combining of takes into a single shot only for the effects of the trick; but by the middle of 1901, films like PIE, TRAMP AND THE BULLDOG (May 6, 1909) and A PHOTOGRAPHER'S MISHAPS (July 31, 1901) were using this procedure for purposes of pacing and to construct a narrative that would have been difficult or impossible to construct in a single take. PIE, TRAMP AND THE BULLDOG is made up of three takes: 1) the tramp indicates to us that he is hungry but that the bulldog prevents him from getting to the pie and he exits; 2) the tramp immediately returns on stilts to outsmart the dog and eat the pie on the ledge; 3) the dog gets the tramp by jumping out the house window and the two exit with the dog holding onto the tramp's pants. Porter gave this procedure its most elaborate expression in BURGLAR'S SLIDE FOR LIFE (April 28, 1905) - a film that also elaborates on the PIE, TRAMP AND THE BULLDOG narrative.

From the earliest days of commercial projection, audiences were often shown several series of 'animated photographs' grouped by subject matter or theme. From the first fight films and passion plays, there was a kind of narrative progression that was consistent with theatrical representation: continuity from shot to shot was based on narrative progression, not on spatial or temporal relationships.

Porter's THE ASTOR TRAMP (October 27, 1899) was the first fictional film to be copyrighted by the Edison Manufacturing Company that contained more than one scene. THE ASTOR TRAMP, along with LOVE AND WAR (November 28, 1899) made by James White who then managed the Kinetograph Department were 'Picture Songs': part of Edison's ongoing attempt to synchronize sound and pictures:

> We have at last succeeded in perfectly synchronizing music and moving pictures. The following scenes are very carefully chosen to fit the words and songs which have been especially composed for these pictures.[6]

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* Certainly one of the major cinematic developments at Edison between 1895 and 1900 was the gradual exploration of the mimetic possibilities of cinema - as a response to outside competition. By 1900, the mimetic range extended from 'actualities' of parades and events to the recording of theatre and vaudeville performances, the recreation of actual events, the creation of fictional worlds, the portrayal of the fantastic and finally the conjuring of 'trick' films.

** These strategies of stop-action substitution did not originate with Méliès but can be seen, ironically, in the very early Edison film MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (1895).

These films are also attempts to adapt the song slide format to cinema. As such , they are early examples of the impact magic lantern shows had on Edison film production in the 1899-1903 period.

The narrative thrust of THE ASTOR TRAMP is in the first shot: the tramp is in someone's bedroom at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel where he uses a woman's cosmetics and sleeps in her bed 'while waiting for Mr Waldorf'. The woman comes into her room and discovers the tramp, resulting in his arrest. In shot No.2, the tramp is back on the street; he grabs a paper from a newsboy and presumably reads about his escapade at the Waldorf-Astoria, gesturing to the audience as he struts about the stage. Unless the song clarifies the narrative progression, the audience would have been required to make a difficult imaginative leap to understand the connection between the two shots (in any case, the films were sold without the music). The first shot retains all the typical characteristics of contemporary one-shot comedies like THE TRAMP AND THE NURSING BOTTLE, THE BURGLAR IN THE BED CHAMBER and WEARY WILLIE AND THE GARDENER which portray the conflict between those outside and those inside society. Shot No. 2 acts as a coda, a non-essential and perhaps confusing punchline to the comedy.

THE ASTOR TRAMP and LOVE AND WAR, although early examples of scoring motion pictures, were not notably successful either technically or financially for the idea was not repeated. As a result, the Edison Company temporarily returned to making one-shot acted films until early 1901. Of the eight multi-shot acted Porter/Edison films that were copyrighted in 1901, six are two-shot films. Of these, TERRIBLE TEDDY, THE GRIZZLY KING (February 23, 1901), THE FINISH OF BRIGIT McKEEN (March 1, 1901) and ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER (May 15, 1901) duplicated the construction of THE ASTOR TRAMP very closely.

TERRIBLE TEDDY, THE GRIZZLY KING, a political satire based on a cartoon that appeared in The New York Journal and Advertiser, pokes fun at Teddy Roosevelt and his hunting exploits. 'The Grizzly King', accompanied by two men wearing large cards that read 'My Press Agent' and 'My Photographer', approaches a tree and shoots up into the air. A very dead cat falls to the ground. "Teddie whips out his bowie knife, leaps on the cat and stabs it several times then poses while his photographer makes a picture and the press agent writes up the thrilling adventure".[7] In the second shot, the three are walking down a path. From a narrative perspective, the second shot, which is not mentioned in the Edison Catalogue, has little narrative content. It dangles and contributes nothing to the satire. As a result, the narrative relationship between shots 1 and 2 is confusing.

THE FINISH OF BRIGIT McKEEN is filmed against a painted backdrop of a kitchen with a stove, table and chair - the only real objects on the set. Brigit McKeen has some trouble lighting her kitchen stove and blows herself up as she starts it with gasoline. There is a dissolve to shot 2, a painted backdrop of a gravestone on which is written the familiar ditty:

Here lies the remains of Brigit McKeen
Who started a fire with gasoline.

In this film, the relationship between shots 1 and 2 is easily understood, particularly by English speaking audiences. Not only is the first shot the cause of the second (the gravestone and the ditty) but the last shot works effectively as a punch-line.

ANOTHER JOB FOR THE UNDERTAKER, made two months after THE FINISH OF BRIGIT McKEEN, is very similar in subject matter and imitates its narrative structure. Shot 1 is a typical trick film: a man enters his hotel room and everything proceeds to disappear before his eyes. He is so traumatized that he blows out the gas flame (a sign under the flame reads "Don't Blow Out the Gas") and presumably died as a result. Shot 2 is 'actuality' material (possibly even stock footage) of three hearses moving across the screen from left to right.

All four of these films share many of the same characteristics. The first shots are self-contained and constructed like one-shot films of the 1898-1901 period - the only significant difference is the addition of a tag. Perhaps what is most interesting about these films is their lack of phenomenological continuity, soon to change in the forthcoming Porter/ Edison films. Méliès CINDERELLA (1899) might serve as an appropriate model in that spatial and temporal relationships between shots are indeterminant, involving indefinite abridgements of time and space, which is to say that Porter had not begun to develop the spatial and temporal articulations fundamental to narrative cinema. Continuity is restricted to a narrative level, consistent with theatrical representation (on a narrative level, Méliès is, of course, much more advanced).

THE TRAMP'S DREAM, a three-shot film copyrighted May 6 1901, is the first film in which Porter employed a clear temporal continuity and what one might call a metaphorical spatial relationship between shots. Shot 1: the tramp goes to sleep on the park bench; shot 2: the dream - the usual confrontation between the tramp who wants a free meal and the dog which grabs the tramp by his pants; shot 3: a return to shot 1, the tramp is being hit on the foot and shaken by a passing policeman. This last shot explains why the dream ends and also reinforces a simultaneity of action between the tramp being attacked by the dog and the patrolman - the tramp gets no peace either in his dream world or his 'real' world. Not only is there a match cut in time but there is a 'spatial' movement into and out of the tramp's mind.

THE TRAMP'S DREAM employs the same strategies used by G. A. Smith in his film LET ME DREAM AGAIN (made by August 1900) in which "An elderly beau flirting with maiden at masquerade ball wakes, and finds himself in bed bestowing unexpected caresses upon his old missus."[8] The film also follows the A-B-A structure of another Smith film, AS SEEN THROUGH THE TELESCOPE.*

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* AS SEEN THROUGH THE TELESCOPE was also the basis for Porter's THE GAY SHOE CLERK (August 1903)

THE TRAMP'S DREAM is further testimony to Porter's readiness to borrow and adapt, in this he was typical of most filmmakers of the early 1900s.*

Porter's development as a filmmaker in the first part of 1901 can only look promising in retrospect. As Lewis Jacobs observed, "none of these productions stood out from the general".[9] However, this may be a result of the vagueries of Edison copyright practices more than anything else.** One extremely important film which does not seem to have survived is THE STAGE COACH HOLD-UP IN THE DAYS OF '49. This film was made in May-June of 1901, just in time for Edison's July Catalogue from which the following description is taken:

> This scene will give you a good idea of the desperate "hold-ups" that occurred on the plains when the rush was made to the new gold fields in '49. It shows the desperadoes coming from the ambush, covering the driver of the stage with Winchester rifles and ordering him to halt. The occupants of the coach are compelled to dismount from their places, and are lined up in a very realistic manner with their hands thrown up. The outlaws get all the booty they can, and are just departing when an armed Sheriff's posse arrives. They pursue the bandits and after a desperate chase and a brutal conflict, capture them and return to the scene of the robbery. The bandits are then forced at the points of revolvers to ride in front of the coaching party to Dad's Gulch, a mining town, where they are safely landed in the lock up. This picture will joyously intoxicate any audience, and deafening applause for an encore will be certain. Length 150 feet.[10]

STAGE COACH HOLD-UP OF '49 answers a number of questions and raises many more. It is a likely model for the British film, ROBBERY OF A MAIL COACH*** as well as for Porter's own THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY. As a western, STAGE COACH HOLD-UP already contains the essential narrative elements of the genre, borrowed from such popular forms of entertainment as Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. While the description is probably a somewhat expansive version of what actually occurred on the screen, the film may have contained anywhere from four to six shots. While the catalogue description encourages speculation about the exact number of shots and their spatial/temporal relationship, it provides no ready answers. TRAMP'S DREAM and STAGE COACH HOLD-UP were both made at approximately the same time; ironically the one which is derivative survived and the other, more original contribution is lost. All this simply illustrates the difficulties of

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* Everyone was copying Smith's films in 1901. Biograph remade GRANDMA'S READING GLASS, Pathé remade LET ME DREAM AGAIN, GRANDMA'S READING GLASS, THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT, etc.

** During this period Edison's memos complain about shoddy copyright practices.

*** Sadoul has even argued that ROBBERY OF A MAIL COACH was the inspiration for THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY.

ascertaining the various contributions of the different film pioneers both in the United States and Europe. Other less impressive Porter/Edison films will have to indicate the direction of Porter's growth as a filmmaker.

THE SAMPSON-SCHLEY CONTROVERSY, another two-shot film copyrighted on August 15th, 1901, was given a different and more descriptive title by George Kleine: "Schley on the Bridge during Battle and Man behind the Gun". The narrative is evenly divided between the two shots which show Schley on the bridge directing the fire against a model boat and the gunner firing on and finally sinking it. Porter has moved beyond the limitations of his earlier films with their self-contained, one-shot constructions. The set, basically the same for both shots, was built using extreme theatrical foreshortening, a technique frequently used by Méliès and before him in life-model magic lantern shows. A slight shift in camera position encourages the illusion of being on different parts of the same ship, a displacement not unlike that of stereo views. The temporal relationship between the two shots is vague though potentially significant in light of Porter's later films: the relative position of the model ship in each shot suggests a temporal repetition. Two aspects of the same battle which occur simultaneously are shown successively.

LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, copyrighted September 16, 1901, and subsequently given the title LIFE RESCUE AT ATLANTIC CITY, is a staged rescue by lifeboat. The film shows what Porter felt to be the two most important parts of the rescue and connected the two shots with a dissolve. The major distinction between LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH and earlier rescue films such as AMBULANCE CALL and AMBULANCE AT THE ACCIDENT which were copyrighted individually on October 25, 1897 and frequently shown together is really only the brevity of the spatial/temporal abridgement and the dissolve which ties the shots together.

During September and October, the Edison Company made a series of films which exploited the recent assassination of President McKinley at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo on September 7th, 1901. These, combined with films of the Exposition that had been shot during the summer, resulted in a financial windfall for the Edison Company. October to December, 1901, when these films were in greatest demand, set a sales record for the Kinetograph Department that was not matched during any other three month period between 1900 and 1904.[11]

Shortly after the assassination, Porter returned to the historic site and filmed PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION BY NIGHT. While this film is often referred to for its early use of time lapse photography, its two-shot construction involving spatial and visual continuity is neglected. There is a pan in the first shot taken during the day which is continued from the same point, in the same direction and at the same pace in the second shot filmed at night. Here Porter combines the conventions borrowed from two different forms of popular entertainment: the panorama and the steropticon. The panorama as a genre pre-dates the cinema by more than a hundred years and was adopted by cinema in the late 1890s. Edison

cameras, which were moving to follow action as early as 1897, had begun to use the sweeping panorama in 1899. On the other hand, the temporal relationship between the two shots is characteristic of day/night dissolving views. This use of dissolving views is particularly significant because the application of procedures common to magic lantern shows was essential to the development of spatial/temporal relationships and narrative strategies.

Porter apparently returned to the Pan-American Exposition a third time, shortly after the death of Czologosz - McKinley's assassin, to film another panorama, PANORAMA OF ESCAPLADE BY NIGHT (November 11, 1901). On his way back, he almost certainly stopped off in Auburn, New York and filmed the first two shots of THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ (November 9, 1901), a film that was prominently advertised in the 1902 Kleine Catalogue.* Undoubtedly this film has its origins in early re-enactment films at Edison (according to Iris Barry, the Edison Company also tried to recreate Czologosz's assassination of McKinley)[11a] and in Melies' THE DREYFUS AFFAIR (1899). It is the first truly interesting Porter/Edison film to survive.

Although THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ contains only four shots, it has a surprisingly sophisticated structure. The first two shots, one third of the film in length, are two comparatively brief pans of Auburn State Prison where Czologosz was executed. In the first shot, the camera pan follows a train going by the outside of the prison, bringing the viewer into the scene of the execution. The second pan, in the same direction and at the same pace, reveals the more foreboding courtyard. The last two shots are dramatic re-enactments of the execution inside the prison. The film was frequently called THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ AND PANORAMA OF AUBURN STATE PRISON and from one perspective the film is a hybrid which combines two genres -the panorama and the narrative film (an exhibitor could, for instance, buy the narrative portion without the panoramas). It would, however, be inaccurate to look upon the film as two shots plus two shots, held together by a common theme; for THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ makes use of an exterior/interior relationship between shots that was beginning to be employed by other filmmakers at this time as well - other examples include Bamforth's KISS IN THE TUNNEL (ca 1900), Williamson's FIRE! (1901) and Méliès BLUEBEARD (1901). This exterior/interior relationship was based on pre-existing conventions rather than on 'cinematic' principles of continuity and can easily be traced back to the magic lantern show (and can be found in comic strips of the day as well).** The Art of Projection (1893), in describing a complicated effect in a lantern show THE EXETER STREET FIRE, indicates an exterior of the theatre (slide 1), dissolving to the interior of the theatre (slide 3). In Porter's film, the strategically placed dissolve between the first two and the second two shots not only links outside and inside, but actuality and re-enactment, description and narrative, a moving and static camera. Porter's use of panoramas at the beginning of the film gives the narrative a context, a well constructed world in which the action can unfold. As establishing shots, they seem to be quite modern, distinguishing this film from most re-enactment films of the period

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* Later Edison and/or Kleine became more reticent and had the negative destroyed

** In this 1900-1903 period, one can isolate two distinct kinds of continuity - the interpolated close-up and a continuity between contiguous spaces. Contrary to conventional wisdom, breaking the presidium was a familiar procedure after 1900, easily understood and achieved. The continuity between contiguous spaces was conceptually more difficult and filmmakers eventually explored several different strategies.

by heightening the reality of the recreation. At the same time, they are part of a progression that leads the audience step by step to a dramatic confrontation with the electric chair and a man's death.

There is a purposeful elaboration of plot in the second half of the film: Czologosz is not simply led off and executed. At the beginning of shot 3, Czologosz is at the doorway of his cell. After a few moments, the guards enter from the right and Czologosz withdraws from the doorway. The guards open the cell door, go in and bring him out. He is brought from his cell reluctantly but without resistance and they exit. Czologosz's retreat at the appearance of the guards is a sensitive bit of elaboration that one could never imagine taking place at Biograph, for instance. Shot 4 does not begin with the entrance of the guards and Czologosz: Porter first forces his audience to look at the electric chair along with several witnesses. As Czologosz enters, these witnesses remove a protective board from the chair. While the pause before Czologosz's entrance facilitates the illusion of temporal continuity, the temporal and spatial relationships are still somewhat vague and certainly do not exclude the possibility of brief temporal abridgements.

After Czologosz is bound to the chair, the current is turned on, making him jerk slightly. This is repeated; he is examined and pronounced dead. The acting is excellent and gestures are minimalized rather than exaggerated, again in marked contrast to films made at Biograph and in England. The acting, sets and lighting are very well done, suggesting that re-enactments forced Porter to use a less melodramatic style than he might have otherwise. THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ exhibits well-executed pro-filmic elements, laying out many of the principles that would be used to make LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.

The Edison Manufacturing Company made few fictional films at the end of 1901 and early 1902; apparently they found it more profitable to dupe the best of their competitors' production as they concentrated on filming topical news events or promotional material for railway companies. Williamson's THE BIG SWALLOW appeared as PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTORTIONS; many others appeared with their original title intact: Smith's GRANDMA THREADING HER NEEDLE, Méliès ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES, Lumiére's SANTOS DUMONT'S AIRSHIP, etc., etc. Against this background, three Porter/Edison films made in 1902 amply demonstrate Porter's increasing skill as a filmmaker: APPOINTMENT BY TELEPHONE, JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, and HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY.

APPOINTMENT BY TELEPHONE (May 2, 1902) is a simple, three-shot narrative executed with greater ease than anything Porter did in 1901. In Shot 1, a man and his male secretary are working in an office when the phone rings. The secretary answers, then gives the call to his boss. After a short conversation, the boss goes out, first checking his tie in a mirror. There is a dissolve to a street scene where the boss is waiting outside the restaurant, displaying a flower in his lapel. A woman arrives and they go inside. Shot 3 takes place inside the restaurant: the waiter waits a moment then greets the couple as they come on screen. They sit down by the window overlooking the street. There is a space between the window and a backdrop of painted buildings: a woman, the man's wife, walks through this space, looks in the window and is shocked. She walks off-screen and, entering the restaurant, approaches her husband. The husband is upset (his female compa nion leaves) and his wife beats him repeatedly in a tableau style ending. Not only did Porter make use

of an exterior/interior relationship between shots, but he used a reverse angle to show overlapping space: the sidewalk established in the second shot is shown again in the third from a different point of view. Although there is a spatial/temporal continuity - perhaps even a match cut - the set is constructed and filmed in such a way that any attempt to match action is avoided. This spatial/temporal relationship is not only established by the exit/entrance of the man and his female companion, but reinforced by the movement of the wife from the sidewalk to the interior of the restaurant. APPOINTMENT BY TELEPHONE represents a significant step forward in Porter's development as a filmmaker.

In making a fictional film more than twice the length of his longest previous effort, Porter chose to work in the already well-established genre of fairy-tale films (Melies' CINDERELLA and LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD and Smith's THE NURSERY RHYMES were popular films that could be purchased directly from Edison). Although JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (June 20) is an elaborate and well made film of ten shots (one more than LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN), it was ignored by Ramsaye and Jacobs, probably because of the 'imitative' nature of its subject matter. Their quiet dismissal of the film does it a disservice, for JACK AND THE BEANSTALK contains all the narrative elements that customarily are said to appear for the first time in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN:

> The success of AN AMERICAN FIREMAN obviously depended upon the pictorial development of the two lines of action which preceeding simultaneously, culminated to form a climax. Within this structural form were included such spectacular devices as the vision which introduced the second line of action, the dissolve linkage blending the scenes, and a change in camera position showing first the interior of the burning room and then its exterior as the action moves out the window with the rescue.[12]

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK uses all the above innovations, many of which were established cinematic strategies as early as 1901 and can be found much earlier than that in magic lantern shows. More importantly, the narrative elements in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN are already developed in JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. Jack's dream of the giant's gold is even more effective than the firechief's dream which is the focus of so much attention in AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. This use of dream balloons and visions, however, hardly began with cinema; magic lantern shows such as GABRIEL GRUB - A CHRISTMAS STORY used the same techniques well before the turn of the century. Furthermore, the level of narrative elaboration encountered in these two Porter films is generally comparable to those magic lantern shows that were extremely popular at the turn of the century.

The congruencies between cinema and magic lantern shows during the 1901-03 period are impressive. Fairy tales, while popular in many different forms of popular culture, were especially so as magic lantern shows. Made primarily in England during the 1880s and 90s, many of these fairy tale magic lantern shows were available for purchase in the United States through George Kleine, also the largest distributor of Edison films. They include MOTHER HUBBARD, CINDERELLA, SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON, BLUEBEARD, GULLIVER'S TRAVELS, RED RIDING HOOD and JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. Most story films from this period have their magic lantern show precursor or equivalent - including THE EXECUTION OF CZOLOGOSZ.

George Kleine underscored this intersection in his 1902-03 catalogues as he promoted multi-media events which interwove motion pictures and lantern slides. His outlook was simple: "the optical principle of the moving picture machine is practically the same as the magic lantern show, the only difference being that the pictures appear on a flexible transparent film passing through the lense in rapid succession".[13] By 1902, the cannibalization of magic lantern traditions by cinema was well advanced. In JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Porter went so far as to incorporate a magic lantern slide of the giant's castle into the film as one of Jack's visions.

A catalogue description of JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (Edison Film Supplement No. 150), which could provide a useful synopsis of the film, does not seem to have survived. Despite the film's theatrical sets, its well developed decoupage signals a continuing advancement. The exterior of Jack's house during the day, shown in shot 2, is shown again from the same camera position in shots 5 and 9, indicating a greater fluidity of narrative within a spatial framework. Jack's climb up the beanstalk to the land-in-the-sky includes shots 5, 6 and 7, while his return trip omits the counterparts of shots 6 and 7. The chase is effectively condensed, for the audience already knows the spatial relationship between Jack's house and the giant's castle. Porter had further developed his ability to make certain kinds of temporal and spatial abridgements while retaining the illusion of continuity. As Jack climbs up the beanstalk in front of the house and out of frame (shot 5), children run out and dance around the beanstalk. In the next shot, Porter employed a backdrop that makes Jack appear far above the ground, looking down on the distant landscape.

In shots 3, 4 and 5, Porter again employed exterior/interior spatial relationships:

Shot 3: the exterior of Jack's house (night) - the beanstalk grows.

Shot 4: interior of the attic where Jack is asleep in his nightgown. He dreams of the giant's wealth, wakes up and goes to the window.

Shot 5: the exterior of Jack's house (day). Jack is at the window in shot 4 but fully clothed. He leaves the window and comes out the front door.

The cut between shots 4 and 5 is extremely interesting and open to different interpretations. Porter could have intended a temporal match cut and a cut on action while simply ignoring an element of continuity (clothing) or he may have intended a temporal abridgement (roughly the time it took Jack to change his clothes). How film historians interpret this and similar cuts will determine in large part a history of cinematic strategies as it may someday be written. The relationship between the last two shots of James Williamson's FIRE!, in which the camera 'follows the rescue out the window' presents the film historian with a similar problem. Here, the fireman is never actually seen climbing out the window as he carries the victim from the burning bedroom to safety outside. This could be seen as a cut on action which is awkwardly executed or again as a temporal abridgement (excluding the time it took the fireman to climb through the window).

The problem which is brought out in these two cuts is one which faced all filmmakers of this period - temporality. While spatial relationships employed in lantern shows could readily be adopted by the cinema, temporal continuities could at best only be implied by these relationships. Film which presents itself unfolding in time, makes temporal relationships explicit. Continuity of action, embryonic at best in the static lantern shows, likewise became a central problem for early cinema. Continuity of action and temporal continuity were thus two inter-related problems that were explored in interesting and sometimes unusual ways during 1901-03. The mechanistic prejudice of film historians in the past has been to assume that early filmmakers were attempting to make match cuts, just doing it badly. The problem is then seen as one of execution and of manipulating pro-filmic elements. The reverse is more likely: early filmmakers had adequate control over pro-filmic elements - the major problem was conceptual. The evidence would suggest that neither Porter nor Williamson were attempting to match action between contiguous spaces in the period under examination.*

HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY (October 31, 1902), while not a particularly well-made film, is important because it experiments with cinematic strategies that Porter perfected in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN. In the first shot, a woman coyly drops her handkerchief on the sidewalk which is rescued by an Uncle Josh type character who then invites her into a bar. In shot 2, they sit at a table and have a drink: she slips him a mickey finn, steals his wallet and leaves. When Uncle Josh is unable to pay, the bartender kicks him out and throws a crate after him. In shot 3, a paddy wagon comes down the street; the camera pans as it backs up and parks outside a building. The bartender comes out and throws Uncle Josh in the gutter by the paddy wagon and throws a crate after him. The spatial and temporal relationships between shot 2 and 3 are determined by the continuity of action as the bartender throws Uncle Josh out of the bar. This action, coming as it does at the end of both shots, reveals the relationship between the two shots only in the final moment. Shots 2 and 3 are then shown to take place in contiguous spaces inside and outside the bar. Shot 3 repeats the same time period shown in shot 2, employing a temporal repetition from a different camera position - a strategy that Porter may have attempted as early as August 1901 in THE SAMSON-SCHLEY CONTROVERSY. Even more fundamental was Porter's use of redundant action to establish specific spatial/temporal relationships between shots. While Porter's execution remained somewhat crude and confusing in HOW THEY DO THINGS IN THE BOWERY, the same cinematic principles were soon employed with much greater sophistication in LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN.

LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (January 21, 1903) represents a consolidation of Porter's development as a filmmaker rather than the qualitative leap suggested by many film historians. As with JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, Porter chose a subject that was in the mainstream of popular entertainment and had already proved its popularity on the screen. FIGHTING THE FLAMES was a popular amusement/spectacle out at Coney Island where a brigade of firemen rescued acrobatic performers from a building that burned down several times a day. The fire rescue was also a popular subject for lantern shows: BOB THE FIREMAN, a series of 12 lithographic slides with a lecture, was made in England and distributed in the U.S. through George Kleine. In terms of the elaboration of a narrative structure, BOB THE FIREMAN and LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN contain remarkable congruencies. The slides for BOB THE FIREMAN have a

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* This significant innovation should be attributed to Zecca in HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME

highly conventionalised imagery that was in large part transferred to the screen. For the Edison Company, the fire rescue had shown its commercial potential as early as November 1896 when the Edison Company made three films: A MORNING ALARM, STARTING FOR THE FIRE and FIGHTING A FIRE. Williamson's FIRE!, as George Sadoul first pointed out, provided Porter with another direct source of inspiration. Sadoul's case, however, can be easily overstated. While the last two scenes of both films share many similarities, Porter's borrowings tended towards the pro-filmic elements of set construction and gesture rather than the specifically cinematic strategies of decoupage. But before examining these cinematic strategies in greater detail, it is necessary to reconsider the well-known controversy that surrounds the two extant versions of the film.

AN AMERICAN FIREMAN was a lost film until the 1940s. Terry Ramsaye's description of the film relied on memory and has little relationship to the actual film. Jacob's description, using the Edison catalogue description and photographs taken for copyright purposes, suggested a decoupage not found in either of the two extant versions. The Jacob's description, however, was modified in detail rather than principle by the first of the two versions to be recovered, the one at the Museum of Modern Art. The second, conflicting version is in the paperprint collection at the Library of Congress; it became available more recently and has been less widely circulated. Both films are essentially identical except for scene 7, described in the Edison catalogue.

> In this wonderful scene we show the entire fire department as described above, arriving at the scene of the action. An actual burning building is in the center foreground. On the right background the fire department is seen coming at great speed. Upon the arrival of the different apparatus, the engines are ordered to their places, hose is quickly run out from the carriages, ladders are adjusted to the windows and streams of water are poured into the burning structure. At this crucial moment comes the great climax of the series. We dissolve to the interior of the building and show a bed chamber with a woman and a child enveloped in flame and suffocating smoke. The woman rushes back and forth in the room endeavoring to escape, and in her desperation throws open the window and appeals to the crowd below. She is finally overcome by smoke and falls upon the bed. At this moment the door is smashed in by an axe in the hands of a powerful fire hero. Rushing into the room, he tears the burning draperies from the window and smashes out the entire window frame, ordering his comrades to run up a ladder. Immediately the ladder appears, he seizes the prostrate form of the woman and throws it over his shoulders as if it were an infant and quickly descends to the ground. We now dissolve to the exterior of the burning building. The frantic mother having returned to consciousness, and clad only in her night clothes, is kneeling on the ground imploring the fireman to return for her child. Volunteers are called for and the same fireman who rescued the mother quickly steps out and offers to return for the babe. He is given permission to once more enter the doomed building and without hesitation rushes up the ladder, enters the window and after a breathless wait, in which

> it appears he must be overcome by smoke, he appears with the child in his arms and returns safely to the ground. The child, being released and upon seeing its mother, rushes to her and is clasped in her arms, thus making a most realistic and touching ending to the series.[14]

In the Library of Congress version, scene 7 is three shots, in the Museum of Modern Art version it is nine. At some point, someone took the last two shots of the LoC version and intercut them, following the action as it moves back and forth between the interior and exterior, matching action several times as the fireman goes through the window. Scene 7 in the MoMA print employs the strategies of parallel editing and matching action while the LoC version uses a temporal repetition from a different camera position that is similar to the one in HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY. A considerable amount of film history has been written based on the Jacobs description buttressed by the MoMA print. Jean Mitry, for instance, used the MoMA print in which 'seven scenes decompose into 15' and concluded:

> One may say with more objectivity that if the English have discovered continuity and montage, Porter was the first to understand that the act of cinema depended on this continuity. In effect, the action is followed across several successive shots. This is a contribution which can't be overestimated. With Porter the continuity becomes genetically linked to the drama, at least to the dramatic emotion. [15]

Others such as Jacques Deslandes reject the MoMA version as re-edited at a later date. The controversy is more than a fine point of film history for it affects the way we look at the whole of early cinema.*

The preponderance of evidence indicates that the Library of Congress paperprint is the original version. The Edison paperprints from the 1902-03 period seem to be made from negatives ready for release. They include dissolves listed in the catalogue and do not have gaps or numbers indicating the possible re-arrangement of scenes as do the later Griffith/Biograph films also in the paperprint collection. Criteria for historical accuracy support the LoC print which was made and then forgotten. The negative or dupe from which the MoMA print was made was subject to 42 years of possible alteration before it reached the MoMA archives. The Museum of Modern Art has also gathered other Edison films from this period. While these films came from different sources, the record is not encouraging: all films suffered considerable abbreviation and

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*The crucial cut between the last two shots of Williamson's FIRE! can be read using the two versions of AN AMERICAN FIREMAN as a guide. If one accepts the MoMA version, it could be argued very strongly that Porter saw this cut as a match cut. If one uses the LoC print, the other possibility, that of a temporal abridgement becomes more convincing. The same holds true for the cut between shots 4 and 5 in JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. As a result, certain kinds of cinematic strategies that can be termed as progressive when using the LoC version as a frame of reference become retrogressive or deviant using the MoMA version.

'modernization' when compared to the paperprint versions, catalogue descriptions and footage counts of the same films. These include UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, BURGLAR'S SLIDE FOR LIFE and BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS. Using footage counts, the LoC version of AN AMERICAN FIREMAN is 400 ft. long which allows for 25 ft. of head titles and leaders. The LoC copy of JACK AND THE BEANSTALK is 600 ft. which also allows for 25 ft. of title and leaders. Consistency argues in favour of the LoC print. The MoMA print is 22 ft. shorter and so would have allowed for 47 ft. of head title and leaders: buyers of Edison films would seem likely to object to the inflated cost if Edison had been selling the MoMA version.

The Edison catalogue description does not coincide with either version of the film in all respects. While it indicates three shots in scene 7 and there are three shots in the LoC version, it does not account for the repetition. Although one could make a hypothetical 'catalogue version' from the LoC version by eliminating the repetition, one could not then make the MoMA version from this catalogue version. Lewis Jacobs has argued that scene 7 is important to film history because there is an awareness that one scene can contain more than one shot. This is not, however, the conceptual breakthrough Jacobs suggests* but a descriptive problem that is logically if awkwardly explained by the LoC version. Shots 7 and 9 were filmed as one shot as one scene. Shot 8 is not only inserted into this scene but shows the same scene from a different viewpoint. The Edison publicist was thus faced with the unenviable task of describing something that was extremely difficult to describe using familiar, modern story-telling techniques. Certainly he was not paid to detail cinematic strategies that might confuse perspective purchasers (he does not mention the dramatic pan in shot 7, for instance). On balance, the catalogue description also supports the paperprint version at the Library of Congress.

Film historians have much more material available to them than did Sadoul or Jacobs in the 1930s and 1940s. Today it should be clear that the LoC paperprint is internally consistent, is consistent with Porter's own development as a filmmaker and consistent with the development of international cinema during the 1901-03 period. The MoMA version is a re-edited version, probably for re-release sometime after 1910. This consistency can be shown by way of a careful analysis of the film.

In shot 1, Porter uses a dream balloon to show the firechief dreaming of a mother and child (a composition with religious overtones); the dream fades and the firechief exits. This shot is spatially and temporally independent from the rest of the film. In shot 2, a hand pulls down the arm of the fire alarm in close-up. Porter had used close-ups before as in the one-shot film BURLESQUE SUICIDE, but this is the first film in which he integrated the close-up into a more complex narrative structure. There is a temporal overlap at the end of shot 2/beginning of shot 3 as the firemen jump out of bed in response to the alarm. The firemen, on the second floor of the firehouse, put on their

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* G. A. Smith's films had more than one shot per scene in 1900

clothes and jump down the fire pole. All the firemen go down the pole at the end of shot 3; at the beginning of shot 4, which shows the ground floor of the firehouse, the firemen are again coming down the fire pole and then hitch the horses to the fire engines. Again Porter employs a temporal overlap with a redundancy of action that clearly establishes the spatial relationship between shots 3 and 4. This is the first time Porter has shown two contiguous spaces that do not have an interior/exterior relationship. The end of shot 4/ beginning of shot 5 also employs a temporal overlap. At the end of shot 4, the fire engine races off forward right. In the beginning of shot 5, the exterior of the firehouse is shown: the doors open and the fire engine comes out and goes off right. In shots 3, 4 and 5, Porter shows everything of dramatic interest that takes place within the frame. This results in a redundancy of dramatic action - the slide down the pole, the start to the fire - effectively heightening the impact of the narrative. At the same time, the repetition of action clearly establishes the spatial, temporal and narrative relationships between shots. This strategy is similar to that used by George Méliès in A TRIP TO THE MOON (August 1902) as the space rocket lands on the moon.* The first time it hits the Man-in-the-Moon in the eye, making him wince. In the second shot, the rocket lands on the surface of the moon and the voyagers disembark. While Méliès' desire to show the landing from two different points of view has legitimate story-telling reasons, the overlap also has the important function of helping audiences understand unfamiliar spatial and temporal constructions. Years later, Porter recalled that:

> From laboratory examination of some of the popular story films of the French pioneer director, George Méliès - trick pictures like A TRIP TO THE MOON - I came to the conclusion that a picture telling a story in continuity form might draw the customers back to the theatres and set to work in this direction.[16]

Porter continued to use overlapping action in his later films, including THE WHITE CAPS (1905), RESCUED FROM AN EAGLE'S NEST (1907) and THE TEDDY BEARS (1907), a film version of GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS.**

Shot 6, the race to the fire, is a conventional rendering of a familiar scene and relies on the quantity of fire engines to impress its audience, sacrificing narrative consistency to spectacle. In shot 7, a fire engine races by a park. As the fire engine begins to move out of frame, a dramatic pan follows the act on, focusing on a fireman who jumps off the fire engine in front of the burning house. Shot 8 shows the interior of a burning bedroom (convention and narrative continuity rather than continuity of action establish the relationship between shots 7 and 8). A woman gets out of bed and staggers to the window, is overcome and faints on her bed. The fireman enters by breaking in the door. He then breaks out the window. The top of the ladder appears at the window and the fireman carries out the woman then immediately returns for the child hidden in the bed covers. The fireman then returns with a hose and douses the flame.

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* Méliès employed this strategy several times in VOYAGE A TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE as well.

** A more limited use of this kind of editing can be seen in Griffith's films right up through ORPHANS OF THE STORM (1922) where the fall of the guillotine is repeated for emphasis and dramatic effect.

In shot 9, the same rescue is shown from the outside. The woman leans out the window,(in shot 8 she does not lean out the window; however, the gesture is identical) then disappears back inside; the fireman brings her down the ladder; she tells him about her child; he goes back up the ladder and returns with the child. As the mother and the child embrace in a tableau type ending, the fireman goes up the ladder with the hose. Shots 8 and 9 show the same rescue from two different perspectives. The action in the two shots is very carefully laid out and continuity of action is more than acceptable as the MoMA version demonstrates. The action in shot 8 has its counterpoint in shot 9 as the people move back and forth from inside to outside: the succession of complementary actions tie the two shots together - something Porter did only once in HOW THEY DO THINGS ON THE BOWERY. While, on one level, these two shots create a temporal repetition, on another level they each have their own distinct and complementary temporality which taken together form a whole. When the interior is shown, everything that happens inside takes place in 'real' time while everything that takes place outside is extremely condensed. The reverse is true when showing the rescue from the exterior. Whenever action takes place off-screen, time is severely condensed.

This complementary relationship between shots is a kind of proto-parallel editing involving manipulation of the mis-en-scene instead of manipulation of the film material through decoupage and manipulation of time over space. While AN AMERICAN FIREMAN uses familiar spatial constructions, its temporal construction differs radically from matching action and parallel cutting which one can see six years later in such Griffith films as THE LONELY VILLA (1909). THE LONELY VILLA'S hypotactic style requires a linear flow of time but moves back and forth between locations by fragmentation of the mis-en-scene through decoupage.

LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN remains indebted to the magic lantern show with its well-developed spatial constructions and an under-developed temporality. By showing everything within the frame, Porter is in effect making moving magic lantern slides: shots are self-contained units (or as the catalogue description concludes, "a series") tied to each other by overlapping action. Like magic lantern shows, the film is built on dissolves rather than cuts, making anything like a match cut nearly impossible. Ironically, AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has been frequently praised for its fluidity and the way it condenses time through its editorial strategies. The reverse is true: the action is retarded, repeated. Porter uses a narrative strategy that was popular among French poets of the Middle Ages whose repetitive, paratactic structures are examined in Erich Auerbach's Mimesis:

> In both ("The Chanson de Roland" and "Chanson d'Alexis") we have the same repeated returning to fresh starts, the same spasmodic progression and retrogression, the same independence of the individual occurrences and their constituent parts. Stanza 13 recapitulates the situation at the beginning of stanza 12 but carries the action further and in a different direction. Stanza 14 repeats, concretely and in a direct discourse, the statement made in stanza 13 (of which, however, the last line has already gone further). [17]

The congruency between LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN and epics of the Middle Ages can help us place Porter's style in an historical context. AN AMERICAN FIREMAN was the culminal expression of a style that decayed no sooner than it was expressed. The Edison Manufacturing Company bore little resemblance to a medieval court: cinema, driven by the revolutionizing character of fierce competition , continued its rapid transformation, quickly developing cinematic strategies that were more consistent with modern narrative techniques. The hypotactic style used by Griffith only ten or fifteen years later would be compared to that of Charles Dickens. [18]

LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN was based on a familiar narrative; its narrative elements occurred and reoccurred across many forms of popular culture. Porter was hardly the father of the story film. The film deserves our attention for its rich accumulation of cinematic techniques. Working within a genre, Porter presents the familiar material in a new and interesting way. The film, however, does not present the world with 'the principles of modern film editing' - quite the reverse. LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN has a special place in film history: it is a coherent, elaborate work which uses cinematic strategies that are outside the repertoire of classic cinema. It presents a deviant style, a direction in narrative cinema that was briefly explored then discarded and forgotten. The film shows us that cinema did not develop in a simple, linear direction. As such, it underscores the need for and value of early cinema.

NOTES

1 A Million and One Nights, Terry Ramsaye, Vol. II; 1926; pp. 414-415.

2 The Rise of American Film, Lewis Jacobs; 1968; pg. 35.

3 Stage to Screen, A. Nicholas Vardac; 1949; pg. 80.

4 "Edwin Porter", Jack Spears; Film in Review; June-July 1970.

5 Warrick Catalogue, September Supplement 1900, pg. 164.

6 Edison Film Catalogue, July 1901, pg. 13.

7 Ibid. pg. 72

8 Charles Urban Catalogue, 1903; pg. 104.

9 Jacobs, pg. 35

10 Edison Film Catalogue, July 1901, pg. 80.

11 Kleine Collection, Library of Congress.

11a Note found in Edison file, Museum of Modern Art.

12 Vardac, pp. 181-182.

13 Kleine Optical Company Catalogue, 1903, pg. 6.

14 Edison Film Catalogue, Feb. 1903.

15 Histoire du Cinema, Jean Mitry; Vol. 1; 1967, pg. 237.

16 Article from an unidentified newspaper; Porter file, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.

17 Mimesis, Erich Auerbach; 1968; pg. 114.

18 "Dickens, Griffith and the Film Today", Sergei Eisenstein; in Film Form; translated and edited by Jay Leyda; 1949; pp. 195-255.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE FILM FORM UP TO 1906

Barry Salt - UK

The annual conference of the International Federation of Film Archives, held for the year 1978 at Brighton, has been the occasion for the first complete survey ever made of the surviving films from one period of world production of fictional films. Even from so remote a period as 1900 to 1906 about 1500 films are preserved in the world's film archives, though several times that many are lost for ever. Although the work of British filmmakers was at that time important in a way that was not to be the case again for thirty years, it would be futile to try and consider their work in isolation since film production was already truly international, with complex interconnections between the features of films produced in the United States, Britain, and France, these being the only significant producing countries at that time.

Although films tended to be very short at that time, about 4 minutes in length on the average, it was nevertheless necessary to reduce the bulk of material by selection on a collaborative basis by experts in various countries. I myself have viewed what I believe to be a representative sample of about 700 titles, ignoring in particular the many hundreds of one-scene "knockabouts" in the Library of Congress Paper Print Collection, though not the more interesting dramatic films in the same place. On the basis of this, I have arrived at a picture of the development in the forms of films of that period that substantially revises the inadequate accounts given in all existing film histories.

Before 1900

The very first steps away from the "one shot - one scene" film seem to have been taken in 1898. Georges Méliès LA LUNE A UN METRE is a reproduction of one of his earlier stage spectacles, and consists of three scenes each consisting of one shot cut directly together. Since these shots, though fairly similar, have different dispositions of the actors and props on either side of the cuts, the effect is disconcerting to the present-day viewer, and may also have seemed so to Méliès and his contemporaries, since his next multi-scene films do not use direct cuts to join shots together. In CENDRILLON, made the next year, all the shot transitions are made with dissolves, and this continued to be so in nearly all his multi-shot films for a number of years. However, also in 1899, Méliès made L'AFFAIRE DREYFUS, in which every shot-scene is preceded by an explanatory narrative title for the succeeding shot, to which it is joined by a straight cut. This was of course to eventually prove the favoured way of joining up scenes, but was not continued by Méliès himself at this time. There is another aspect of this latter film which does not seem to have been commented upon, and this is the way that the actors move up close to and past the camera in two scenes; the attack on the lawyer, Labori, and the fight in the schoolroom at Rennes. In these scenes the camera is placed a little above eye-level, and the way

actors moving into the foreground are cut off at the chest level resembles the kind of framing often found in actuality footage of real street scenes taken at this period. In other words it is a purely cinematographic kind of composition. This kind of framing of action had of course appeared earlier in one or two of the one shot - one scene films such as the Lumière L'ARROSEUR ARROSE (1895), but Méliès proved to be incapable of developing this feature himself, and retreated to staging all his scenes within a plane perpendicular to the lens axis.

Photography

The two films by Georges Méliès just mentioned also show that he had already arrived at the use of muslin diffusers suspended over the studio sets used in them to soften the direct sunlight falling on the scene. Other film-makers at this time used only direct sunlight to light all their sets. The usual length of a roll of film, and hence the maximum length of a shot, was about 80 feet, and each shot was developed separately, the conclusion of development being determined by intermittent inspection, just as it was in still photography at that time.

Special Effects

Méliès had worked out and applied his full range of special camera effects before 1900; the stopping of the camera and adding or subtracting objects before restarting, superimposition on a dark background, and straight superimpositon, as in ESCAMOTAGE D'UNE DAME CHEZ ROBERT HOUDIN (1896), L'HOMME DE TETES (1898) and LA CAVERNE MAUDITE (1898) respectively. After 1900 he merely applied what he had already achieved to longer and more elaborate subjects. Méliès priority in discovering some of these techniques is not quite certain, as some now lost films of G. A. Smith of nearly the same date seem to have used them too.

In fact, in the last years of the century Méliès was in continual correspondence with G. A. Smith in England, but the works they produced are entirely different. G. A. Smith's SANTA CLAUS (1898) does use superimpositon on a dark ground, but not to create an illusive effect strictly speaking. In this film a circular inset scene shows the parallel action of Santa Claus climbing into the chimney on the roof while the children sleep in bed in the main shot, into which it is inset, and into which he appears subsequently from the chimney place. Also in this year G. A. Smith produced THE CORSICAN BROTHERS in which a similar circular inset scene was used to represent the contents of the dream of the character sleeping in the enclosing shot. It is probable that this latter use of the inset scene inspired Ferdinand Zecca's representation of a series of dream scenes as inset in HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME (1901), although in this case, as in others, Zecca's technical command caused him to create the second inset scene on a simultaneously physically present inner stage behind the main set. Subsequent use of this device in the next few years by Edwin S. Porter and others returned to Smith's method of creating inset scenes by a purely photographic method. G. A. Smith does not seem to have used the inset again himself.

The other important invention of Smith in this period was the Point of View (P.O.V.) shot, in the first instance with a circular black mask to represent the view through a large magnifying glass in GRANDMA'S READING GLASS (1898). This film shows children looking at a series of objects with the reading glass, with masked shots of what they see cut into the main shot at the appropriate points. The 1902 Biograph Co. remake of this film as GRANDPA'S READING GLASS shows the actual view, without masking of a book page through a magnifying glass, before continuing with the simulated views with a black circular mask in the same manner as the original film. The first shot in this latter film is thus a rare early occurrence of the full Point of View shot, which was hardly ever used in the next several years, whereas use of the masked P.O.V. shot rapidly proliferated. This instance also indicates the way modifications of a device occurred in the course of plagiarism, and were themselves then taken up in subsequent films by other makers, so contributing to formal evolution of the cinema.

It should be mentioned that there is evidence that the various devices mentioned above as being introduced into cinema by G. A. Smith had already been used by him in photographic lantern slide narratives that he made and marketed before the arrival of cinematography.

According to descriptions of R. W. Paul's film ON A RUNAWAY MOTOR CAR THROUGH PICCADILLY CIRCUS, it may have been important in initiating the development of the technique of single-frame animation. Apparently this film, taken with a car-mounted camera, showed an extremely accelerated progression through the streets, but it is not clear whether this was done by extremely slow steady cranking of the camera, or by exposing a single frame at a time, with a brief pause in between, as is required for true time-lapse of object animation technique.

1900 - 1906: The Basic Forms Emerge

Before the Nickelodeon boom and subsequent world-wide increase in film production from 1906 onwards, the pressures on the evolution and development of the forms of films were low. The only absolute demand from audiences was that films be photographed (and printed) sharply in focus and with the correct exposure. Even after 1900 there were still audiences somewhere for just about anything that moved on a screen. Around 1903 there was a definite trend towards longer, multi-scene films, although the number of titles produced did not increase that much. Despite the relative lack of competitive pressure, some cinematic devices were taken up gradually by many film-makers, while others were never repeated after their invention; one instance is the unique handling of parallel action with an inset image within part of the main scene in G. A. Smith's SANTA CLAUS of 1898. Another instance that had some influence only for a short while derives from Georges Méliès' way of making shot transitions in CENDRILLON (1899) and a number of subsequent films.

Shot Transitions

When there was no appropriate intertitle to separate succeeding scenes, Méliès used dissolves rather than cuts from one shot to the next in his early films. Other examples of this procedure occur in BARBE-BLEUE (1901) and LE VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE (1902), and despite examples of what was to become the standard approach available in the work of contemporary English film-makers, W. S. Porter and others took up this type of shot transition. The shots in his LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1902) are all joined by dissolves, even though the film is basically an imitation of James Williamson's FIRE! (1901) in which all the transitions are made with cuts. And in LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, presumably made by Porter or under his supervision at Edison in 1901, the transition from a Very Long Shot of a beach resuscitation to a closer shot of the same is made with a dissolve.

In ALICE IN WONDERLAND (Hepworth, 1903) there are a number of transitions of this kind, with dissolves in to a closer shot, and also dissolves when the actress walks out of one shot into the next. This is despite the fact that the position matching from one shot to the next is what would come to be considered fairly good many years later. (It must be emphasized that Méliès was not using the dissolve to indicate a time lapse between shots in his films, since many of the instances in his films mentioned earlier occur when there is no time lapse between characters walking out of one shot into a spatially adjoining shot. In fact, the use of a dissolve to indicate a time lapse was not established as a convention till the later nineteen-twenties.)

The use of fades is incredibly rare in the early years of the century; those that occur in ALICE IN WONDERLAND are probably unsuccessful attempts at making a dissolve in the camera by fading out then winding back and fading in on the next shot. The earliest cameras did not have footage counters, and a miscounting of the number of turns back with the crank handle could easily replace a dissolve with a fade-out and -in. For this and other obvious reasons the use of dissolves made in the camera between every shot was not an efficient procedure, and neither was making dissolves in the printer by an equivalent process for every separate print of the film produced, so it is no great surprise that the usage disappeared after 1903.

And it was displaced by J. H. Williamson's creation of action moving from shot to shot cut directly together in STOP THIEF! and FIRE! of 1901. The first of these is the source of the subsequent developments in "chase" films, and has the characters moving out of the first shot into the second set in a different place and joined to the first with a straight cut, moving across that scene towards the camera, and then into the third and final shot. FIRE! introduces this feature into a more complex construction. In this film an actor moves from a scene outside a burning building by exiting from the side of the frame and into a shot outside a fire station, then the fire cart moves out of this shot into the distant background of a shot of a street, advancing forward and out of the frame past the camera, and then into the original scene outside the burning house, all shots being

joined by straight cuts, as are all the subsequent shots of the film. The next shot is of the interior of an upper room of the house from which an occupant is rescued by a fireman who comes through the window. The next cut to the outside view again is on the movement of rescuer and rescued through the window, though the continuity is imperfect, there being half a second of movement missing between the two shots. As with some of G. A. Smith's films, it seems that FIRE! was modelled on narrative lantern slide sequences previously made by Bamforth on the same subject, though obviously action continuity of the kind we have in the film was impossible in these.

Another contemporary example of "outside to inside" cuts with time continuity occurs in THE KISS IN THE TUNNEL, probably made for the Bamforth Company about 1900. This film shows a railway train going into a tunnel in Extreme Long Shot, and then the next shot shows the interior of a railway carriage compartment, and then finally the train coming out of the tunnel in Very Long Shot.

So far no films repeating the continuous shot to shot movement of Williamson's films are known before 1903 and the appearance of DARING DAYLIGHT ROBBERY, made by the Sheffield Photographic Company. This film again has an onlooker moving from the first high angle shot of a burglar breaking into a shot of a street elsewhere in which he alerts the police, and then there is a straight cut back to the original scene. The innovation in this film is that a chase then develops through a series of shots, so combining features of both FIRE! and STOP THIEF! into a whole that was one of the most commercially successful of all films made up to that date. DARING DAYLIGHT ROBBERY was made available for sale in America by the Edison Co. under the title DAYLIGHT BURGLARY, and it seems fairly certain that Edwin S. Porter had seen it before making his THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY several months later.

In some respects THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY does represent an elaboration of its model. The most important of these was the addition of what might be called an "emblematic" shot, which in this case shows a Medium Close Up of a cowboy bandit pointing a gun straight at the camera. This shot, which could be placed at either the beginning or end of the film by the exhibitor, does not represent any action that occurs in the film, but can be considered to indicate the general nature of the film. At any rate, when the device was copied subsequently in many films, this is clearly the way it was used, as in RAID ON A COINERS DEN (Alfred Collins, 1904), where the first shot shows a close up insert of three hands coming into the frame from different directions; one holding a pistol, another with clenched fist, and the third holding a pair of hand-cuffs. A similar instance occurs in the famous RESCUED BY ROVER (Hepworth, 1905) and various other films of these years, and the device continued to occur up to at least 1908, being used in some of Griffith's first films, amongst others. In a small number of cases it occurs at the end of films instead of the beginning. Since the emblematic shot may include characters present in the first true scene of the film narrative, it may not be immediately recognised as such, since it is always a close shot before the inevitable Long Shot framing

of the first true scene, but the matter is clinched if there is wild positional mis-match between characters in the two shots and the rest of the film has fair continuity for the period.

The method of overall construction stemming from FIRE! that has been described above continued to be applied over and over again in the years after 1903; applied to new versions of the subjects already broached, and without much variation - though one later example has the chase in the middle rather than the end, (STOLEN BY GYPSIES, Edwin S. Porter, 1905).

The genre of comedy chase films descending from STOP THIEF! are invariably simpler in construction than the dramatic films incorporating chases, having a simpler linear movement of the action through shots set in a succession of different places, without cutbacks to an established scene. They too only emerge as a steady stream from 1903 onwards, with such titles as THE PICKPOCKET - A CHASE THROUGH LONDON (Alf Collins, 1903), and most famously and influentially, Biograph's PERSONAL of 1904. The descendents of this last include a total plagiarism made at Pathé in 1905, DIX FEMMES POUR UN MARI.

Films using the chase construction were all original film subjects, with the possible exception of THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, which may have been based on a preceding stage melodrama of the same name, and they are nearly all without intertitles between the shots. But there was also a category of films adapted from stage or literary works, or even actual events, in which a more complex narrative was handled within several minutes running time by using a narrative or descriptive title before all (or most of) the scenes. This form was of course established before 1900 in some of Méliès longer films such as L'AFFAIRE DREYFUS, and in the period under consideration it was occasionally combined with the chase after 1904, as in Ferdinand Zecca's SCENES OF CONVICT LIFE (1905), where the shots of the chase are cut straight together. This sort of construction obviously leads on to the flexible form that became usual in subsequent years.

It should be mentioned that around half the films surviving from before 1906 consist of just one scene done in one shot, and these are of no interest as far as film construction is concerned.

Directions

Georges Méliès seems to have fairly quickly realised the importance of "correct" directions of entrances and exits for the smoothness of film continuity, even though he was using dissolves between every shot. Certainly by LE VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE (1902) he was consistently using an exit frame right followed by an entrance frame left, and vice versa, when the characters moved out of one shot into the next set in a different, but neighbouring location. This was not the case for most other film-makers at this period, though obviously anyone who makes the directions of entrances and exits purely at random without having thought about the matter is going to get them "right" some of the time, just by chance. Of course it was made

slightly easier for Méliès to come to grips with this problem, because he was working in the one place, his studio stage, whereas everyone else making multi-scene films was working in a number of different real locations in succession in the one film, and these locations tended to put some pressures on the way the action in each shot should be staged.

In multi-scene films shot on real locations the transition to the next shot was often cued by movement forwards out past the camera, or conversely, as already established in J. H. Williamson's FIRE!, and in the next shot the actor or actors would be discovered already within the frame in a new location. For this type of transition it is almost immaterial which side of the camera the exit (or entrance) is made. However, if the actors are discovered moving strongly in one direction not too far from the camera in the next shot, it gives smoother continuity (according to subsequent ideas), if they exit in the same direction.

In general in this period one either has a series of shots with axial movement towards the camera from the far distance, or a series of shots with movement into the frame past the camera moving away into the far distance, but the subtler mixed combination of movement out of frame past the camera followed by a shot in the opposite direction with movement into the frame past the camera, as in Haggar's DESPERATE POACHING AFFRAY (1903) is extremely rare.

Scene Dissection

Prior to 1900 the only instance of a scene being divided up into a number of shots occurs in G. A. Smith's GRANDMA'S READING GLASS (1898), in which the various objects a child looks at with the magnifying glass are shown inside a circular mask as Point of View (P.O.V.) Big Close Ups. This device was repeated by Smith in SCENES ON EVERY FLOOR (1902) and AS SEEN THROUGH A TELESCOPE (1900) with masked vignettes representing the actors P.O.V. through a keyhole and a telescope respectively. This device was applied to a slightly more extended narrative in A SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE (Biograph, 1903), in which the series of keyhole-peepings and associated P.O.V. shots lead the wife and detective to a confrontation with her unfaithful husband inside one of the rooms spied on through a cut on action and change of camera direction of 90 degrees. By the definition of "scene" being used here, which corresponds to the modern "script scene" or "master scene", this last cut described is a transition from one scene to the next.

An interesting example of the evolution of filmic devices through modified plagiarism is provided by Edwin S. Porter's GAY SHOE CLERK (1903), which combines, as so often with Porter, features from two or more previous films to give something novel. This film, which shows a shoe salesman taking the opportunity to fondle a female customer's foot in a Big Close Up insert cut into the main scene, derives from THE LITTLE DOCTORS for its general construction, and from a French film of 1901 for its subject matter. This latter film shows a man with a telescope spying on another

man who is taking advantage of his helping a woman onto a bicycle to also fondle her foot, but in this case an identical Big Close Up is seen inside a circular mask and cut in as a P.O.V. telescope insert.

For the development of cutting to another camera position within the course of a scene, we have to turn back to G. A. Smith's THE LITTLE DOCTORS (1901), which was re-issued in shortened form as THE SICK KITTEN (1903). In this film there is a cut straight in from a Long Shot of two children administering a spoon of medicine to a kitten to a Big Close Up insert of the kitten with the spoon in its mouth. The position matching across the cut is not exact, but it could be worse for what is the first ever use of this device.

As with other devices, 1903 saw the real beginnings of the continuous development of closer shots cut into a scene, and the most remarkable occurs in that little known master-work MARY JANE'S MISHAP, again from G. A. Smith. Here there is repeated three times in the course of the first scene cuts in cuts in and then out again from a Long Shot of Mary Jane lighting the fire to a Medium Close Shot of her, admittedly with poor position matching. The use of the device begins to proliferate in 1904 with Medium Shots cut into scenes in THE STRENUOUS LIFE (Edison) and THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN (Biograph), and then becomes quite common from 1905 onwards in films too numerous to catalogue from France, Britain and the U.S.A., but we might mention LA CALZA (Pathé, 1905), MODERN BRIGANDAGE (Pathé, 1906), THE FIREBUG (Biograph, 1905), DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND (Edison, 1906), EINE FLIENGENJAGD (Skladanowski, 1905) amongst many.

It really becomes necessary to distinguish at this point between the true Close Up and the insert, which I define, following later nomenclature, as a close shot of some object or part of an actor's body <u>other than the face</u>. This distinction seems to have been made in practice at the time, for there were studios such as Vitagraph where the insert was used, but not the true Close Up or Medium Close Shot from 1905 onwards. The use of a close shot of a letter or other text at the point where it is written or read in a film obviously makes a vast difference to the possibilities of film narrative, and early examples that must be mentioned include the tombstone inscription in MARY JANE'S MISHAP, a cut to a Close Up of a notice on a gate in THE WATCH DOGS (Pathé, 1904) and insert shots of documents in BUY YOUR OWN CHERRIES (R. W. Paul, 1904) and HONEST PEGGY (Pathé, c. 1905). Inserts to show clearly details important to the story are used repeatedly in THE MISSING LEGACY (Alf Collins, 1906) and FALSELY ACCUSED (probably Hepworth, 1905), and from this point on we can consider the usage well-established.

The earliest cut within a scene without any real change of scale or closeness of shot, and with strict time continuity, occurs in LADIES SKIRTS NAILED TO A FENCE (Bamforth, 1900), in which the second shot is taken at 180 degrees to the first from the other side of the fence, with time continuity, to make the action clear. This could be called in a vague way a reverse angle cut, but is certainly not of the interesting kind that involves the interaction of two people facing each other. In any case, this particular instance is achieved by an ingenious cheat which depends on moving the actors to the other side of the symmetrical fence without moving the camera for the second shot.

In 1901 someone at the Edison Company applied the Méliès dissolve to join together the shots that form the single continuous scene of LIFE RESCUE AT LONG BRANCH, although Méliès himself had only used the dissolve between separate scenes in different locations. The Biograph Company imitation of this film, CAUGHT IN THE UNDERTOW (1902), has the shots joined together with straight cuts, and the last moves straight in down the camera axis to Medium Long Shot of the resuscitation. Also in 1902, a British film, THE INTERFERING LOVERS, features a transition by a cut from Very Long Shot, with a simultaneous change of camera direction of 60 degrees, so covering any minor discrepancies of actor position between the two shots and ensuring a smooth transition (as seen in subsequent terms). However this principle was not consciously realized by the film-maker or his contemporaries, and for the next decade cuts to a closer shot continued to be made straight in down the camera axis.

There was in fact no consolidated development in the use of cutting to different angles within a scene before 1906, unlike the case of cutting in to a closer shot, but for the sake of completeness I should also mention a true pair of reverse angles from pursuing car to pursued, and vice versa, in THE RUNAWAY MATCH made by Alf Collins in 1903. There are also a number of cuts to other side of a wall in comedy chases, for instance the French film WET PAINT of about 1905.

Other Forms of Shot Transition

The already mentioned MARY JANE'S MISHAP (G. A. Smith, 1903) includes a remarkable and quite unique pair of vertical wipes to effect the transition into and out of a closer shot of the inscription on her gravestone, and as well as this there are a few occasions when fades were used intentionally in the years between 1900 and 1906, one fairly trivial instance being their use to begin and end each of the one-shot scenes in LA VIE DU CHRIST made by Jasset and Hatot for Gaumont in 1906. In this case every scene is preceded by a narrative title put in between the fades. Much more interestingly, in THE OLD CHORISTER (1904), scenes are joined directly by a fade-out and a fade-in, and in another case by an iris-out and a fade-in.

Another unique occurrence in these years is the use of a focus-pull to give an out-of-focus blur on a Medium shot of a man kissing a beautiful woman, then a cut to another out-of-focus blur which pulls in to a Medium Shot of the same man in bed kissing his ugly wife, from whom he recoils in revulsion when he realises that he has been dreaming. The film is LET ME DREAM AGAIN (1900) by G. A. Smith, but there were to be no other examples of the use of this device for a couple of decades, transitions in and out of dreams being done with dissolves from Zecca's Pathé remake of this film as REVE ET REALITE (1902) onwards to AND THE VILLAIN STILL PURSUED HER (Vitagraph, 1906).

Cross-Cutting Between Parallel Actions

As has already been described, the practice of cutting away for one shot from the enclosing scene was quite well established by the end of these years, but the idea of doing this repeatedly was not. A preliminary stage of this latter development may be visible in a few films in which the shots alternate repeatedly between aerial events and those connected with them on the ground. One example occurs in BRITISH TROOPS FIGHTING COLONIAL REBELS (Prod. Co. Unknown, ca. 1905), in which there are cuts between soldiers in an aeroplane shooting at soldiers on the ground and the latter shooting back. A similar instance without so many cuts occurs in RESCUED IN MID-AIR (Arthur Melbourne-Cooper, ca. 1906).

But most remarkably, fully developed cross-cutting appears in a race against time situation in THE HUNDRED-TO-ONE SHOT (Vitagraph, 1906), with repeated cuts between a speeding car and events at its destination. This seems to be the beginning of a development that continued through 1907 into 1908, and for which D. W. Griffith incorrectly claimed credit.

Dreams, Memories, Visions, Etc.

The first way that dream memories were treated was as a separate scene inset within the frame containing the scene showing the person dreaming. The famous example here is Zecca's HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME (1901). This film used the stage device of showing the sleeping man's memories by having part of the back-cloth vanish and reveal a smaller set behind, on which was enacted the past scene, or in this case, series of scenes. This device is repeated using photographic means in the first scene of Porter's LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN; the inset being another scene placed in a dark part of the frame by superimposition. There must surely be other subsequent examples in the next several years, but I have not found them so far. The related representation of spirits, angels, and so on by a simple superimposition had already appeared before 1900, and was continued through this period in films such as Uncle Tom's Cabin (Edwin S. Porter, 1903), THE OLD CHORISTER (1905), and DRINK AND REPENTANCE (1905).

An alternative approach particularly convenient for representing multi-scene dreams must surely have appeared before the instance of AND THE VILLAIN STILL PURSUED HER (Vitagraph, 1906), which has already been

mentioned as using dissolves into and out of the dream section.

Dialogue Titles

Towards the end of this period there are isolated instances of dialogue titles being cut in before a scene in the place of the usual narrative title, but the films being produced at this time are still not long enough to contain a continuously developed complex narrative in which the usefulness of such a feature would be obvious. The earliest example I have noticed occurs in Porter's THE EX-CONVICT of 1904, and there are others in LA VIE DU CHRIST (Jasset and Hatot, 1906), ALI BABA ET LES QUARANTES VOLEURS (Pathé, 1905) and an English film of unknown title produced by the Urban company in 1906. (This last film is catalogued as "FATHER", MOTHER WANTS YOU, which is actually the first dialogue it contains, well into the body of the story.) In the case of the two French films mentioned the dialogue titles they incorporate are the best known lines their respective stories contain.

Trick Effects

It is my view that excessive attention has been devoted to early trick films, and particularly those of Méliès, in view of the fact that they proved a deadend as far as the development of the cinema is concerned. Nevertheless, such films still formed a fair part of production in the early years of the century, though the decline in their commercial importance was already evident by 1906. This is not to say that they have no other interesting qualities, just that enough is enough. The basic techniques that Méliès and everyone else used had already been developed and established as standard before 1900, though with one exception which will be noted below. There is no necessity to describe these techniques which involve stopping the camera and adding or subtracting elements of the scene, superimpositions of various kinds made in the camera, including those made on a dark field within the background shot, and reverse motion, nor to comment on the films in which they appear. Their occurence and manner of execution is always quite obvious, particularly since no cameras of the period had perfect registration and hence the two parts of a superimposition always move with respect to each other. There was no development in what Méliès did with them either, with the possible exception of his science-fiction fantasies.

The transference of Méliès techniques to scenes shot in real surroundings (rather than on a stage set) by English film makers also has its place in the history books already, but since it largely happened after 1900 some discussion is in order. The earliest examples were made by the Hepworth company in that very year, and consist of EXPLOSION OF A MOTOR CAR and THE BATHERS. The effects in the first are achieved in the standard way by stopping the camera, substituting an imitation motor car for a real one, then starting the camera again and exploding the imitation one, and so on.

Similar later films show a man being literally flattened by a steamroller and other events effected in the same way. THE BATHERS simply shows two bathers undressing and diving into the water, then the action apparently reverses in time and runs its course backwards to the initial state. The reversed second half of the film was produced by printing each frame of the original negative in reverse order, and the laborious manipulation this involved to make each separate print ensured that after one or two similar productions the idea was abandoned.

The British motor car trick films can be related to the extra-filmic tradition of British nonsense, and lead me to mention HOW IT FEELS TO BE RUN OVER, also made by Hepworth in 1900. In this film a motor car drives straight at the camera and when it is right up to it and out of focus there is a cut to a black frame decorated with stars and dashes and exclamation marks, and then a cut to the title "Oh, Mother will be pleased". The climax of this sort of thing was THE BIG SWALLOW made by Williamson in 1901. In this, a shot of a photographer about to take a picture of a reluctant pedestrian is succeeded by a photographer's Point of View shot of the man approaching till his head fills the screen, at which point he opens his mouth to almost full screen size, and then there is a cut to a shot of the photographer and his camera falling around in a black void, and then a final Long Shot of the pedestrian walking away munching. An interesting technical point concerning this film is that the focus is adjusted as the actor approaches the camera to keep the image sharp. Such adjustment of the focus during the course of a shot is extremely rare before World War 1, and the only other early examples occur in W. GIBSON - EXCENTRICITE AMERICAINE.

The most important development in trick effects during the period we are concerned with first appears in a film made around 1900 and attributed to Arthur Melbourne-Cooper. This involves model animation done by shooting one single frame at a time, with minute adjustment of the model's position between exposures, so producing the effect of movement when the film is projected, and the subject is a match appeal for the Boer War. A stick figure made of matches is animated by this process, and it appears to write the text of the appeal on a blackboard. (The Méliès films that involve animated objects are done by pulling them about with invisible wires.) The technique of frame by frame animation requires a camera with gearing modified so that one turn of the crank handle exposes one frame of film. It is possible that this technique was more widely known at the turn of the century than is now apparent, for there exists a 1902 Biograph film of the demolition of the Star theatre made by time lapse photography using the same type of camera adaptation. In any case frame by frame animation became standard procedure from 1904 onwards, with films such as THE WHOLE DAM FAMILY AND THE DAM DOG (Edwin S. Porter, 1904), EL HOTEL ELECTRICO (Segundo de Chomon, 1905), HUMOROUS PHASES OF FUNNY FACES (J. Stuart Blackton, 1906) and many others.

A new development in Georges Méliès work may be connected with single frame animation. It is difficult to be certain if his LE ROI DU MAQUILLAGE (1904)

which shows what would now be thought of as a "Wolfman" type facial transformation, has been executed by single frame filming or a series of closely spaced and even dissolves from one stage of the addition of more hair, etc. to the next.

Edwin S. Porter pioneered the use of double exposure in separate areas of the frame created by masking in the camera or printer rather than using a black area built into the decor as Méliès and others had done. An early example of this technique occurs in THE TWENTIETH CENTURY TRAMP (1902), in which the frame is split into two fields by a horizontal mask line, the upper area showing an airship shot on a stage set, and the lower a pan across the sky line to give the illusion of relative movement in the opposite direction of the upper scene. The upper half was masked off while the lower was exposed, and vice versa. Porter repeated the device in the better known example of DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND (1906), and after several more years it became quite commonly used. Other early attempts to handle similar stories involving flying such as RESCUED IN MID-AIR (Melbourne-Cooper, 1906) use simple superimposition with white coloured flying machines and people to minimize background print-through.

Optical Printing

It is possible that the masking used by Porter to create his flying effects was done in the printer rather than in the camera; certainly he had constructed an optical (or projection) printer by 1902, as UNCLE JOSH AT THE MOVING PICTURE SHOW proves. In that film the already existing Edison film of the Black Diamond Express is printed in reduced size on the area of a cinema screen represented within a part of the shot, and this would be impossible to do with an ordinary contact printer. The well-known matte shot backgrounds in Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (1903), were presumably also done with the same optical printer, though they could in principle have been done in an ordinary contact printer. There is no visible evidence for any other film-maker making and using an optical printer before the nineteen-twenties.

Photography and Lighting

The bulk of film production in this period continued to be done under direct sunlight alone, either on natural exteriors, on open-air stages with built sets representing interiors, or in the case of some major companies on glass-roofed stages. However in 1904 this natural light began to be helped out on occasion with artificial lighting. This was provided by either simple arc flood-lights on floor stands of the type already in use in the theatre and still photography, or by racks of mercury vapour tube lamps. The latter were usually referred to by the name of their principal manufacturer, Cooper-Hewitt, and the light they gave, similar to that from a very large modern "soft-light", is very difficult to distinguish from diffuse natural light coming into a film studio through the glass ceiling. In the early years light from Cooper-Hewitt lamps was used purely to supplement natural light, but arc flood-lights were used straight away to create special lighting effects, possibly

modelled on existing theatrical usage, though no definite records exist of such theatrical usage prior to 1906.

In any case, the scene of "Old Age" in Edwin S. Porter's THE SEVEN AGES has a fire effect done with an arc flood-light in a fire place before which an old couple sit, illuminated solely by its light.

Partial uses of arc lighting also occur in RESCUED BY ROVER (Hepworth, 1905), in which the scenes in the gypsy's attic room are illuminated by a pair of arc lights to simulate the light from the window, though as an addition to the general diffuse natural light, and in THE FIREBUG (Biograph, 1905) arc floodlighting is used to heighten the effect of the fire-raising, though without any attempt at a flickering effect. (In this context, it is worth mentioning that Williamson's FIRE! seems to have a flash of arc light put in from a corner of the room interior which is on fire, though it is just possible that it is photographic flash powder doing the job.) Another very early attempt at a lighting effect is the use of the sun reflected in a small mirror to produce a patch of bright light simulating a lantern beam in MAN MEETS RAGGED BOY a British film of 1902. An entirely different approach to the simulation of a beam of light occurs in a Pathé film of circa 1905, RESCUE FROM A SHIP WRECK, in which a scene lit by the beam from a lighthouse is revealed within the confines of a diagonal band delineated by a soft-edged mask in front of the lens, which is meant to represent the outline of the beam.

Returning to the eruption of effect lighting in 1905, another extremely interesting example is in FALSELY ACCUSED, probably from the Hepworth studio. Here a man searching a totally dark room by lantern light is photographed doing just that, the sole illumination of the scene coming from a tiny arc concealed in his lantern! It seems to have been several years before this technique turned up again in films. There would seem to have been someone at Hepworth aware of the possibilities of available light photography, because in the same year STOLEN GUY has a bonfire scene lit solely by the light from the bonfire.

Some innovative camera work was being done at this time by Billy Bitzer and F. A. Dobson at Biograph. 1906 saw the appearance of THE PAYMASTER photographed on location by Bitzer and featuring an available light interior scene in a watermill in which sunlight coming through windows from the side produces a strong charoscuro effect. In the same year F. A. Dobson produced THE SILVER WEDDING and THE TUNNEL WORKERS doubling as director and cameraman, as was quite usual at this period, and in these films, more by the nature of the sets he had constructed than by the exact sources of light used, created scenes with illuminated backgrounds and dark foregrounds showing silhouette figures of actors, scenes of a type that were not extensively exploited till a decade later.

Finally, and more importantly, what might be considered the beginning of figure lighting as something separate from general scene lighting can be seen in LA VIE DU CHRIST (Jasset & Hatot, 1906). In a few scenes of this

film extra arc lighting was applied to the figures alone, on top of the general diffused daylight falling equally on both set and figures, so sharpening the modelling of the latter in a new way that was to become standard not only at Gaumont, but also at Vitagraph over the next several years.

Camera Movements

Although well-established in actuality filming before 1900, panning shots only rarely appear in dramatic films made before 1906. The earliest examples I have seen occur in 1903, in DESPERATE POACHING AFFRAY (Haggar), and THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (E.S. Porter), in which there is also a pan and tilt combination to follow action. In the next couple of years, the use of pans to follow action on exteriors became fairly widely diffused, though still very rare in its occurrence. They are most likely to appear in Porter's films and in Pathé company films, and just about the only instance of pans on studio interior scenes occurs in Pathé's ALADDIN AND HIS WONDERFUL LAMP (1906).

As for tracking shots, their use in showing views from the front of moving trains before 1900 was not generalized to fiction film in this period, though the unique example of THE RUNAWAY MATCH (Alf Collins, 1903), which shows in succession the view from a pursued car and then that from the pursuing car should be noted.

Acting

There are no general trends to be discerned in the acting of films of the 1900-1906 period, but, it should be pointed out that an appreciable number contain very naturalistic acting, both from professional and non-professional actors. To choose a couple of examples at random, the acting in both Williamson's SOLDIERS RETURN (1902) and in Porter's THE KLEPTOMANIAC (1905) is very restrained, as is that in Biograph's THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE (1905).

On the other hand, many films have extremely crude acting, as in BRITISH TROOPS FIGHTING COLONIAL REBELS (ca. 1905). It is very difficult to see any patterns emerging, either taken by studio or by director.

Coloured Films

In the 1900-1906 period all-over uniform tinting and toning of prints was little used, but a certain number of films were made available with the images differentially coloured. In the case of Méliès' films this was done by handpainting each frame in a number of different colours, and the effect here was particularly suitable, giving the images with their stylized flat scenery the look of naive woodcuts block-coloured. A good example is provided by a surviving print of LE ROYAUME DES FEES (1903). Such prints were sold at double the price of ordinary prints. Other companies also occasionally used hand colouring on fantasy subjects, but in 1905 Pathé introduced superior stencil-tinting process, performed by applying the tints through thin metal stencils to the appropriate areas,

one stencil to each colour in each frame, the outlines exactly matching those of the successive positions of the moving figures. Initially only two or three colours were used, but after a few years the number was increased to around five. The process was maintained into the nineteen-thirties. In surviving copies of Pathé stencil-tinted films the colours are much less intense than those in most copies of hand-coloured films, and there is some reason to believe that this was so when they were new, because of the different method of application of the colour.

Conclusion

It should be emphasized that the films made before 1906 that still exist are only a fraction of the production of that period, and so if a particular feature is found in several of them, it is very probable that it also appeared in many more that are now lost: for instance if about 30 surviving films have closer shots cut into the middle of a scene, then it is likely that there were more than 100 films actually made with this feature. On the other hand, if there is only a unique occurrence of a particular feature in surviving films, then it may well have been unique at the time.

With this in mind, we can say that the major trends in the development of film form that emerge quite clearly through this period are the practice of cutting in to a closer shot of one kind or another inside a scene, the elaboration of "chase" construction, and the use of Point of View shots. In 1904-1906 we can also see the beginning of what was probably the continuous development of cross-cutting between parallel actions, and also the use of arc lighting for effect and figure lighting. There could be more to be discovered in these areas, but I personally do not expect any great surprises.

JAMES A WILLIAMSON: AMERICAN VIEW

Martin Sopocy - USA

1. Lantern-slide Documentarian

As long as Edison's motion pictures were seen by one customer at a time in Kinetoscope machines, it was hard to think of them as anything but photographs: a portrait (say) of a man wearing a boater where the subject turns toward you suddenly and tips his hat. A miracle has happened: for an instant the photograph has come to life.

Before long, moving pictures abound of prizefights, horse races, vaudeville routines, scenic views, street scenes, even a rescue by a fireman.* (Note: In discussing the pre-projected motion picture it is important to keep in mind that not all of Edison's Kinetoscope films were shot in the Black Maria. The evidence of the 1894 Raff & Gammon catalog of Kinetoscope films and of W K L Dickson's History of the Kinetograph, Kinetoscope & Kinetophonograph (1895) suggests that from the very beginning there was some degree of on-the-street shooting of unrehearsed subjects.) Like any other photographs, they are taken close up or at a distance, depending on the subject. Since, via the camera lens, the peepshow photos duplicate the way the naked eye sees its surroundings and are governed by the same laws of perspective, one of their greatest novelties is the way a figure or an object in them seems to grow larger or smaller, depending on whether it moves toward or away from the camera. Apart from defining the space within which the picture has been composed, the edges of these photographs are without significance: they are merely the unexposed portions of the film.

Then in France in 1896, Louis Lumière finds a practical way to project the photographs onto a screen, and soon many customers at a time can see them. This is the cue for the showmen to move in. To the delight of seeing an object grow as it approaches the lens they add a thrill by making that object a speeding train.

Almost at once - between 1896 and the early years of the century - some work of exceptional interest is done at the English seaside resort of Brighton, by colleagues and associates of the photographer and inventor William Friese-Greene. One of the scores who have claimed credit for inventing the motion picture camera, Friese-Greene's claim - notwithstanding that he was able in 1910 to persuade an American court that he had made and patented a workable camera before Edison's - is left more dubious than ever by the scrutiny that British scholars have given it in recent years.* (Note: See "William Friese-Greene and the Origins of Kinematography" by Brian Coe, Photographic Journal, March and April, 1962; also The Beginnings of the Cinema in England by John Barnes, London/New York, 1976.) Yet his sheer enthusiasm for the moving photographs - for which, by the way, he never sought a commercial use - may still get him a place in cinema history, for it was this enthusiasm, apparently, that infected a gathering of Sussex hobbyists and professionals called The Hove Camera Club, which he seems to have frequented while living at Brighton. When a talented local mechanic

named Alfred Darling succeeded in fashioning some cameras out of the projectors that had just begun to appear on the market - beginning what would soon be a thriving business as a manufacturer of film equipment - three important pioneers of British cinema presently emerged from the club's ranks: Esme Collings, George Albert Smith, and, founder of the club, James Williamson. They constitute what Sadoul termed the School of Brighton.

Collings, whose connection with Friese-Greene was the most immediate, was the first of the three to take moving pictures. A well-established portrait photographer of Brighton, he had at one time been in partnership with Friese-Greene in London. At a lecture to the Croyden Camera Club on December 2, 1896, Friese-Greene showed two of Collings' pictures, THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW and a fragment of a popular play called THE BROKEN MELODY, performed by August Van Biene and members of his company.

Nothing is known to have survived of Collings' work. So far as I have been able to find, none of G. A. Smith's films are now in American archives, but there are four 16mm prints of Williamson's at George Eastman House: A BIG SWALLOW (1901), FIRE! (1901), THE ACROBATIC TRAMPS (1902), and THE SOLDIER'S RETURN (1902).* (Note: The National Film Archive of Britain lists, in its 1966 catalog, some eighteen of Williamson's films - including a 77-foot excerpt from ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION which apparently includes the famous cut - and thirteen of Smith's. See filmography at end of this article.) Most American students, in trying to form an idea of the work of the Brighton filmmakers, have had to rely on old catalog descriptions, rare stills and frame reproductions, and the accounts of their work (fortunately excellent) by Rachel Low and, especially, Georges Sadoul, one of the first writers to recognize their more than national significances in the development of the film narrative.* (Note: See bibliography.) From these sources one might gather that the work of James Williamson is of particular interest, and this impression is supported by the Williamson films at Eastman House.

A year-around resident of Brighton's twin city of Hove, James A Williamson - whom we know was born sometime during 1855 and somewhere in Scotland - was a druggist by profession. Rachel Low tells us that "he first took up cinematography as a novelty to add to his lantern lectures." This is intriguing enough to make us want to know more, and indeed the point is of more than casual interest, for such was the popularity of lantern-slide shows in Britain during the 1890s that when projected motion pictures came in, showmen as well as their public tended to think of them as a novel form of lantern-slide entertainment. One consequence of this was that British filmmakers from the start designed their pictures to fit the established format of the lantern-slide show, with rather unique and interesting results, as we'll see. Another consequence of this lantern-slide prejudice was that it saved them from that grossly unphotographic prejudice which equated the projected picture with a theatrical stage.

But while the exact nature and extent of Williamson's involvement with lantern-slide showmanship is not know, we do know from Frederick Talbot's

contemporary sketch of him that, becoming interested in the cinematograph, he "produced a projector, but at first confined his efforts to showing moving pictures for the edification and enlightenment of his interested club-fellows." This was in September, 1896, according to Rachel Low, but he took no moving pictures of his own until the spring of 1897. By that date, both Collings and G. A. Smith (who, like Collings, was a portrait photographer) had made films, though Collings had probably abandoned animated photography. After taking some thirty pictures in 1896, he shortly afterwards put his equipment and his negatives up for sale. The latter, according to Talbot, were bought by Williamson - presumably for his first catalog of short films. This catalog was brought out in September, 1899.

"It has to be remembered," he wrote in 1926, "that the public up to this date had been accustomed to looking at lantern slides of exquisite photographic quality, single pictures upon which much time and skill had been spent. It was not easy to persuade people that photographs fit to look at could be produced by the yards simply by turning a handle." Lantern-slide showmanship is, I think, implicit in his 1899 photo-sequence BANK HOLIDAY AT THE DYKE - catalog description: "Swing-boats (28 ft.), Merry-go-round (25 ft.), Cycle Railway (16 ft.) and Switch-back (46 ft.)." - as it also is in THE HENLEY REGATTA, one of several of his films on this subject, where, according to Sadoul, flashed on the screen in chronological sequence were: 1. The assembled crowd, 2. The starting of the boats, 3. Crews at work during the face, 4. On-lookers seen from a moving boat, and 5. The winning boat crossing the finish-line. Williamson's 1899 catalog could no doubt furnish other instances. Cecil Hepworth's autobiography and numerous other sources make it clear that the man who projected the pictures at these shows did not do so in silence.* (Note: Came the Dawn - Memories of a Film Pioneer by Cecil M. Hepworth, London, 1951. See his description of a mixed-media showing of slides and films given by himself circa 1896, page 31 and following.) He was usually a seasoned performer, and his spoken commentary on the pictures - his "lecture" - was the standard practice of the lantern shows. There is no evidence that this was discontinued by the showmen, most of them lantern-slide men, who first exhibited movies in Britain. I submit, however, that showing films to an accompanying commentary by the showman was continued in Britain rather later than writers have assumed - at least until 1903 - and that the films of this period often disclose a dependence on spoken commentaries. Clarification of this point would certainly give us a more accurate understanding of the work of the early British filmmakers, and while it would in no way diminish their achievements, it would shed some light, I think, on their remarkable willingness to risk confusing their audiences by indulging in bold editing experiments.

"As regards the films," wrote Williamson, "so long as something moved the subject did not matter. To see waves dashing over rocks in a most natural way, to see a train arriving and people walking about as if alive was admitted to be very wonderful."* (Note: These quotations are from Williamson's notebooks, some excerpts from which are included in the first volume of

Rachel Low's History.) He took his pictures almost at random but showed a particular interest in their documentary possibilities, their phenomenal aptitude for specifying facts and information. His Country Life series of 1899 documents such matters as how a blacksmith puts an iron rim on a cart's wheel, and an ingenious method used on Sussex farms for threshing and winnowing turnip seeds. Some of these must have consisted of joined sequences of individual shots.

Convinced that he could earn a living by pursuing these new interests in 1898 Williamson closed his pharmacy for good and from then on devoted himself exclusively to producing moving pictures. The nickelodeon craze was still several years away, but there was already a modest but dependable market for the pictures at fairgrounds and in the music halls which, like American vaudeville houses, were now including them in their programmes. The novelty of more movement had begun to wear off, and finding the demand for documentary subjects somewhat sluggish, he followed the lead of his friend G. A. Smith in supplying showmen with trick films and "comics". The latter might be described as comic postcards that moved just long enough to get their laugh. As for the former, it was found that, by such manipulations of the negative as double exposure, interruptions or variations in the speed of cranking, stop motion and so on, animated photography offered rich opportunities for magical effects.

2. Attack on a China Mission

Williamson's trick films and comics sold well, and he would very likely have gone on making them his speciality but for the series of wars that suddenly erupted around the world near the turn of the century. Overnight there was a demand for current events films. In America the Spanish-American War was given surprisingly good coverage by an infant film industry, and while the French producer Georges Méliès scooped his American competition with a representation of the sinking of the Maine in May, 1898, barely three months after the actual event, Kemp R. Niver's reconstructions of the Library of Congress paperprints show that, besides on-the-spot newsreels, the Edison Company was copyrighting faked war incidents by August, 1898. The Vitagraph Company was also producing them around that time. These might show such imaginary or reconstituted events as a group of American soldiers taking formal possession of a Spanish fort by pulling the Spanish flag down from its pole and running up the American flag in its place; or a battle charge by American troops with a soldier dashing forward to seize the stars and stripes when the flag-bearer is shot. They were crude little films - those taken by British cameramen of the Boer War of 1899-1902 were apparently no less so - but from their very number it is clear that audiences loved them - more than the newsreels, probably, since, unlike the newsreels, they could be tailored to a given pitch of patriotic fervor. It was while pursuing the formula of their success that the showmen of England, America and France hit on the idea of producing faked enactments of any such sensational doings as might be reported in the tabloids of the yellow press - famous robberies, murders, and other topical notoreities. These were photographed just as they might have looked to a newsreel cameraman who happened to be on the scene and had had the remarkable luck to set up his camera in a way that would capture the most significant portions of the action that was about to unfold there - improbable circumstances the audience had to accept as the

basic conventions of these reenactments. But once this acceptance was given it was found that the camera could make surprisingly convincing counterfeits of real events. Of course it helped the illusion when the action was staged in actual places instead of the open-air stage platforms already in use by filmmakers, and it also helped when the actors moved freely toward and away from the lens during the action. Their doing so carried the artful hint that there was no controlling intelligence behind what the camera was recording, that events might take an unpredictable turn at any moment, just as in the newsreels. And, as it also did in the newsreels, it lent these little stories a look of unrehearsed spontaneity, much as did, forty-five years later, the hand-held cameras of the Italian neo-realists (which also, and with a similar purpose, counterfeited the work of newsreel cameramen). But if a concern for realism is evident in these conventions, it is more than likely that the showmen who devised them were ignorant of, and indifferent to, such highbrow concerns as Naturalism and the realist reform that was then sweeping the last of romanticism from the stages of Europe and America. The showmen were simply trying to embue their tabloid narratives with greater immediacy, with the illusion in fact that those narratives were photographic documents taken directly from life, and all this for the sole reason that the customers found them more exciting, could more readily identify with them, when they were shot that way. Possibly because they called for less suspension of disbelief.

Meanwhile in their daily newspapers customers of the variety theatres could read how on December 31, 1899 the Reverend S. M. Brooks, a young English missionary in China, was captured on a lonely road by a roving band of anti-Western rioters in Shantung province. His nose was pierced and a cattle ring put through it; in this way he was led to the spot where he was hacked to death by swords. It was the beginning of a season of almost uninterrupted bloodletting which riveted the attention of Europe and America on a violent upsurge of popular anti-Western feeling in that country. The rioters - cultists with a family resemblance to the kung-fu fighters of our own day - were called Boxers by the press. In the early months of 1900 the newspapers carried almost daily reports of the massacre of Westerners in China. The tabloids especially - papers like The Daily Mail in England and the Pulitzer and Hearst chains in the United States - carried harrowing accounts of the tortures and deaths of the victims, most of whom were missionaries and Chinese Christians, for whom the Boxers had a particular hatred. The numbers of the dead mounted sharply in June when the Dowager Empress let the rioters understand that she would not seek to punish the assassin of foreigners in China. Among the slain were the German ambassador and Japanese <u>chargé d'affaires</u>. The European powers and Japan responded by dispatching gunboats and land forces with the avowed purpose of safe-guarding and evacuating their nationals. This intervention, which occured during the months of July and August of 1900, ended by being punitive, and by August 20th the Boxer movement had effectively collapsed.

It is safe to assume that the music hall public was conversant with these horrors, which were still in progress when reconstituted events of the uprising began to appear in British music halls. The Mitchell & Kenyon Company brought out four of them in July, 1900 - that is, on the eve of the intervention and while the uprising was still headline news:

ATTACK ON A MISSION STATION (86 ft.), ATTEMPTED CAPTURE OF AN ENGLISH NURSE AND CHILDREN (60 ft.), THE CLEVER CORRESPONDENT (54 ft.), and THE ASSASSINATION OF A BRITISH SENTRY (91 ft.). A fifth film, describing the intervention itself, was ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION - OR BLUEJACKETS TO THE RESCUE, which James Williamson released in November, 1900. As outlined in his catalog, this 230 ft. narrative ran something like this. Nine Boxers, armed with swords and guns, storm the gate of a mission compound and force it open. Entering the courtyard they are stopped by the missionary who holds them off with gunfire while his family hurries for cover in the mission building. When his ammunition is exhausted, he struggles with the attackers and is killed.* (Note: At least one such incident is known to have really happened. It is related by Richard O'Connor in his book on the Boxer Uprising, The Spirit Soldiers (New York, 1973):

"At Peoting-fu two American missionaries, the Reverend Horace Tracy Pitkin and the Reverend Herbert Dixon, were surrounded in their compound, along with thirty others. Each of the men confronted the situation in his own way. Pitkin fired at the Boxers until all his ammunition was used up. Dixon refused to defend himself, and the last entry in his diary read, 'Thank heaven we drove them off without killing any.' All were massacred.") Williamson's catalog describes what happens next:

"Missionary's wife now appears waving handkerchief on the balcony; the scene changes and shows party of bluejackets advancing from the distance leaping over a fence, coming through the gate, kneeling and firing in fours, and running forward to the rescue, under command of a mounted officer." They arrive just in time to prevent the Boxers from abducting the missionary's daughter, whom they have dragged from the mission. Riding into their midst, the officer hoists the girl onto his saddle and carries her to safety.* (Note: The frame reproductions in Williamson's catalog - which are reprinted on page 181 of Sadoul's LES PIONNIERS DU CINEMA make it clear that they ride in a convex arc toward the camera, passing a few feet in front of it and off to the left; they also confirm the catalog's hint that in our first view of them the bluejackets run directly toward the camera. It is also clear that at the end of the film the sailors exit from the picture by moving in a mass toward the camera and passing to the left. Similarly, both in FIRE! and in THE SOLDIER'S RETURN exits are usually made toward the camera.) In the ensuing melee the bluejackets subdue the attackers and save the dead missionary' s family.

There is room for disagreement about the exact meaning of that waved handkerchief (which of course is filmed in long-shot). But whether it is, as some believe, a pre-arranged signal that brings the sailors running, or whether she has just caught sight of an evacuation party which, by happy accident, was already on its way and is signaling them to hurry, it makes no dramatic sense unless it is followed immediately by the shot of the rescuers. The description of it in Williamson's catalog, quoted above, is ambiguous, adhering strictly to the outward appearance of the event. Yet,

in terms of the narrative itself, either interpretation leaves a good deal unexplained about how the sailors got there and indeed, the very fact that disagreement on this point can exist at all faces us once again with the lantern-slide thinking that is still evident in ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION. It is clear that the man who made it could still rely on the circumstances that any ambiguities in the action of his film would be cleared up for its audience in the commentary of a master of ceremonies who formed an indispensable part of what was in effect a vaudeville act. The continuity and narrative thrust of the picture story sequences that were one of the attractions of the lantern-slide shows - indeed, the logical connection between one picture and the next - was verbal, and showmen were adept at improvising intelligible narratives out of whatever pictures they had on hand. In such cases, extreme but not uncommon, the stories were meant to be listened to, the pictures merely forming the illustrations for this spoken narrative. The waved handkerchief here is an attempt to reverse that situation by giving the narrative a greater degree of pictorial self-sufficiency, for the least it can mean is a desire on the filmmaker's part to form some kind of connecting link between the photograph of the mission besieged, and the photograph that follows it. She waves the handkerchief so we will understand that the photograph of British sailors running is no mere lantern-slide non-sequitur, but that the sailors pictured are in fact running to the mission's relief. If the gesture's intention is less than fully realized, it still puts us on the road to a self-sufficient film narrative. But there is another reason why that cut is an exciting event in the history of the narrative film, for the music hall patrons who watch its first showings did not need a commentator to tell them the fate that awaited the missionary's family, and we can imagine how they must have cheered at the timely arrival of the rescuers. No matter that the last minute rescue had been part of the theatre's stock-in-trade for centuries in that moment an enormous advance was made in the development of the photoplay. For the first time in a motion picture, dramatic excitement had been generated by the simple juxtaposition of two photographic images.

3. Music Hall

Though we may smile at Williamson's claim in his first catalog that his comics were "funny without vulgarity," we must concede that it is the boast of a man who is trying to make a quality product according to his own best lights. And it would be a mistake to assume because of it that the humor of these little films was the thin-lipped Sunday School kind. For us today they appealingly evoke the boisterous gaiety of the turn of the century variety theatres. This gives a film like THE ACROBATIC TRAMPS an almost touching charm, for it is very obviously the routine of a troupe of music hall acrobats, slightly varied to accord with its possibilities for camera tricks. Williamson's catalog describes it this way:

> Old gentleman has been doing a bit of carpentry, and is just shouldering his tool basket and moving off when two tramps appear over the fence, and do some rather remarkable acrobatic feats (assisted by reverse movement of the camera). They see the old man coming and scamper off, one going over the fence, and the other climbing a tree, which he pulls over on top of him. The old man goes away again; tramps reappear and so (sic) some marvellous feats; seeing the old man coming

> again with a gun, one tramp turns a somersault and disappears; the other rises up in the air and also disappears; the old man points his gun up in the air and fires; tramp tumbles down all torn to rags by the shot, and is chased around and around by the old man, finally disappearing over the fence. 104 ft.

Denis Gifford has identified these acrobats as The Cobbolds, professional tumblers who appeared in several other films for Williamson.* (Note: It is even possible that they are the anonymous stuntmen who, as sailors in ATTACK ON CHINA MISSION, perform the spectacular rescue of a baby from the burning mission: "The missionary's wife now rushes out of the house pointing to the balcony, where she has left her child; a blue-jacket has secured it, but his passage down the stairs being blocked, three sailors mount on each other's shoulders and land the child safely in the mother's arms." Yet it was probably to the Wild West shows, popular in Europe since Buffalo Bill's first tour of Britain and the Continent in 1887, that CHINA MISSION owes its other sensational bit of stuntwork, the saving of the missionary's daughter by the mounted officer, a piece of business reminiscent of the horseback rescues used in the reenactments of Indian raids on frontier settlements. This interesting bit of trick-riding was executed in the film by the partially anonymous "Mr James.") Shot in one (to all appearances!) continuous long-shot, THE ACROBATIC TRAMPS is perhaps a bit old-fashioned-looking for its date (1902), coming as it does after the bold inventions of some of Williamson's 1901 films. In one of his comic pictures of that year, STOP THIEF! (112 ft.), about a nimble tramp who pilfers a joint of beef from a tray carried by a butcher, occurs one of the earliest chases on record prolonged and varied by joining three separate shots in sequence, as this description makes clear:

> 1st scene. quiet roadway.....Tramp lifts joint from tray and bolts, butcher after him. 2nd scene. roadway and front of cottages; tramp rushes past, dogs after him and then butcher; cottagers come out and look after them. 3rd scene. a large tub; tramp comes in, dodges around the tub, hoping to escape his pursuers; throws joint into tub, and jumps in after it, dogs following closely behind....

Another 1901 comic is A BIG SWALLOW. G. A. Smith, who had taken comic close-ups before the turn of the century, had already begun to splice them into tiny narratives. In A BIG SWALLOW Williamson uses a trick close-up into which he splices a medium shot to get the following effect (catalog description):

> "I won't! I won't! I'll eat the camera first." Gentleman reading, finds a camera fiend with his head under a cloth, focussing him up. He orders him off, approaching nearer and nearer, gesticulating and ordering the photographer off, until his head fills the picture, and finally his mouth only occupies the screen . He opens it, and first the camera, then the operator disappear inside. He retires munching him up and expressing his great satisfaction. 65 ft.

Coming from Williamson, this bit of fooling with the illusion that a man progressively enlarges as he approaches the lens is interesting, for in his "non-trick" films he indulges so freely in movement toward and away from the camera that one might almost think that the idea had never occurred to him. Yet of all Williamson's films this witty invention may well be pictorially the least self-sufficient. To anyone seeing it without some prior knowledge of the catalog's scenario, the film would seem as divorced from sense as any of Dali's and Bunuel's surreal conceits.

Also dating from 1901 is a telephone gag titled ARE YOU THERE? in which he photographed his subjects half-length and split screen. The catalog description of this film is especially interesting:

> Scene showing two rooms and telephones. Gentleman comes in, rings up: "Are you there?" Lady comes to the other telephone. "Is that you Lilian?" - "Yes, dear." - "Is the old man in?" - "No, dear." (Old man listening behind girl.) "Can you come round and see me?" - "Yes, I'll come round." Hangs up telephone and goes out without seeing the old man behind, who catches hold of telephone and listens. Gentleman at other telephone goes on giving girl directions how to come; old man in a towering rage takes the information and uses it to find the next scene, which shows the young gentleman sitting in joyful expectation of his lady love's arrival; he is considerably perturbed when the old man arrives instead and makes effective use of his umbrella. 75 ft.

Here again, I think we can establish from this that in 1901 we are still not far from lantern showmanship, for it is hard not to conclude that in this film Williamson is taking it for granted that the showman-commentator would (more or less) fit these dialog exchanges to the lip-movements of the actors (which were plainly visible, to judge from the still reproduced in Low's History of the British Film - for, since titles were not then in general use, how otherwise did he intend to make the drift of their conversation clear to the audience? From the style of the catalog description, moreover, one other thing is clear: the showman, leafing through it in search of material for his act, is also given some hints on how to make the film go with an audience, on the special opportunities it may offer him as a performer - such as, say, a comical imitation of both voices in the above.

In both ARE YOU THERE? and A BIG SWALLOW Williamson is known to have used a professional comedian named Sam Dalton, but as with many other pioneer movie-makers, the actors in his film were often as not himself and his family. His own sons were featured in his Two Naughty Boys comics.

4. "A Bit of Real Life"

In choosing subjects for his narratives the next few years James Williamson showed, if not a consistently prosaic bias, then at least a consistent avoidence of theatricality that may make one wonder at the dramatic flair of ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION. Was it the case of a sluggish dramatic

imagination roused to a white heat of inspiration by its subject, the nightmare of a devoted family man? The scarcity of facts about him makes it difficult to infer much of anything about Williamson,* (Note: That even less is known of Williamson than is known of Shakespeare has doubtless acted as a deterrent to would-be writers on his career. No reference source, for instance, can tell us what the "A" of his middle initial stands for, and we can only speculate on the reasons why it has been inpossible to establish the year of his death, or the exact date and place of his birth. If a photograph of him exists, none has ever been printed. We have seen that in 1948 Rachel Low printed excerpts from his notebooks in the first volume of her history. These were made available to her "courtesy of Major T. Williamson" - presumably an heir of the great pioneer. Where are these notebooks now, one wonders, and how it it possible that a document of such manifest importance to the history of the motion picture has never been printed in its entirety?) but, as we'll see, he in fact possessed a remarkably acute instinct for theatricality when he chose to use it. Its absence from these films suggests that at this time he was consciously trying to form a drama not of bang-up theatrics but of simple human interest. Despite its predominantly documentary character, this tendency I think is already visible in FIRE! (1901), his next best remembered film.

First scene. Policeman on his beat in the early morning finds an unoccupied portion of a building well alight with window burning out, while the inmates of the adjoining part are apparently asleep and unconscious of their danger. He endeavors to arouse them, and tries to open door, blows his whistle to call assistance and rushes off to call the fire engine and escape.

Second scene. Outside the fire station; policeman rushes in, shakes the door and rings the bell; fireman hurry forward, dressing as they go and quickly rush off with small fire escape. In an incredibly short time a horse is fixed to another escape, and two horses into a manual engine, and the whole gallop off.

Third scene. Shows horsed fire escape and engine coming full gallop past the camera.

Fourth scene. Interior of bedroom full of smoke; man in bed just rousing; discovering room full of smoke he jumps out of bed and throws contents of water jug over the fire, then rushes to the door and opens it, but finds his passage blocked by flame and smoke; he then goes toward the window, but just at that moment the curtains set alight, and overcome by smoke and heat he buries his head in the bedclothes. The window curtains and blind now burnt away disclose a fireman outside with hatchet breaking in the window; he comes in with his hose and quickly extinguishes the fire; he then goes to the relief of the man now helpless on the bed, and puts him across his shoulder, and carries him to the window.

Fifth scene. Shows the outside of the window; fireman with rescued man across his shoulders comes down escape; another fireman runs up and fetches down the hose, throwing out some bedclothes to put round the rescued man; the latter recovering his senses recollects that there are others in the burning building. One fireman, laying a wet cloth over his mouth, breaks

into a French window, while others hurry away with the escape to another part of the building. Fireman re-appears through the smoke with a child in his arms, the previously rescued man clutching the child from him hurries away with her, overjoyed at her rescue. Meanwhile the captain has directed another party of fireman to prepare to rescue another inmate, who appears at the window in an exhausted condition; the fire escape being occupied elsewhere, the jumping sheet is brought into requisition, and the man jumps into it and is carried away by the firemen. 280 ft.

First of all, we must notice a striking improvement in the way Williamson prepares us for the arrival of the rescuers in this film. In CHINA MISSION they appeared out of nowhere; here the sequence of pictures makes it clear exactly how their arrival at the scene of the fire has come about. In FIRE!, however, moments of drama and human interest, unlike those of CHINA MISSION, arise out of an essentially documentary framework, for the real point of the film is to show us how a firefighter does his job. Edwin Porter's LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN (1903)- which certainly derives from it - is strikingly more dramatic in conception. In each film the nature of the fireman's involvement in his work is slightly different. In Williamson he is a professional doing his job with exemplary skill, but Porter at the start of his film takes care to introduce <u>his</u> fireman as a man for whom each person trapped in a burning building might well be a member of his own family. The practiced ease with which Williamson's subject lifts an unconscious full-grown man onto his shoulder identifies him as a real-life fireman, not a make-believe one, just as the posturings of Porter's man show <u>him</u> to be an actor. Williamson's film, shot with the evident cooperation of the Hove Fire Station, contains bits of action whose only point is their documentary interest; Porter's film - although more specific than Williamson's aboutthe firemen's preparations before they leave the engine -house - has noticeably fewer of these once they arrive at the scene of the fire, where the rescue of a woman and her child becomes the narrative's exclusive concern. This fact alone makes Porter's film more pictorially self-sufficient than Williamson's, for the latter, seen without first reading Williamson's description of it, contains some obscure detail: for instance, the cloth bundles which the firemen throw from the window of the burning house; unless one is told what they are, they could be draperies or a number of other things besides bedclothes, and this bit of action can be taken to mean that the firemen are disposing of some impediment to their efforts to get the fire under control. The point is minor, yet the absence of such unessential (indeed, distracting) detail in Porter's film improves its narrative efficiency. Finally, Williamson frames his subjects as a newsreel cameraman might: in his only interior shot (Scene 4), the stationary camera is placed as close as it can come to the subjects while still retaining its ability to record in a single set-up and in one continuous shot the sequence of actions that occur in the room, framing his actors upwards from just below the knee. By contrast, Porter in <u>his</u> interiors, frames his subjects as if the picture itself represented a theatrical stage, placing them sufficiently far back on it to make them visible at all times from head to foot. In this he follows the example of Méliès, inventor of the convention that the outlines of a picture projected onto a screen - the indispensable condition for this convention - were to be seen, not as the edges of a photograph but, on the contrary, as forming a sort of proscenium

window which, as in the theatre, frames the action behind it. Sadoul has suggested that this way of shooting may have originated from Méliès' having intended his films for projection into the proscenium of the Théatre Robert-Houdin, which he owned and which, after he took up movie-making, constituted its chief attraction. In any case, since the projected pictures were no longer to be treated as photographs but as motion tableaux framed by a proscenium, one of Méliès chief imperatives, once he had committed himself to this way of shooting, was to abolish the close-up along with the panoramic long-shot, both of which would destroy the illusion that a live show was going on behind the screen. Similarly, movement toward and away from the camera had to be forbidden since of course such movement would result in the actor's seeming to shrink or enlarge on the stage. Cross-cutting, if it had been thought of, would likewise have been repressed as violating every correct principle of theatrical story development. In fact, by implication, any way of filming a scene except in one continuous shot by a stationary camera was necessarily prohibited - or, at least, one apparently continuous shot since, magic being an important component in these films, they ceaselessly exploited the resources of gimmick photography.

In keeping with his preference for low-keyed narratives of simple human interest at this time, Williamson's Boer War stories, with few exceptions, are concerned not with easily dramatized - and highly filmable - battles or acts of heroism but, on the contrary, with the bleakly detailed sufferings of families left destitute when their breadwinners go off to war - a circumstance in which some writers profess to find evidence of sociological thinking. Whether or not Williamson viewed class behaviour with the disciplined objectivity which that term implies, it is certainly true that in these little narratives he captures with unusual sensitivity the everyday concerns and anxieties of the laboring poor - the class which, by the way, is sure to have formed most of his audience as a filmmaker. It is doubtful that the Naturalists were able to do this with an accuracy greater than Williamson's, and his stories, moreover, are relatively free of the mannered sentimentalities of the melodramatists of the day. THE SOLDIER'S RETURN of 1902, for instance, told this story in 185 feet of film:

Scene one shows a portion of a row of poor cottages - one occupied, another empty. Soldier walks in with his kit bag on his shoulder, tries the door, peeps in the window, looks up to the top window, the cottage is evidently deserted; a woman comes out of the next cottage and says something to him - no doubt with reference to the late occupant, which appears to upset the soldier a good deal; a blacksmith walks up, claims acquaintance, and is warmly greeted; the soldier hands his bag to the woman next door to look after, and walks away.

Next scene shows the outside of a workhouse; soldier enters, presents a paper to the gate porter, who looks at it and points out the direction in which he is to go.

The next scene shows the door of the women's ward, the soldier walks in, knocks at the door, which is opened by a nurse who looks at his paper and

goes in again, soldier waiting outside; after a short interval an old lady in workhouse garb appears, evidently the mother of the soldier, as they embrace warmly - a pathetic picture, true to life. The soldier indicates that he has come to fetch her home, and motions to her to go and change her clothes; he helps her up the steps, and walks to and from (sic) while the old lady is dressing. After a short time she comes out again dressed in her own clothes - the soldier takes her arm and walks away with her; they only get a few steps, however, before they are called back by the other old inmates, who have followed the old lady, to shake hands, congratulate her and wish her good-bye.

Another short scene shows them walking out of the gate.

The last scene shows the outside of the cottage again - but what a change! The windows cleaned, clean curtains up, flowers in the window, a bird in a cage hanging up by the door; the old woman sitting by the door sewing, while her son in his shirt sleeves is planting some flowers in the little slip of garden in front - he stops to light his pipe, and asks if that will do; the old lady nods approval, and he resumes his work. He looks up again later and says something to her, and then goes into the cottage and brings out a cup of tea and hands it to his mother; the picture closes just as she is drinking the tea.

In his catalog, Williamson prefaced this description of THE SOLDIER'S RETURN with the boast that it was "a bit of real life. There is no suggestion of acting in this picture, and the setting is perfectly natural." Indeed the central scene has the look of having been filmed at an actual workhouse: shown in these shots is the exterior of a huge forbidding structure of institutional brick, and the cottage of the opening and closing scenes is also a real one, not a stage set. Moreover, the film itself has more charm that the catalog's bare outlines can suggest. Besides the touching simplicity of the reunion between mother and son at the workhouse, there are several moments of human interest in it which, if properly presented to an audience could elicit delighted laughs from them; the bit about the cup of tea and earlier the business of the mother's interrupting her departure to go back and say goodbye to her friends. Another appealing touch is the little scene with the blacksmith, which shows the prompt fellow-feeling with which the decent poor always respond to each other's adversities: a constitutionally buoyant, emphatic, good-hearted kind of man, the blacksmith seems to offer the soldier a few words of bluff commiseration, and as he leaves gives him a reassuring slap on the shoulder. Although individual bits of action might be clarified by a word here and there, the narrative is largely self-sufficient. Yet a commentator would still be useful at this juncture to guide the audience's response and make sure that the intimate appeal of these moments was not lost. This would call for not just any showman, but a thoroughly knowledgeable one, one who could read a picture the way an actor reads a written line, or a musician a line of notes: to uncover its expressive possibilities and do them justice in performance. Another film of the Boer War was A RESERVIST BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR, literally a before-and-after picture which shows a reservist returning penniless from the service of his country, reduced to stealing to feed his family. Both this film and THE SOLDIER'S RETURN were released

in 1902. The following year Williamson released WAIT TILL JACK COMES HOME, a 430 ft narrative which combined and elaborated on ideas from THE SOLDIER'S RETURN and BEFORE AND AFTER with quite remarkable results, for to judge from the catalog description, it is doubtful that any narrative film made up to this time had depicted manners with such detailed realism. Indeed, it is tempting to infer from it that Williamson by this date had become conscious of the Naturalist movement then prevalent as a leading force in the theatre and in letters.

A pathetic story of humble life

The first scene shows a cottage interior. Jack's mother is just packing up in preparation for his departure for his first voyage, having just finished his training. The old man looks out of the window; "all right, here he comes;" and Jack walks in with a big parcel. This turns out to be a large portrait of himself - a parting gift, and a surprise to the old people; they both express their admiration of the picture and delight at the gift, but do not forget that Jack must hurry off. After an affectionate leave-taking of the mother and a long handshake with the father, Jack departs. The old man is waving adieu at the window; turning around he finds the old lady in tears; he goes over and consoles her as the picture closes.

Scene 2. Off to work. Shows the interior of the bedroom, wife in bed; husband comes in with a cup of tea for the missus whom he wakes; he draws up the blind and calls her attention to the fine morning - the sun streaming in at the window. He finishes dressing, shoulders his tool bag, and departs for his day's work.

Scene 3. The accident. The old man is seen at work on a building in course of erection; goes up a ladder with pail on his shoulder, slips, drops the pail and falls to the ground. His fellow workers hasten to his assistance, and are seen to be putting his leg in rough splints and giving him what aid they can. One is sent for a doctor.

Scene 4. What makes him so late? Shows the cottage interior again, the table spread for tea, which the wife is preparing, now and then looking at the clock. While so engaged, a boy rushes in to tell her of the accident, and almost immediately after he is brought out on a stretcher. The old man is deposited on a couch; his wife doing her best to comfort him. The doctor now enters, and deciding that it is a case requiring immediate attention, he takes off his coat and proceeds to set the broken limb.

Scene 5. Six weeks after: the wolf at the door. The old couple have hitherto been able to support themselves comfortably; now we find the old lady in this picture anxiously considering how the next lot of medicine is to be paid for, and whether the old man will not have to give up his tobacco. What about the pawnbroker?

The old man is very quiet; she looks in and finds him asleep. She slips on her bonnet and shawl, makes the old man's pillow comfortable, picks up a garment - her best Sunday frock evidently - puts it under her shawl and goes out.

Scene 6. Exterior of pawnbrokers. Old lady comes along, but passes the door; after going a little way, she looks around, pretends to look in the window, and then slips in the doorway.

Scene 7. Brings us back to the cottage interior again, where we find the old man rousing up and reaching up to the mantelpiece for his pipe, and he is just bemoaning the fact that he has no tobacco when the old lady enters, evidently well pleased with her journey. She produces first a paper of tobacco for the old man, who soon puts it into use; shows a fresh bottle of medicine and several other little necessaries which she had been able to purchase, and we leave them in a hopeful mood.

Our last scene (8), however, commences very badly. "Distraint for Rent, The Man in Possession." They have struggled on for six weeks more, hoping daily to get a remittance from Jack. This very morning they had had a letter, delayed in post, saying that he will be home shortly; and when the bailiff arrives the letter is shown to him, and he is asked to "wait until Jack comes home." The man, however, is obdurate, and proceeds with the help of the man in possession to seize the few effects which are left them. He has left them one chair and the couch upon which the still almost helpless man is sitting, when he catches sight of Jack's picture. He orders the man to take it down, but the man has a heart hid away somewhere, and has been in the house long enough to know how much they value this picture, and he refuses, pointing out that he has enough to satisfy his claim without it. However, the bailiff gets upon a chair and reaches it down. The old folks are much excited at this, and the old lady catches hold of it and struggles with the man for it. In the midst of this, Jack arrives; having learnt from the man outside what was going on, he rushes in, seizes the bailiff by the collar, and kicks him out of the door.

Jack briefly embraces his mother and father. The bailiff comes in the door again in a blustering and threatening manner, but soon turns tail when Jack shows fight again. Jack soon has the furniture brought back and put in its place; the bailiff again enters, this time with a policeman; the latter has all his work to do to keep Jack's hand off the bailiff. He explains that the bailiff has the law on his side, and his account must be paid. "How much is it?" Jack asks, and dives into his pocket; however, all he finds is not sufficient, but he goes to his kit bag and fishes out a handkerchief tied up in a knot, in which is apparently much more than enough to settle the debt. The bailiff carefully avoids getting near Jack, and takes his money from the table at arm's length, the sailor all the time threatening him, and the policeman keeping them apart. However, after the bailiff has gone out, the policeman whispers something not very complimentary to the bailiff, shakes hands with Jack and departs.

WAIT TILL JACK COMES HOME is certainly Williamson's finest achievement in the human interest narrative. Keeping in mind the absence of title at this time, however, a narrator would have been needed to explain the basic situation at the beginning of Scenes 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8; as well as to inform the audience of the time elapsed between Scenes 4 and 5, and between 7 and 8. In Scene 8 he would also be needed to explain that the letter which the mother is showing is from Jack, and that in it he has written that he is on his way home (for here too the last minute rescue is carefully prepared for). If the reactions of a 1903 audience can be thought to resemble those of later times, then the customers might have been mildly intrigued by the film's kind of realistic novelty, yet one would guess that only a first-class commentator could have made an effective show out of it by bringing out the human interest values in the last four scenes, while making certain that the most was made of such touches as that moment of suspense when the money in Jack's pocket falls short of his parents' debt, and for a few instants the outcome of the drama is once again plunged in doubt. Indeed, as these little stories grew in sophistication, so too grew the burden they placed on the skills and resources of the showmen, till finally we can imagine that only the best of them, a bare handful, might have bought copies of them to perform in the high-class variety theatres where they worked. It was a market so small that no producer could afford to cater to it. As a simple matter of survival, one had to design one's product for a larger market, the larger the better in fact, such as the one that was beginning to take shape in America.

5. Dawn of the Nickelodeon

Although some form of the nickel theatre is likely to have existed from the time of the invention of projected movies, their importance in the economics of the movie business was at first negligible compared with that of the vaudeville theatres. The importance seems indeed to have lagged along a course roughly parallel to that of the evolving film narrative, for, as we know, it was the story film, not newsreels or travelogs or documentaries, that formed the staple of nickelodeon programming. It can be said with some truth, indeed, that the picture narrative was compelled to remain a vaudeville entertainment for as long as it lacked the techniques to tell a story in pictorial terms that were so explicit that no intermediary was needed to explain to the audience what it was seeing.* (Note: For some reason, the convenience of titles does not seem to have been fully appreciated by filmmakers until around 1904. Their use till then was sparse and exceptional and even after that date did not become general for several years. In D. W. Griffith: His Biograph Films in Perspective Kemp R. Niver has noted that Griffith held out against them until the middle of 1909.) Once these techniques existed, however, the narrative film was free to enter its next phase both as a developing popular art and as a show business phenomenon, the age of the nickelodeon. The dynamics of this change were already in motion by the beginnings of 1904, for in 1902 Méliès had made an unprecedented success with A TRIP TO THE MOON (845 ft.), a triumphantly self-sufficient pictorial narrative, and December, 1903 saw the release of Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (740 ft.). It is not too much to say that between them these two films precipitated a boom in the production of narrative films and prepared the way for a revolution in their exhibition. Méliès' fantasies and Porter's action films must be considered

key factors in the nickelodeon's rise. A drama for the masses was in the making, banal, escapist, uncouth little narratives, the faster paced the better. Here begins the real career of the movies as a thriving business enterprise, for now there were fortunes to be made supplying the nickelodeon's voracious appetite for them. The age of quality vaudeville movies was over. Apparently baffled by the changing movie market, G. A. Smith would stop producing them by 1904. But Williamson was already experimenting with ways to adapt his production to the new conditions. In October, 1903 - just a month after the appearance of WAIT TILL JACK COMES HOME - he released a narrative titled THE DESERTED - the longest he had ever made - some 520 ft. - it seems to have derived its basic situation from an 1898 idea of R. W. Paul's (DESERTER; 80 ft.), from whom Williamson may also have borrowed some ideas for FIRE! While, like JACK, it contains some documenting of working class realities, it is a remarkably dissimilar piece of work. In its borrowings from the formulas of popular fiction, in the unblinking logic of its dramatic construction, in its almost insistent use of dramatic conflict it is far more frankly popular in its appeal, and is even embellished with a chase, that most photographic of dramatic devices (Scenes 3, 4 and 5 below).

Scene 1. Inside a barrack room. Soldier polishing accoutrements; comrade enters with telegram: "Father worse, come at once if you wish to see him alive." Officer enters; soldier shows telegram and asks for leave; officer finds fault with different things, swears in dumb show and knocks things about: "No, you cannot have leave," and marches off. Soldier and comrade consult; thinks he can just slip away and get to his father's cottage and back in time for next parade. Another comrade, evidently a bit of a sneak, and probably having a grudge against the soldier, witnesses the departure and informs against him.

Scene 2. Soldier seen climbing over wall and running off.

Scene 3. A country pathway; soldier rushing down, evidently pursued; turns off into a harvest field, dropping cap in the field. Two horsemen now seen coming over the brow of the hill and down the pathway; find the soldier's cap; one dismounts, examines it, remounts, and (they) gallop off.

Scene 4. Harvest field; harvesters' dinner time; lighting fire and preparing meal. A child comes rushing up and points out soldier dodging among the sheaves and coming toward them; the harvesters take in the situation at once, and hide him amongst the sheaves behind them, just as the pursuing horsemen are seen approaching; one of the horsemen questions the harvesters; one of them points away in the distance evidently putting them off the scent. As soon as the horsemen are out of sight they uncover the fugitive, whom they find in a terribly exhausted state; they give him some refreshment and furnish him with some old clothing as a disguise; he starts away in a direction opposite to that of the patrol.

Scene 5. Interior of cottage bedroom; father of the soldier in bed, mother and brother attending him on one side; while a young woman who is evidently something more than a sister to him is watching on the other side. It is evidently a death-bed scene. The soldier now stumbles into the room met by the young woman, who exclaims at his appearance; the situation on

both sides is quickly explained, the soldier kneels at the bedside, and is rejoiced to find that his father recognizes him, and feebly passes his hand to him. At this moment the patrol enters, having traced the fugitive to the cottage. They prepare to secure their prisoner, but are stopped by the young woman. The soldiers perceive the solemn nature of the scene, and at a word from the deserter silently pass out again.

Scene 6. Outside cottage, the patrol walking up and down; soldier and the young woman evidently deeply distressed now come out together; after an affecting leave-taking the soldier calls the patrol and holds out his hands to be handcuffed. His comrades, however, spare him this indignity, and they walk away together. We have no doubt that they will see that a proper account of the circumstances is laid before the colonel, and that the punishment, inevitable though it be, will be mitigated thereby.

Scene 7. Orderly room. Colonel seated at table; enter Orderly-Room Sergeant with official letter. Colonel opens it; enter Captain, who took part in Scene 1; salutes, and seats himself beside Colonel; the latter discusses the charge with the Captain, then orders prisoner and escort before him. Prisoner is asked what he has to say in answer to the charge; produces the telegram. Colonel tells the Captain the man ought to have had leave, as requested. Who reported this? Informer is brought in and escort dismissed. Informer questioned, then Colonel goes up to prisoner, pats him on the shoulder, tears up the charge and dismisses him also. Scene finishes with Colonel and Captain in animated converse, the latter apparently also being admonished.

Scene 8. Outside of the Orderly Room. Prisoner's com rades hanging about; when the escort comes out, they gather round anxiously enquiring as to result. Directly afterwards their discharged comrade appears and is loudly cheered; closely following him comes the informer, who is severely hustled, and the last scene shows him being doused in a horse trough, the hero of the story coming to his rescue.

If, as narrative, the images of THE DESERTER are not entirely self-sufficent, they are far closer to being so than those of WAIT TILL JACK COMES HOME, and this is clearly the result of a conscious effort by its maker. No doubt he is still thinking in terms of the music hall, is still relying here and there on a spoken word from the commentator. Yet so shrewdly has he popularized his style that with this streamlined and ingratiating little narrative he has come to within a hair's breadth of the nickelodeon.

Although both THE DESERTER and WAIT TILL JACK COMES HOME have been lost, we have some clue to what they looked like from the 35mm frame reproductions inserted into the text of the story synopses in Williamson's catalog for November, 1903, a copy of which is in the library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. There are three such stills for JACK and nine of them for THE DESERTER. From them we can tell, for instance, that the pawn shop to which the mother takes her best dress in JACK is evidently a real one, and we can see that the interior sets of both films have been furnished with some care for realism. A feature of special interest about these stills,

however, is that they show that Williamson is now using stage-framing for his interior shots. It is hard to account for this unless, as is likely, he is simply conforming to a usage that seems to have become fairly general by this date. The example of Méliès - with all his prestige as incomparably the most successful producer of narrative films at this time - must certainly have been a factor in bringing this about, though probably even more important was the purely practical circumstance that the stage-frame offered the least difficulty to filmmakers who shot their interiors on relatively tiny open-air stages with cameras that were often literally bolted to the floor. It is important to note, though, that Williamson uses it only for his interiors. In his exterior shots he seems to revert to his old free style, his "newsreel" style. In THE DESERTER, Scene 3, a still shows the pursuing horsemen riding directly toward the camera; in Scene 2, a still of the soldier climbing over the wall catches him at the instant when he has just cleared the top and is about to drop down to the side where the camera is positioned; the most logical direction for his getaway will be away from the wall and toward the camera. Finally, a still for Scene 8 shows the soldier's exit outside of the orderly room. He is moving obliquely toward the camera - that is, on a diagonal line that will take him out of the picture at the bottom-left corner of the frame. To judge from the stills in Rachel Low's History and in Kemp R. Niver's The First Twenty Years, this practice of using the stage-frame for interiors side by side with freely framed exteriors remained characteristic of British filmmaking for the next few years, and in THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY Porter also shows a free shooting style in his exteriors. Like his British contemporaries, he treats the outlines of the screen sometimes as a proscenium frame and sometimes as the edges of a photograph.

Yet though Williamson has at least partially conformed to Méliès' stage-frame, it is clear that he has not accepted its implications, and certainly he has not adopted the staginess with which it was evidently associated in the minds of other filmmakers. The stills suggest an acting style of remarkable restraint. Except for its specified use as a device to suggest profanity in the opening scene of THE DESERTER - this may be the first instance of its kind in a Williamson film and a symptom of coming change - his actors apparently do not feel obliged to communicate their meanings in dumbshow, for there is not so much as an eloquently upraised arm in any of the stills. In this respect it is recognizably the work of the man whose boast was that there was no trace of "acting" in THE SOLDIER'S RETURN. For it was not just family togetherness or Scottish thrift that had made actors of himself and his relations. It was also, perhaps it was mainly, a distrust of the work of professionals, an intuition that his narratives needed a special kind of non-acting that professionals could not give them. Non-professionals could be counted on not to overact. They could be counted on not to act at all. For hadn't the newsreels already shown that even the most dramatic of human events could manage to preserve a somewhat prosaic exterior, and that the deeds of great magnitude were often performed, not with the actor's working countenance but with a perfectly straight face? There must be no affected posturings to spoil the illusion and give his narratives away as the works of the imagination they were. His players must not mime or "express" or "project." It was enough if they pretended the camera was not there while staying within the

focus of its lens, and, beyond that, that they behave - with all possible unselfconsciousness! - as if they were actually involved in the events that were unfolding. Certainly he found that non-actors could give him that documentary camera behavior far more easily than could professionals trained and conditioned to theatre work.

Logical and consistent reasoning. Yet it is doubtful that such acting contributed much to the self-sufficiency of his narratives. For how, if not by some form of dumbshow, could (say) the thematic exposition of THE DESERTER'S opening scene, and others like it, be made clear? Without pantomime it would merely be pictures of people talking to each other. The success of Scandinavian and Soviet filmmakers in working with non-professionals would come only after the narrative film's resources of editing, titling and camera-placement had been explored and developed for two decades. Williamson had respected the photographic nature of the new medium, but as a photo-dramatist he had conceived of the photograph perhaps too narrowly as a document. He did not understand that before documentarism could thrive in the haunts of entertainment seekers the expressive possibilities of the photographic narrative, which he had stumbled on in ATTACK ON A CHINA MISSION, would need to be far more fully developed. And if, till now, he had gotten by with using non-actors in his drama, hadn't it been because he was not relying on them to make his narratives theatrically effective but on the arts of commentators who were as resourceful and as knowledgeable in the ways of the theatre as any actor? Without a spoken commentary, and until titles would come to relieve them of part of it, the burden of making the drama clear would rest heavily on the actors. It was too great a responsibility to entrust to amateurs. What was needed now were professionals trained to cope with the special problems of making dramatic meanings intelligible in the picture narrative.

If the mere record of Williamson's continuing survival during the next few years can tell us anything, it is clear that he did succeed in adjusting to the conditions of producing narratives for the nickelodeon trade. In fact, the record of his output suggests that even if not with the wholehearted zest of Cecil Hepworth, whose RESCUED BY ROVER (1905; 425 ft.) - an impeccably self-sufficient photoplay where through the sheer brilliance of its editing an illusion was created of a dog behaving with super-canine prescience and resourcefulness - was perhaps the crowning achievement of early British cinema. Williamson seems to have prospered reasonably well until 1908, when a tightening of restrictive alliances by American producers against the work of foreign producers forced out of the nickelodeons all but a few powerful firms or those that had been provident enough to open American offices to keep an eye on their interests. His markets dwindling, Williamson directed his last film in 1909, a 1125-foot narrative of the days of Lady Jane Grey, based on one of William Harrison Ainsworth's novels. For this last effort he took his actors and his camera to the Tower of London and filmed some scenes there. In 1910 he sold his studio at Brighton to Charles Urban and G. A. Smith for their Kinemacolor Company. According to Rachel Low, he prolonged his life as a filmmaker for a short time by producing newsreels and nature subjects. By 1912, to judge from what Frederick Talbot writes of him, he was out of production altogether, and for the next few years ran a business which manufactured cameras and film-printers and which, besides, processed the negatives of other filmmakers. Williamson sold this business in December, 1918. He is believed to have died around 1933.

FILMOGRAPHY

Of Narrative Films by James A Williamson

Note: This list is compiled from Denis Gifford's British Film Catalogue 1895-1970, a book to which the foregoing essay is heavily indebted. Where the film is at least 300 feet long, I have adopted Mr Gifford's method of following its title with a parenthesized number which represents its length in feet, but I have omitted it for films of less than 300 feet. Mr Gifford gives a thumbnail synopsis for each film in the catalog; I have repeated his synopses only for dramas that seem representative of the period following the one covered by the essay. Films are listed in the order of the year and the month of their original release; after 1899 this presumably means the date of their first appearance in Williamson's catalogs. A title in italics means that the film is known to still exist (either in its entirety or as a fragment), and in this case the title is followed by a "B" or an "E", to signify respectively that the National Film Archive of Britain or George Eastman House has a print of it. My information extends to these archives only, though I have not been able to discover that any other Williamson films exist in the United States.

1898 July: Two Naughty Boys Upsetting the Spoons; Two Naughty Boys Sprinkling the Spoons; Two Naughty Boys Teasing the Cobbler; Washing the Sweep; Winning the Gloves; The Forbidden Lover; Sloper's Visit to Brighton.

Aug: The Jealous Painter; The Clown Barber; The Fraudulent Beggar.

1899 Oct: The Jovial Monks; Tit for Tat (The Jovial Monks 2); Courtship under Difficulties; The Sleeping Lovers.

1900 Oct: The Disabled Motor.

Nov: Attack on a China Mission (B).

1901 Oct: A Big Swallow (B and E); The Magic Extinguisher (B); The Elixer of Life; Stop Thief! (B); Over the Garden Wall; The Marvelous Hair Restorer; Are You There? (B); The Puzzled Bather and His Animated Clothes; Teasing Grandpa; Tomorrow Will Be Friday; Cyclist Scouts in Action; Fire! (B and E); Harlequinade (What They Found in the Laundry Basket).

1902 May: Ping-Pong (B)

June: The Soldier's Return (E); A Workman's Paradise.

July: An Extra Turn; Those Troublesome Boys; A Lady's First Lesson on the Bicycle; A Day in Camp with the Volunteers; Close Quarters, With a Notion of the Motion of the Ocean; Sambo; The Acrobatic Tramps (E).

Nov: Fighting His Battles Over Again.

Dec: An Amateur Bill Sykes; The Little Match Seller; A Reservist Before and After the War (B).

1903 May: Spring Cleaning.

June: Quarrelsome Neighbors; Remorse.

July: A Trip to Southend or Blackpool; The Wrong Poison.

Aug: The Wrong Chimney; No Bathing Allowed.

Sept: Wait till Jack Comes Home (430).

Oct: The Deserter (520).

Nov: The Evil-Doer's Sad End.

Dec: The Dear Boys Home for the Holidays (B); Juggin's Motor.

1904 July: The Great Sea-Serpent; Oh! What a Surprise; They Forgot the Gamekeeper.
Aug: The Clown's Telegram; The Student and the Housemaid.
Sept: Two Brave Little Japs (490: Nurse takes wounded father's dispatch to ship, is caught by Russians and saved by a sailor); The Stowaway (550: Boy stows away and on return finds drunken mother reformed).
Oct: An Interesting Story (B); All's Well that Ends Well.
Nov: Gabriel Grub the Surly Sexton (400; Episode from Dickens' Pickwick Papers); The Old Chorister (B).
Dec: The Tramp's Revenge; An Affair of Honor.
1905 July: Brown's Half Holiday (B); Sausages; Rival Barbers (B).
Aug: The Prodigal Son, Or Ruined at the Races (585: Disowned gambler finds gold and returns in time to save blind father from begging); Our New Errand Boy (350; B).
Sept: The Polite Lunatic; In the Good Old Times; Two Little Waifs (500; B: Gipsy steals boy; he flees with gipsy girl; she is caught but boy's father saves her from burning caravan).
Dec: An Eclipse of the Moon.
1906 May: Her First Cake (300); The Angler's Dream (300).
July: The Sham Sword Swallower (350); Mrs Brown Goes Home to Her Mother.
Aug: The Miner's Daughter (600; Girl elopes with artist and is reunited with angry father by child); A Day on His Own (330).
Sept: A Wicked Bounder (550); Where There's a Will There's a Way (675; Man elopes by posing as gardener and fools her pursuing father by putting dummies in car).
1907 Jan: Cheating the Sweep; The Village Fire Brigade (325).
May: Orange Peel.
July: The Brigand's Daughter (806: Girl helps artist escape from bandits; they are chased onto bridge which is struck by lightening); After the Dress Ball (345); Bobby's Birthday; Pa Takes Up Physical Culture (305: B); Why the Wedding Was Put Off; Just in Time (540: Child sees Puritan plant papers on royalist, whose fiancee then rides for Cromwell's pardon); Getting Rid of His Dog (310); The Orphans (665: Boy steals, is jailed, freed, and refused work; he robs house where his sister has been adopted).
1908 Feb: A Day's Holiday (495).
Mar: The Rival Cyclists (360: B).
Apr: One Hundred Pounds Reward (400; B: Sacked man's dog finds hidden jewels and tracks thieves); The Professor's Great Discovery (350); She Would Be a Suffragette; Animated Matches.
May: Uncle's Picnic (400).
Aug: My Wife's Dog (373).
Sept: The Ayah's Revenge (660: In India sacked nurse steals officer's child; mother rides to rescue and shoots nurse); The Little Mother (620: Widowed sailor returns in time to save children from eviction); The Great Bargain Sale (460).

Oct: Sunshine After Storm (890: Salvationist reforms suicidal drunkard who is later wrecked while escorting emigrants, and saved from sea by ex-wife); The Reconciliation (360: Squire's disowned son shot while poaching to feed starving wife).

Dec: A Countryman's Day in Town (350); The Rent Collector (360).

1909 Jan: 'Arry and 'Arriet's Evening Out (345).

Feb: Saved by a Dream (485: Gambler reforms after dreaming he loses everything and is jailed); The Letter Box Thief; The Tower of London (1125: In 1553 Lord escapes from jealous jailor to wed Lady's maid).

In addition to the above, The Williamson Film Company in 1908 and 1909 released four films written, directed and performed by Jack Chart. The Bully and the Recruit (336); Still Worthy of the Name (520); Raised from the Ranks (360); and How They Made a Man of Billy Brown. During the same period it also released eleven films directed by Dave Aylott: The Boy and the Convict (750); Scouts to the Rescue (550); Squaring the Account (370); A Dash for Help (515); Two Naughty Boys (375); The Unwelcome Chaperone (400); For Her Sake; Gingerbread (400); and Sorry, Can't Stop. The last films issued by the company were Aylott's Scratch as Scratch Can (410) and And Then He Woke Up, both September, 1909.

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FILMMAKING AT THE AMERICAN MUTOSCOPE AND BIOGRAPH COMPANY 1900-1906

Paul C. Spehr

In the hope of casting a clearer light upon film production from 1900 through 1906, a period that antedates trade press coverage, it occurred to me that there was a need to study specific examples. What follows is based on the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company production logs, which survive in the library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and are available in the Library of Congress on microfilm; on Kemp Niver's compilation of the Biograph Company's bulletins;[1] and on my viewing, over a long period, of many Biograph films, some of which survive in the Library's Paper Print Collection. The production logs provide a chronological pattern of film production by one of the most important of the early American film companies. My study concentrated on the firm's production volume and frequency, the length of its films, the shooting locations, and the films' makers.

In 1900 the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company had a rooftop studio in New York City at 841 Broadway, the Hackett-Carhart building, near Union Square. The building had been the office of the Magic Introduction Company, owned by Bernard Koopman, who, in 1895, joined Henry Marvin, Herman Casler of Syracuse, and Thomas Edison's former employee W.K.L. Dickson in forming the K.M.C.D. Company, which soon became the American Mutoscope Company. Although the company was originally formed to produce movies on flip cards for the Mutoscope machines, it soon turned to producing films for projection in theaters as well. This led the firm into conflict with the larger and more dominant Edison Company - America's earliest major motion picture producer. Edison met this competition with a patent suit designed to restrict projection of the films.

In this early movie market, the competitive war was continually waged on two fronts - the legal one, with the suits involving interpretation of the patent laws, and the more direct one, whereby audiences chose their favorite film productions.

In retrospect, the Edison Company seems to have been the more conservative of the two companies - traditional and bound by commitments, either real or imagined, to high moral principles.[2] The Edison Company's role as plaintiff in the patent suits in which they appear as the aggressor tends to confirm the company's image as a conservative and possessive business conglomerate. The American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, which we will call by its later name, the Biograph Company, has always seemed the more adventuresome and opportunistic of the early companies.[3] It appears to have augmented its output of travel, religion, and classical literature films, the staples of the conservative early filmmakers, with sex, drama, comedy, and sensational productions, thereby laying the groundwork for the imaginative creativity of D.W. Griffith and his followers.

Today's scholars have access to sources which were not available to earlier researchers who stereotyped aspects of this period. The survival of the Biograph Company's handwritten, daily production logbooks, in which filming

activity was recorded in roughly chronological order, provides unique information. About 40 percent of these logged films survive, many in the Library's Paper Print Collection, and now scholars can view them.

Volume 1 of the Biograph logbooks begins April 15, 1899, with production number 935. Each production is recorded in sequence by number, date, subject (often the release title), shooting location, the name of the operator (as the cameraman-filmmaker was usually called at the time), the date the negative was developed, and occasionally some production or release information. Later entries include the length of the original, the "corrected" length, the date shot, the date developed, the speed at which the camera was cranked, occasional quality evaluations, and a note recording whether it was produced for Mutoscope (flip-card machine), Biograph (projection), or both.

I have classified filmed dance or vaudeville acts as entertainments. Inevitably, I had to make some arbitrary decisions regarding what should be categorized as entertainment, so my statistics should be regarded as proportional rather than absolute. There were also certain subjects that could not be judged accurately. Some of the early titles are experimental or provide no clues concerning the subject matter. Since there were no surviving copies, these were classified as "uncertain".

In order to get a perspective on production in 1900, it is necessary to consider the situation in 1899. The rooftop in New York City which was the company's shooting stage had some inherent limitations, particularly in the winter. If it was cold, stormy, or even gray and overcast, the rooftop became unusable since controlled, consistent, strong light was vital for production.

The last productions of 1899 were shot in November by operator Francis S. Armitage. The titles include: THE MAKE-UP THIEF, A WARM BABY AND A COLD DUCK, FOUGERE,* THE FOSTER MOTHER,* and PITY THE BLIND. They were relatively short films, twenty-five to fifty feet in length and scarcely a minute in running time. During November and December of 1899, a number of actuality films were shot outside of New York City - eleven titles in Honolulu and the Philippines by an operator named Raymond Ackerman, and another series along the Union Pacific Railway line.

The roof studio was not used again until January 18, 1900, when Wallace McCutcheon shot NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS OF A TYPEWRITER and THE PERFECT WOMAN WANTED HER PICTURE IN THE ALTOGETHER. On January 23 I HAD TO LEAVE A HAPPY HOME FOR YOU* and CAUGHT were shot. No more films were made until March, when four titles were shot. In the meantime forty actuality films were received and processed by the company, all shot outdoors in Philadelphia (two), Cincinnati (two), Chicago (three), Canada (thirteen, by Arthur Marvin), and the Philippines (by Raymond Ackerman).

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* Film titles followed by an asterisk are in the Library's Paper Print Collection.

During 1900 the company made 374 films - 166 were actuality films, 194 were entertainment, and 14 were of undetermined nature. Five men worked as operators during this time. Ackerman, who was in Hawaii and the Philippines at the beginning of the year, returned to the West Coast in September. Francis S. Armitage, G.W. "Billy" Bitzer, Arthur Marvin, and Wallace McCutcheon worked out of the New York office.

The peak production period for the year was from the beginning of May through October, when 266 titles were produced. Of these, 151 were entertainment, 107 were actuality, and 8 were of undetermined nature.

On May 16, the first five-part film, THE DOWNWARD PATH,* was shot by Arthur Marvin[4] and the next month the second five-part film, A CAREER OF CRIME,* was also shot by Marvin. Although very short, these films represent a clear effort to start producing more complicated, longer films. They are also significant because of serious topical subject matter - prostitution and economically motivated crime.

Although production at the rooftop studio was fairly steady during the spring, summer, and early fall, the company took a ten-day break from July 6 to July 16. It was a common practice for companies to close for a summer vacation during these years and this probably accounts for Biograph's July break.

Although the majority of the performers in these early films were obscure and anonymous, a few prominent personalities and professional actors and actresses appeared before the cameras during 1900. Homer Davenport, a cartoonist for the JOURNAL, was photographed on the roof. Stage performers John Rice and Sally Cohen appeared in scenes from IN OLD KENTUCKY, and Charles Grapewin appeared in CHIMMIE HICKS AT THE RACES.* Since the studio was located near New York's theater district, it is not surprising to find that a few recognized theatre people appeared in early films. Performing in movies was not yet lucrative, and the industry remained primarily a producer of curiosities.

As a postscript to the year's production, there was an interesting experiment with trick printing during December 1900 and January 1901. On December 8, 1900, three films were made by double printing productions which had been made earlier. The resulting releases were A NYMPH OF THE WAVES* (productions 70 and 1,210), DAVEY JONES' LOCKER* (350 and 354), and NEPTUNE'S DAUGHTERS* (349, 351 and 1,161). On January 5, 1901, the experiment with double printing was continued with reproduction of THE GHOST TRAIN* (production 81 printed negative, and a shot of the moon), CAST UP BY THE WAVES (351 and 1,590) and ROCK OF AGES* (380 and ROCK OF AGES). It seems probable that the midwinter production lull, accounts for this interlude of creative experimentation in technical achievements.

These three were the only entertainment productions made by the company until April 15, 1901; only two were done during April and seven during May. It was a very slow year for new entertainment productions at the Biograph Company. Only forty-nine entertainment productions were made all year (in contrast to 185 the year before) and twenty-nine of them were made during June, including

a five-part TEN NIGHTS IN A BAR-ROOM.* Eight were made during July, and then New York production was shut down until May 1902.

During 1901 Biograph continued to employ Armitage, Bitzer, Marvin, and McCutcheon as camera operators. Cameramen Robert K. Bonine and James Congdon were added to the staff. Bonine made a trip to Hawaii, Japan, and China. The year's production of new films focused on actuality production, 286 titles. There were seventeen films of uncertain type. Major attention was given to the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo and the assassination and funeral of President McKinley.

During 1902 the staff of operators was reduced to Bitzer, Bonine, Congdon, and Marvin. Production for the year dropped from 352 to 187 titles. Production of entertainment films continued at about the same level, 52 (49 in 1901). Once again, production of entertainment films was restricted to the warm months of May through August. The drop in production coincides with the period when the Biograph Company began to make massive copyright registrations for previously produced subjects. This burst of copyrighting was probably the result of a favorable court decision in the long continuing suit with the Edison Company. For the first time the company could distribute films for projection, augmenting its Mutoscope distribution.

The production patterns for the year reflect a rather conservative, unadventurous approach to production. The major documentary event of the year was Prince Henry of Prussia's visit to the United States. There were so few new ventures on the dramatic side that a series of seven films featuring the newly popular comic strip characters "Foxy Grandpa and the Boys", with stage actor Joseph Hart playing the lead, stands out as a creative achievement. The Library has copies of many of these films.

During this period productions continued to be short, twenty-five to fifty feet of 35mm film, less than a minute of running time. By now the majority of the entertainment films were broad comedies patterned after burlesque routines. They were repetitive and predictable. The number of comedies produced outnumbered the melodramas.

In 1903 Bitzer and Bonine continued as operators. Armitage and McCutcheon returned to work and were joined by A.E. Weed and a San Francisco photographer, Herbert J. Miles.

During the year production jumped from 187 to 496 titles, and the company moved from the rooftop studio on Broadway to a converted brownstone at 11 East Fourteenth Street (about a block away). This building was made famous by D.W. Griffith, Lillian Gish, Blanche Sweet, Mack Sennett, and other members of the Biograph Stock Company. Films produced on March 26 and 27 and April 1 are marked in the log as made in the studio, the first such indications. The first title so listed is FOR THE UPPER CRUST. April was, however, a period of light production, with only seven films made during the month, so the beginning of new studio production was rather hesitant.

The earlier part of the year had seen a burst of documentary production. In February Bonine shot thirty short films at the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, Ohio, apparently on a commission from the company. Certainly one of the earliest "sponsored" films, it recorded factory production, employees' activities, and the management of the company. Unfortunately, the film has not survived.

In March forty documentary films were recorded, more than twenty-five titles were made (as opposed to ten the previous month). In July thirty-two were made, twenty-one in August, thirty-eight in September, and forty-four in October. While production dropped to eleven in November, thirty-seven titles were made in December. The indoor facilities in the new studio clearly put at least a partial end to the seasonal nature of the company's output.

At the same time, documentary production was also flourishing, spurred on by the production of films in groups or series. In August twenty-four films on the U.S. Postal service were shot in Washington, D.C., and its environs (including Westminster, Maryland) by operator A.E. Weed. Also in August, Bitzer shot twelve films on the U.S.S. Kearsarge, which was on Oyster Bay, New York, near Theodore Roosevelt's home. In August and September Francis S. Armitage shot forty-one films in the West and Southwest for the U.S. Department of the Interior. While these films could be viewed individually, they also had a continuity of subject and, perhaps, some sequential order. Since some of these "series" were up to an hour long, this clearly indicates a significant change in production patters.

October of 1903 brought the first long entertainment releases - THE AMERICAN SOLDIER IN LOVE AND WAR* in three short parts, KIT CARSON* in thirteen parts, and THE PIONEERS in six parts. The latter two were made in the Adirondacks in September by Wallace McCutcheon. At this time, Biograph was following the lead of the rival Edison Company, which had released several successful longer films (about one reel each), including JACK AND THE BEANSTALK* (June 1902), LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN* (January 1903), and UNCLE TOM'S CABIN* (July 1903), soon to be followed by A RAILROAD ROMANCE (ROUTE OF THE PHOEBE SNOW)* (October 1903) and THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY* (December 1903).

Biograph's first long entertainment films were awkward, self-conscious and tedious. As such, they were a distinct contrast to Edwin S. Porter's Edison productions which were lively, imaginative, and more popular.

It was not until March of 1904, when THE BATTLE OF THE YALU* was made, that Biograph began to compete seriously with the Edison Company in the production of longer films. In the meantime they opened 1904 with a heavy production schedule of short films. Of the 104 entertainment films they made during the year, 94 were made during January, February, and March.

During 1904, the company continued to employ Armitage, Bitzer, McCutcheon, and Weed as operators. They were joined by F.A. Dobson. Cameramen Miles, Bonine, Congdon, and Ackerman were no longer working for the firm. Marvin, still with the company, apparently did not operate a camera very often.

During 1904 the number of titles produced declined again to 214, less than half the previous year's total, but there was an increase in the number of longer titles released. During the first half of the year production was very mixed, following previous patterns somewhat, but later in the year the production pattern becomes more complex.

Biograph was still committed to providing new titles for the Mutoscope machines which the company had sold all over the country. The capacity of a Mutoscope machine was limited by the circumference of its drum; therefore, a certain percentage of the company's production had to be short films. Longer films, gradually approaching the 1,000-foot length which would become an industry standard, were making a definite impact on the market by the early part of 1904.

In April of 1904 the company sent Bitzer to Pittsburgh, where he shot a series of more than thirty short films at the Westinghouse plant, similar to Biograph's industrial documentation of the National Cash Register Company the previous year. A copy of the Westinghouse series of films survives in the Library's collection.

The major documentary concern of the summer was the St. Louis Exposition. A.E. Weed spent April to June in Missouri recording a wide variety of events. The Library has copies of most of these films.

In June 1904 the company produced PERSONAL,* the most famous of its early long productions. The camera operator was Bitzer. The film was a popular success and from that time, about one long entertainment film a month was produced for the rest of the year. The production pattern was, however, not strictly regular, as no long work was produced in December, while two long films were made in October.

This commitment to longer entertainment films was matched by a few longer actuality releases, such as HOLLAND SUBMARINE BOAT TESTS,* made in June, and AUTOMOBILING AMONG THE CLOUDS,* which was made in July at Mt. Washington, New Hampshire.

The logbook also indicates that some form of editing was beginning. The entries for the year 1904 contain the notations "original length" and "corrected length". Most entries are quite neat with only an occasional new entry in the corrected length column, but as the films grow longer in May and June, there are more frequent entries in this column. PERSONAL was originally 462.5 feet in length and was corrected to 383.5 feet. The HOLLAND SUBMARINE BOAT TESTS, made by Bitzer on June 20, 1904, was 706 feet, corrected to 454 feet. In August THE WIDOW AND THE ONLY MAN* was corrected from 1,010 feet to 462.5 feet.

Although no productions were made in December of 1904, two were made in the film studio during January, including BABY'S DAY,* an early attempt at a documentary. It recreated typical baby care of the period but was shot in the studio rather than in someone's home. However, the eastern winter weather did not prevent them from going out to Ft. Lee, New Jersey, to shoot THE GENTLEMEN HIGHWAYMEN* on January 14.

Operators working for the company during 1905 were Bitzer, Armitage, McCutcheon, and Dobson; Weed did not work during 1905.

At least one long film a month was produced throughout the year as were a number of shorter films of Mutoscope length. The number of actuality films declined dramatically, from 105 in 1904 (268 in 1903) to 43. The average length increased. The number of entertainment films, 104, was the same as the previous year. By the end of 1905 the number of longer entertainment films (450 feet to 750 feet) being made had increased to two or three a month.

In January of 1906 the company made THE JOLLY MONKS OF MALABAR* (653.5 feet), THE INSURANCE SOLICITOR* (611.5 feet), A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED* (516.75 feet), MR. BUTT-IN* (680.5 feet), and THE CRITIC* (748 feet). In addition, an actuality film, SEEING BOSTON,* was made and released at 398.75 feet.

Once again, during 1906 the total number of film titles produced declined (to 113), with about half being actuality and half dramatic. The staff of cameramen was reduced to Bitzer, Dobson, and O.M. Gove, the last working only in California.

Mutoscope productions continued to be made, but the concentration on longer productions was now a clear commitment.

No longer were there months of frantically heavy production and periods of no production as in earlier years. Production dropped to five titles in February and three in March. The heaviest production month during 1906 was June, when fourteen titles were produced, although twelve were made in both April and May. Production again dropped to five in July, although this may reflect the closing of the studio for vacation during part of the month.

For those interested in firsts, the Biograph records indicate that on June 12, 1906, O.M. Gove shot A CALIFORNIA HOLD UP in Los Angeles, certainly one of the first westerns made in the area.

What conclusions can be drawn from this information? First, between 1900 and 1906 the company moved from rather primitive, short film production to longer, more sophisticated production; from elementary single scene films to more complicated productions, clearly the beginning of structured movies as we know them today.

Second, production moved from an exterior, rooftop studio, which depended upon natural light and favorable weather, to an indoor studio with artificial light, making longer productions possible. Also, by 1906 there is evidence that both individual productions and patterns of production are being more carefully planned, a change from the dependence upon improvised filming which characterized production at the turn of the century.

The gradual reduction in the number of cameramen employed by the company seems to reflect a change in production techniques. At the turn of the century

only one cameraman-operator would be at the studio to film entertainment productions on the roof, while several men would be traveling, both at home and abroad, shooting short actuality footage. By 1906 even the production of actuality films changes, and longer, more structured films are being produced. These films are much closer to the sort of documentary productions we know today than the single scenes which were typically made in 1900.

Finally, there is evidence that the experience of the early cameramen-operators who learned to shoot movies out-of-doors and learned camera skills by photographing objects that moved, led to an interesting mixture of exterior and interior shooting even when more sophisticated and interior staging was possible in an artificially lighted indoor studio. From the earliest days of studio production, Biograph's filmmakers went to the countryside or out into the streets of the city to shoot their films but shot the interior scenes on the Fourteenth Street studio sets. This pattern of filmmaking was well established when D.W. Griffith joined the company in 1908. These early filmmakers were almost obsessed with having constant movement in their films. At times this obsession created a nervous quality in the films, but in the best hands this passion for action and shooting in natural settings provided the beginnings of the vigorous, lively American cinema that would prove to be so popular with audiences worldwide.

Biograph Company Productions
1900-1906

	Theatrical	Nontheatrical	Uncertain*	Annual Total
1900	194	166	14	374
1901	49	286	17	352
1902	52	117	18	187
1903	225	266	5	496
1904	104	105	5	214
1905	104	43	9	156
1906	46	52	15	113
Total	774	1,035	83	1,892

* Not enough information available to determine if the film is theatrical or nontheatrical.

NOTES

1. Kemp R. Niver, comp., BIOGRAPH BULLETINS, 1896-1908, ed. Bebe Bergsten (Los Angeles: Locare Research Group, 1971).

2. Other competitors existed, particularly the Vitagraph Company of America, but they were not yet a serious threat; however, their time would come. At the time of these early suits, the Edison Company was purchasing some Vitagraph films to expand its sales catalog.

3. The company's name was changed to the Biograph Company in 1909.

4. The handwriting in the logbook is not always clear, but it appears to indicate Marvin for this production.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CZECH CINEMA, 1900-1906

Zdeněk Štábla - CZECHOSLOVAKIA

I am using this opportunity to inform you briefly about the situation of Czech cinema in the years 1900 - 1906 and try to characterize it. I assume that this will be of interest to you too, because this was a national cinematography starting in a not too big country, a country under national oppression, stricken by conflicts between the nations living there, the Czechs and the Germans; this country then belonged to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, which was not well disposed towards the Czech nation.

The first wave of travelling cinematographic establishments flooded the so-called lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia, Moravia and the former Austrian Silesia) as early as the second half of 1896 and the first half of 1897. Foreign establishments from Germany and Vienna and, later on, from France (Lumière) and the U.S.A. (Edison), which had introduced cinema to this country, were soon replaced by domestic establishments, Czech and German, which were systematically visiting one place after the other. The cinematograph was considered as an interesting technical novelty at first, and, to the proprietors of the first travelling film shows, it meant only a temporary business. Just as with X-Rays and, in the past, other inventions too, it was propagated by showmen as an instrument useful to science and its popularization or a means of documentation.

In less than a year, not a single locality of importance in the Czech lands was left unvisited by a cinematograph. But, at the same time, the interest in it waned, and so the first temporary domestic film establishments disappeared. Others were taking their place, but soon also ceased to operate. Still, there was a case in which the cinematograph became a matter of a more permanent character: this was the domestic German establishment of the Oeser Brothers from the town of Zatec in Bohemia, who considered the cinematograph to be a convenient part of their Electric Theatre, presenting a great variety of experiments in the field of physics, optics and electricity. There was also the case of the Prague "Variety" Theatre, where the cinematography changed into a music hall attraction and, with small intervals, continued as the closing number from 1896 to the Twenties.

It was only after 1901 that, in the Czech lands, which belonged to the most industrialized regions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, itinerant showmen, who represented the most progressive form of commercial exploitation of films, changed the cinematograph into an original means of entertainment, whose importance was growing with the development of the story film. The number of persons interested in getting a licence for showing films was increasing steadily, but it was not until 1904 that the cinematograph's trade became something stable in this country. At that time, the film establishments began to show signs of greater vitality, and so their gradual growth could be seen. Of course, not all the establishments which came into existence after 1904 succeeded in keeping afloat. Their owners' entrepreneurial

activities and social status varied, but the numbers of those having definitely chosen film showing as their trade was growing steadily. Some names first noted by us among the proprietors of touring film-establishments appeared again in later years in connection with the creation of a network of cinemas; this started in 1907 when the first permanent cinemas were established.

At the period we are speaking about, in Paris, London, Berlin and New York, films were not only shown, but also produced while, in the Czech lands their production was only a result of the unsystematic activity of some enterprising individuals. The most important step in this direction was made as early as 1898 by Jan Kříženeckỳ and Josef Pokorný, technical employees of the Prague municipal construction office. These two young men, with the help of Pokorný's father, bought a Lumière camera with accessories and film stock and, for the Prague Exhibition of Architecture and Engineering, which had to give a picture of almost a thousand years development of Czech architecture and technical activities, made some original documentary films at the Exhibition and on life in Prague. Together with these actualities, in order to give a zest to their programme, they filmed three merry scenic "animated photographs" with the participation, in Prague, of the well known singer and entertainer, Josef Šváb-Malostranský. These three pictures were an exception, because the Czech pioneers of the cinematograph, just as the Lumière Brothers, considered the "animated photographs" to be a true reproduction of life and, consequently, were shooting the chosen event exactly as it was happening in front of the camera, without making any changes or artificial adjustments.

In 1901, inspired by the Czech Sokol Community, which was a national sports organization, Jan Kříženeckỳ filmed eighteen "animated photographs" at the 4th All-Sokol festival in Prague. This picture collection, a film reportage, was altogether 360 metres long, which was a considerable length for that time when, as a rule, each "picture" was no longer than 20 or 30 metres on the average. Therefore, Kříženeckỳ's collection of festival pictures really was a "super-production", which, most probably, represented something unprecedented in this country.

Kříženeckỳ's film reportage from the 4th All-Sokol Festival has also been remarkable for its subject. Such imposing mass-performances of domestic and foreign Sokol groups doing light and heavy gymnastics in the presence of many thousand spectators was unparalleled in the whole world. This feast of sports efficiency, physical preparedness and beauty, mainly filmed from above from a tower specially built for the purpose, must have made a strong impression upon the spectators, especially because the camera eye magnified a spectacle already imposing in itself. In a period of national disputes between Czechs and Germans, Kříženeckỳ's collection of Sokol photographs could also strengthen the feelings of patriotism and inspire Czech national consciousness and pride. It is a pity that Kříženeckỳ was unable to send his collection of Sokol-festival pictures abroad. There, they would most probably have been admired and even mentioned in the history of world cinema.

But, in this country, they fell into oblivion and when, many years later, just a mention of their existence was found, this was for us a truly historic event.

The Prague National Museum of Technology has an archive where documents on the history of technology and industry are kept, among them two letters and a delivery order sent by the firm A. Lumière and Sons to Kříženecký, one at the end of May and the other at the beginning of June, 1901. There we can read that Kříženecký bought 21 rolls of film stock to be used for filming the Festival pictures. One of the letters indicates that, in connection with filming the Sokol Festival, Kříženecký was also interested in getting cassettes that would hold a film of more than 17 metres. He was very disappointed to read in a letter signed by Louis Lumière that the factory continued to produce the sixteen and seventeen metre films only and that the cassettes delivered with it for exposed and unexposed film had dimensions corresponding to this footage only and, under no conditions, could they hold films longer than that.

When, in 1907, Kříženecký had to film the 5th All-Sokol Festival, he obviously did not have enough money to buy a new camera and, therefore, "modernized" his 1898 Lumière camera. In the Prague National Museum of Technology, where Kříženecký's camera with accessories is exhibited, we find not only the original Lumière cassette, but also cassettes of a more recent type which can hold 80 metres of film. If we take a good look at Kříženecký's camera, we can see that it was reconstructed. The exterior itself indicates that some changes were made. A heterogeneous element is a circular indicator of the stock consumption; less conspicuous is a view-finder fixed at the left lateral side of the box. Even inside the camera, we find that substantial changes of design were also made. The exposed film was no longer wound into a metallic cassette inside the apparatus, but into a double cassette outside it, which was designed in a way to hold the unexposed as well as the exposed film. With such a camera Kříženecký could make longer shots required by the object being filmed, and also several consecutive shots, without having to reload the camera after each of them.

In 1901, he had to content himself with shorter, but technically still up-to-date pictures. In 1907, in comparison with the new, technically more advanced apparatus, his camera, despite all the efforts to "modernize" it, was clumsy, inconvenient for panoramas and, moreover, detracted from the quality of the picture, especially by its jerky recording of motion; in the meantime, this defect had been eliminated elsewhere, and the new cameras were already free of it. Kříženecký's reportage about the 4th All-Sokol Festival was just as good as any other "animated photographs" made in other European countries at that time and, in its aesthetic qualities, it was perhaps superior to them. But, from the technical point of view, his reportage about the 5th All-Sokol Festival could not bear comparison with the high standard of world cinema at that period. Czech film historian Jindřich Brichta was right in saying that, in the first decade of this century, Czech film-making "was arrested in its development at the technical level already reached at the very beginnings of cinematography".

Of Kříženecký's other films made in 1901, we know only a reportage about the ceremonial blessing of the bridge of the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Josef I, attended by the monarch himself. Only a single complete, but damaged picture of this event has been preserved. It immortalizes the Emperor walking at the head of his suite on the bridge. Of two other pictures, only fragments remain: the first one shows a festival gateway near the National Theatre, the second a group of guests and onlookers at the ceremony. This material is not enough to give any idea of how many animated photographs made up the reportage, but one thing is obvious: Kříženecký conceived his reportages exclusively as a collection of "animated photographs" and, from the viewpoint of subject, did not content himself with only one of them, as was still the case at the time of the 1898 Exhibition. This new way of filming allowed him to record an event from several angles. During the projection, after each picture, a short interval was needed to put on another small film-reel, but each of the "animated photographs" already has something in common with the others, and this is the first indication of composition by editing in our country.

In 1901, when Kříženecký went back to the camera for the second time, he was no longer the only producer of films in Prague. Since 1899, the Varieté theatre in the Karlín district - a theatre of international standard - had also presented original pictures from time to time, produced at the initiative, and with the financial help, of its director, Eduard Tichý. They were filmed by foreign cinematographers who were giving shows as part of the music-hall programme. The first original pictures were those of Emperor Franz Josef's visit to Prague in August, 1899. They were filmed most probably by Otto Dittmann, showing Messter's "cosmograph". After that reportage, other topical shots from Prague followed, including the sensational picture, of February 16, 1900, THE FIRE AT PALACKÝ AVENUE IN KARLÍN.

The most interesting reportage for this theatre, produced on March 28, 1903, was that of Czech politician František Ladislav Rieger's funeral. It was filmed by four cameras directed by the Dutchman, A. Nöggerth from Amsterdam. Its showing lasted more than fifteen minutes. The last cinematographic pictures were produced for the Varieté theatre in 1907.

This theatre sold the used films to itinerant proprietors of film establishments. In 1904, for instance, the reportage on Rieger's funeral and another about the Imperial festivities held in Prague in 1901 could be seen at Ponc and Körber's establishment with the English title "The Royal Bioskop", which showed them first in Pilsen and then in Southern Bohemia. The picture IN FRONT OF THE RINGHOFFER FACTORY AT NOON, produced in October, 1899, was still being shown as late as 1907 in Viktor Ponrepo's first permanent cinema in Prague, situated in the "Blue Pike" house in the Old Town.

To make their performances more attractive, touring establishments, too, sometimes produced pictures in the places they were visiting. We have found the first mention of this in connexion with the performances of B. Schenk's "Continental Theatre Eden" in Brno (June 1897). In his publicity slogans, he declared that his theatre was the biggest and most fantastic in the world and had an amphitheatre. In its programme, the Eden theatre showed a picture filmed in front of the Grand Hotel in Brno.

A Swiss cinema with the name "The Royal Bio Co.", belonging to L. Praiss junior, was touring the Czech lands from 1901. In 1905, it produced pictures in Prague, Pilsen and České Budějovice, and, in 1906, when it was giving cinematograph performances at the German-Czech Industrial Exhibition at Liberec, it made a film reportage about Emperor Franz Josef's visit to that town on the occasion of the Exhibition. The reportage consisted of seven pictures. It showed the reception of His Imperial Highness at Liberec railway station as well as the ceremonial welcome given to him by the magistrate in front of the Town hall, and the Emperor's visit to the Exhibition. In June, 1907, when Praiss's cinematograph was showing films at the Exhibition of New Inventions at Olomouc, this reportage was still on its bill. Soon shots from the Olomouc Exhibition were added. They showed the inauguration of the Exhibition by its patron, Archduke Josef Ferdinand, a children's procession there and a performance of a Vienna choir. It was still possible to see Praiss's "The Royal Bio" in 1908 at the Prague Exhibition of the Chamber of Commerce and Trades, where Jan Kříženeckýs shots from the Exhibition were shown. This is the last known appearance of Praiss's cinema in the Czech lands; because of the owner's unfortunate death, this travelling film establishment was sold to somebody else in 1909.

As far as we know to-day, of the domestic film establishments only the Oeser Brothers produced their own original pictures, as documented by a notice preserved about their performances in Prague in November, 1906.

At this period, we can also see films being used for the stage. In this country, it happened for the first time in October, 1902. Jan Kubík, who was producing J. Freund's farce "The Best Number", adapted by Kren and Lindau, at Švanda's Aréna theatre in Prague-Smíchov, made use of the cinematograph to get a powerful effect, which is mentioned by one of the actors of this show, Alois Charvát, in his memoirs From the Old Prague. He writes: "At the end of the first act, there was an uproar on the stage, everyone was rushing from the theatre, and everything happening in front of it could also be seen on the white sheet of linen which, in the meantime, had been dropped instead of the curtain".

A review published by Divadelní listy at that period, and by now forgotten, tells us that the cinematograph pictures appeared again in the third entr'acte. But, this time, they were not linked with the preceding scene, but represented a collection of films made by Jan Křížecký in 1898 and 1901.

"With astonishment we are putting the question," Divadelní noviny wrote, "how is all this to the point? We do not deny that it is only because of the cinematograph that the audience comes to see "The Best Number", but we are of the following opinion: if a piece is shown only to allow such music-hall exhibition, perhaps the piece could be left out entirely while keeping only the cinematograph and the inserted wonderful music-hall songs àla Eulalie; on the theatre gate, the following inscription could be painted: 'Švanda's Music-Hall'...."

The author of the cinematograph pictures especially made for this staging was Jan Kříženecký, who, in 1906, most probably produced a cinematograph picture representing Satan's ride on the railway; it was to be used for another theatre piece with songs and dances, "Satan's Last Excursion", written by J. Harry and Ed. Goulton. Kříženecký's interlude to this theatrical show was sent to the Lumière factory to be processed. Because of some snag, the returned printed film could not be cleared through the customs in time and, therefore, the management of the Smíchov Aréna theatre turned to Antonín Pech, brother of an important Czech writer, Eliška Krásnohorská, and photographer at České Budějovice, who was known to have made some amateur films, and asked him to produce another picture of this kind. Pech processed the film himself so it could be shown at the première of the play on August 4, 1906. When the picture processed by the Lumière factory was finally cleared by the customs, it was added to Pech's picture and shown with it.

Pech's name can also be found several times in the history of Czech cinema in later years. He takes credit for having founded the First Prague Production of Cinematographic Pictures in the first half of 1910; which, in May, 1911, was changed into the first Czech cinema-society Kinofa; in the three years of its existence, Kinofa produced about 200 films, including some features.

In the period 1900-1906, in the Czech lands, permanent cinemas or enterprises selling or lending films did not yet exist. Therefore, the cinemas travelling there were mostly dependent on Berlin, which was the centre of film trade in Central Europe, and, partly on Vienna, where newly established branch offices were negotiating the sale of films coming from Berlin. As not one of the domestic entrepreneurs in the field of cinematography felt himself financially strong enough, and the mere will to produce films, as shown by Jan Kříženecký, for instance, was not sufficient, the real development of film production in this country was possible only when permanent cinemas and distributors came on the scene. The first distributors were the cinema owners who were to become the first film producers.

The law governing cinematographic performances acted as a brake on the development of cinematography in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Austro-Hungarian authorities considered all forms of travelling show-business, including the cinematograph, to be a fairground entertainment. The cinematograph was a trade which the authorities tolerated, but at the same time controlled, to prevent it from running wild. A licence was always issued for one year only, based on a decree of the Imperial Court Office of January 6, 1836, supplemented by some provisions, of June 3, 1851, which were motivated by the growing number of itinerant showmen, mostly from abroad. According to opinion current at the time, these establishments were corrupting public morals. Permission to give cinematograph performances was issued by the highest local authorities who were able to record the number of establishments touring the country. Taking into account local conditions and the welfare of the population, the authorities decided whether cinematograph performances were to be allowed at all, and, if so, where this could take place and for how long, especially when higher political interests demanded stricter supervision of all travelling showmen.

As regards the licence - and this aspect is very important for the development of cinematography in this country - only the proprietor named in it could make use of it. But if he died, the document could not be transferred to anybody else, not even to another member of the deceased person's family. The licenced proprietor was not allowed to have two establishments or to assign his licence to any other company. The application of these provisions on cinematograph business was specific to the Austro-Hungarian State and, from the very beginnings of cinema, had been an anomaly.

Czech film production was also adversely affected by the problem, only partially resolved, of nationalities, which led to never-ending national conflicts to be felt throughout the country. This antagonism had a negative influence on the development of Czech cinema, especially on the possibility of releasing Czech films. Czech entrepreneurs owned not more than about a third of all cinemas in the Czech lands whereas the remaining two-thirds belonged to the entrepreneurs catering for the German part of population. It is understandable that the members of this second group preferred films produced in Berlin or Vienna and were not interested in Czech productions.

According to a national-economic rule establishing that film production develops especially in the economically most advanced countries, Prague, as the centre of Czech economic and cultural life, should have had the most favourable conditions for becoming the centre of successful film production. But, at a time when there were still no agencies establishing contacts between film production and cinemas in all parts of the country, film production could have a chance of development only in those centres where most of the cinemas were concentrated. In this respect, in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Vienna as well as Budapest had an advantage over Prague. This unfavourable situation continued to exist even after 1911 when the first Czech features were made.

SOUND-ON-DISC-FILMS 1900-1929

and the possibilities of video-transfer

Tjitte De Vries

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This paper was inspired by the subject of one of the symposiums of the 34th FIAF-Congress 1978 at Brighton: the possibilities of film transfer to video systems.

Introduction

Almost from the beginnings of the history of moving pictures many efforts have been made to make the pictures also talk.

Since America's well publicized claim that they brought the talking pictures to life 55 years ago it is almost forgotten that at the Paris Exhibition of 1900 two talking movie-systems could be seen and heard.

Also into obscurity went the fact that from 1903 till 1913 no less than 500 German theaters operated with a talking picture system.

In the Netherlands the famous travelling showmen Alberts Frères travelled around with their "Electro Talking Bioscope" from 1901. In England at least several hundred of talking or singing pictures have been produced from 1904.

Like the many names these systems had, all ending more or less with "-phone", many inventors tried to create a satisfying sound movie system. And even as late as 1927 the Vitaphone system still depended on the sound-on-disc contraption though the optical system was already invented in Germany and England many years before.

Unfortunately the early sound films have been quite neglected by the general filmhistorian, and though Edison has become a legend for the first synchronised efforts in his workshop of sound and film.

The study of this particular section of filmhistory has become quite a nuisance because in order to recreate the effects of the old systems one does not only need to have access to the old films, made for these systems, but also to the old cylinders and discs on which the accompanying sound was recorded. But still many old cylinders and discs have been saved in private collections though most of the old record collectors hardly realise that several of the items in their possession belong in fact to films which may still be scattered and kept in Filmarchives and filmcollections of private collectors.

I hope this paper will stimulate both types of collectors to join their efforts in co-operation with the national archives in order to recreate the old talking and singing film shows. The new video systems could be of a great help in these efforts. But a lot of research has still to be done, though it would be extremely useful if national filmarchives could offer the possibilities of video-systems to reproduce the old sound-on-disc films.

Early French history

While studying the history of the early sound-on-disc (or cylinder) film systems, one should in quite some extent take a distance from well heard myths about it like "movie goers very soon tired of them" and "by 1910 the very mention of talking pictures in trade circles was a dirty word".[1]

In several countries like Germany and Holland, the sound-on-disc films were well in use still during the early twenties and even in England Cinema Managers made efforts to show in 1928 THE JAZZ SINGER in the old Panatrope apparatus (installed in the orchestra pit with extension speakers near the screen), which shows that before the Vitaphone was installed older systems were also still in use here.

The question why the talking pictures made only a break 32 years after the beginning of the history of film, must be seen in the light of successful exploitation. Like Richard Brown writes in his article "England's First Cinema": "The universal and sustained success of projected film was equated then as now, with the highest, maintained, return on capital outlay".[2]

In other words the technical possibilities did not earlier coincide with the marketing possibilities than in 1927 when a complete change over of all theaters to sound films became an economical necessity. That the Vitaphone disc-and-film system made the break through can be seen as an underlining of this coincidence, though the optical systems overtook the market in less than a handful of years. But the latter system did this in spite of quite a number of patent litigations.

As the legend tells it was in 1889 when Edison's assistant, W.K. Laurie Dickson greeted the stone deaf inventor (after his trip to the Paris Exhibition where he saw Ottomar Anschutz's"Tachyscope") from a screen projected film synchronised with a sound cylinder.

In 1898 Edison brought next to his Kinetoscope machine also a device in which the film was synchronised to the phonograph. In the Kinetoscope parlors customers could see also the flickering images of a short moving picture and hear saying some words or sing some short song if they put a stethoscope-like tube to the ear.

Leslie Wood[3] assumes that Edison did not patent the Kinetoscope and the Kinetoscope-phonographe in England because he knew that Friese-Greene was trying to work on a sound movie system.

Though no one has up till now established which was the first public successful performance of talking moving pictures, one can safely assume that Clément Maurice

belonged to the very first when he introduced his PHONO-CINEMA-THEATRE to the public at the Paris Exhibition of 1900.

Clément Maurice was travelling with picture shows through France and filmed the famous chirurgical operations of Dr. E. Doyen.[4] His early experiments were with the Lioret-phonographe which used cylinders. He made films with Sarah Bernhardt, Coquelin, Réjane, the dancer Cléo de Mérode and the tenor Henri Cossira who sang an air from "Romeo et Juliette" for the Phono-Cinéma-Théâtre.

Henri Cossira remembers that first the film was taken. Then the performer, watching closely their movements on projected film, the artists spoke or sang for the cylindric recording. For that occasion the projector was placed in an iron booth and a red light told the operator that the cylinder had started to turn.

During the projection there was an acoustical horn, like on ships and in the servant quarters of hotels and rich families, leading from the phonograph in front of the screen to the enclosed projection booth. With his ear to the tube the operator could hear the sound and synchronise the manual speed accordingly.

Félix Mesguich, one of Louis Lumières first camera operators, showed also a "Cinéma parlant et chantant" at the Paris Exhibition of 1900. With Mesguich Clement later established the famous Sociétè Général de Cinématographes et Films Radios in Boulogne. Mesguich worked with the inventor Auguste Baron for his talking moving pictures.

It is not known how long sound films with the cylindric phonographs were in use. It seems quite clear that as soon as the technical possibilities of the gramophone discs became available the rather vulnerable cylindric systems were left. But it is quite clear that from the mythical "Good Morning Mr. Edison" to "Wait a minute! You ain't heard nothing yet!" inventors and exhibitioners had a long way to go.

Early Dutch history

While speaking about sound-on-disc films it should be mentioned that from almost the very start films never were quite silent. Musical accompaniment, specialist behind the screens to produce sounds effects, the Bouncing Ball-films which were cut in the programmes for a sing-along, and other novelties (whether or not derived from old music hall or variété traditions) have spiced the cinema goers menu till well into the thirties or even longer.

But the real talking and singing film was a feat well publicized by the showmen who installed an apparatus for sound films. In September 1902 the Alberts Frères announced in the local paper of 's Hertogenbosch, Netherlands, that they are bringing for the first time:[5]

"For the first time here.
Complete new invention!
During the Christmas Days:
Splendid Performances.
ALBER'S ELECTRO TALKING BIOSCOPE
Latest invention of Lumière (Lyon.)
Patented for whole Belgium and Netherlands.
You will see and hear Musicals, Comedies,
Fairy plays, etc. everything the newest and the best.
THE TALKING BIOSCOPE
is a complete survey of todays art history.
The order of the program:
Faust Opera (Coloured views).
Carmen
La Favorite.
Les Huguenots.
De 28 dagen van Clairette. (The 28 days of Cl.)
Asschepoester. (Cendrillon)
Barbe bleu.

De zeven kastelen des duivels (The 7 castles of the devil).
La visite du major.
Genoveva van Brabant.
Ezelsvel. (Donkey's skin).
Kerstnacht-droom. (Christmasnight dream)
De stomme Muziekliefhebber. (The mute music lover)
Eieren leggen (to lay eggs), etc. etc.

NOT ONLY MOVING BUT ALSO TALKING!
Everything Electrical.

I have the honor to bring to the attention of the esteemed patrons that this new invention is exploited by the since long well known Firma ALBER & BASCH, that this is patented by this firm for Netherlands and Belgium, thus that competition in this field is totally impossible.
ALBER talking Bioscope is the onlyest, which is exploited on this moment in Netherlands."

(I have translated as literal as possible from the Dutch original, with the exception of the film titles.)

Then some "Telegram"-films are announced, films of well known Dutch entertainers from the variety-shows, like SOESMAN, ZWAAF and CHRETIENNI, with popular songs from those days. "Talking, moving, etc. etc." according to the advertisement.

This indicates that most probably the Alberts Frères travelled already for quite some time with their Talking Bioscope through Holland and Belgium, and I assume that they bought the apparatus in France after seeing it at the Paris Exhibition of 1900.

The name of Lumière is used in this advertisement, and that seems to indicate that they bought the equipment from Mesguich, but I rather assume that the Lumiére-name was rather used to stress the importance of their Bioscope. Therefore I think that Alberts Frères bought the equipment from Clément Maurice.

In the local newspaper a reviewer is quite enthusiastic about the "Sprekende Bioscope" (the Talking Bioscope" of Alberts Frères, though "A couple of turns we rather saw disappear from the program. We will not name these, for the management will certainly understand what we mean."[6] The management understood, because in the same newspaper our reviewer can happily report that Mr. Alber (this time again written without t) promised to cut the films from the program.

The following day the same reviewer reports in the same paper enthusiastically about the adventures of HALI BABI, a new film, and apparently also a "talking picture" for in almost the same breath special mention is made of the pianist, Mr. Henkeshoven Jr. of Arnheim, for his music during the intermissions. That reveals anyway that Alberts Frères' "Sprekende Bioscope" had only one projector cum photograph.

Advertisements of Alberts Frères' "Sprekende Bioscope" can still be found in Dutch newspapers of 1904, but in January 1908[7] a columnist mentions the Alberts Frères again, and in February 1908[8] they announce

"Colossal Program, 3000 meter New Projection,
Enormous Success!
Stampeding Horse
Cook's Dream
Pearl fishing
The Adventuress
and 26 other new turns.
Sensational: the PHONO-BIO
Mercadier - Polin
Chanteurs Parisiens."

With this new "Phono-Bio" the Alberts frères announce "new created shots recently made by Alberts frères: Dumas, Speenhof, Henri Dons, Extra Phono-Bio HERSCH HERMAN FULD the well-known Baritone singer in one of his famous arias."

A Dutch magazine later the same month[9] has a report on the "Phono-Bio". It mentions the special film of Clement Maurice of the surgical operations of dr. Doyen, which can give the conclusion that at least the early "Sprekende Bioscope" of the Alberts Frères was the apparatus of Maurice. The article mentions the "phono-Bio", being a combination of "bioscope and phonograph" but not giving a clue if this has been a new mechanism or still the old apparatus, bought most probably from Maurice.

The Alberts Frères who introduced talking pictures in Holland were no more the only ones a couple of years later. In July 1904 an advertisement appears in a newspaper about the Biophotophon.

The management of the variety-theater "Seinpost" in Scheveningen (the Dutch Brighton) announces that this is the "first performance in Holland. Newest invention of this century".[10]

And: "It is brought to the attention of the esteemed public that this differs completely from the common Kinematograph". In the same newspaper Messter's "Biophotophon" is mentioned in a positive review.

In October 1904 a program was printed for the Rembrandt-Theater in Amsterdam in which Messter's "Biophotophon" was annouced with the following films:

1. BOWRY BOY
2. DE STOMME MUZIKANT VOOR DE RECHTBANK. (THE MUTE MUSICIAN IN THE COURTROOM).
3. NEGER CAKE-WALK. (NEGRO CAKE-WALK).
4. DANS-DUET UIT "FRUHLINGSLUFT", OPERETTE VAN JOHAN STRAUSS.
5. OP DE WIELERBAAN. (ON THE CYCLING RACETRACK).

Rotterdam sees early this month[11] the circus of Widow Carl Pläging with "The Bio Photogramophone". "Living, talking, singing and music making photographs. Complete new system. No Edison (America). No Messters (Berlin) but Dutch much improved invention. Competition impossible".

But in the same newspaper in an advertisement of two days before the readers will have become quite confused by the following announcement for the Casino-Variété:[12]

"Latest Wonder 20 Century
Singing, Music making, Talking BIOSCOPE!!!!!
Biophotophon.
Direct from Edison, arrived from America to here in
Casino Coolsingel. To see and to hear from Saturday 1 October.
It has been possible for the Management against high costs
and lots of trouble to engage this
WORLDWONDER!!!! only for a short time in the
CASINO-VARIETE
and as such making it possible for the honoured public in
and out of Rotterdam to have the opportunity to come and
HEAR and SEE!!!!!
It surpasses the boldest expectations."

If the Messter's Biophotophone was used, the name of Edison was only used to wet the audience's appetite, I am sure. But the jubilant exclamations of the exhibitors do not make it much easier for the researcher 74 years later to trace which invention has been commercially exploited where.

However, Mr. Soesman, manager of the Casino-Variété in Rotterdam strikes back after the Circus-advertisement. For in the same newspaper he lets the readers know (a day after the announcement of the Bio Photogramophone":[13]

"Unbelievable, unknown Success of the Talking and Singing BIOSCOPE
(Biophotofon).
Unique in the world.
AVIS. The Management points out to the attention of the honoured public her advertisement of last Friday and her future announcements in different newspapers concerning the talking Bioscope (Biophotofon). This machine (not the IMPROVED but the BETTER) is certainly the best and only good Biophotofon which is in existence until now in THE WHOLE WORLD.

Read further the important national and international newspapers like: Berliner Tageblatt, 1 Sept.(1904?), Strassburger Zeitung, 5 Sept., New York Herald, 2 Sept.(1904?), London News, 3 Sept.(1904?), Tagelische Rundschau, 2 Sept.(1904?), Telegraaf Amsterdam, 4 Sept.(1904?) which publishes the following that MEESTER'S BIOPHOTOFON (now in the Casino) wins it by far from the machine (the improved) which it heard in Amsterdam, stating that the better wins it by far as novelty through better sound, more steady for the eye, more beautiful colours, and the exceptionally clear sound. Also they think and everyone agrees, "that Messter's Talking Bioscope (Biophotofon) which is now on display at the Casino, is clearly the most natural reproducing machine in the world"."

Two weeks later Manager Soesman of the Casino in Rotterdam advertises his machine as "Meesters Singing and Talking Bioscope, from the factory of Edison".[14]

As "coming attractions" for the Casino a year later in the same newspaper, Mr. Soesman announces: "Meesters Talking, Singing and Music making BIOPHOTOPHONE (Bioscope); inventor: Edison, America".[15]

But the program in the advertisement in this newspaper a couple of days later reveals that the same number and titles of films, amongst which THE BOWERY BOY (spelled this time as DE BOVERRE BOY) has been shown.

The "Bio, Photo-Gramaphone" (despite the spelling this seems to be the same apparatus seen almost two years before in the circus in Rotterdam) finds its way in 1906 into the famous Kurhaus in Scheveningen and is announced as "Nöggerath's Bio, Photo-Gramaphone".[16] The "combined effect of bioscope and gramophone" gets good reviews in the local papers.

Nöggerath's name will bring us to England, where at that time his son Anton Nöggerath Jr. was working as actor, assistant-director and in other capacities at the premises of the Alpha Film Studios in St. Albans, where Arthur Melbourne-Cooper turned out hundreds of comedies, actualities and dramas.

In 1907 the Dutch theatrical tradepaper "De Thatergids"[17] announces in the Grand Théâtre Van Lier in Amsterdam the presence of the Talking Cinematographe of the firm Pathé Frères of Paris, management A. Brassart (or Abrassart?).

After 1908 soundfilms seem to have disappeared from this country until 1920 when an Amsterdam newspaper announces for the Passage Bioscoop "The very newest world attraction THE TALKING FILM; in the leading part the well-known Dutch actor De Cock. First showings of this newest sensation were in Amsterdam, the latest cinematographic wonder".[18] The same cinema advertises in another paper in October 1920: "The Singing Film" with 'Mrs. Stella Fontaine in her imitations". This poses some questions. Is Mrs. Fontaine giving voice to films of well-known Dutch variety artists who were filmed some years before? Or has she been filmed while discs are used of the voices of these personalities? The advertisement gives no clue, but "Stella Fontaine in the Singing Film" raises many doubts.[19]

In the same newspaper one can find an advertisement on 3 July 1924[20] of the Cinema "Royal" (famous for its sing-along numbers during intervals):

> "As second attraction something very new in the field of Cinematography:
>
> AMSTERDAM IN WORD AND IMAGE
> Actueel Film Haarlem
> Actors: well-known Dutch artists and several animals, cows, horses, pigs, dogs, sheep, etc. At the moment that you see the artists and animals on the film you will hear THEIR VOICES AND SOUNDS
> through a special apparatus (LOUDSPEAKERS)
> WHICH ARE REPRODUCED IN THE THEATRE!"

Shortly after the Philips factories were building the Philips-filmprojector with rod-linked discplayer for the Warner movies.

And shortly after the arrival of the soundfilm in Holland a Dutch businessman built himself a soundfilm-contraption, most probably litigating all kind of patents, which he called the LOETAFOON, after his own name Loet C. Barnstein.

Soundfilm in England

Arthur Melbourne-Cooper (1874-1961) on a tape-recorded interview in 1957 remembered quite well that he made for the Walturdaw's Talking System a fair number of short "singing pictures". He was most of all very impressed by Clara Butt singing LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY, which he filmed and which was either recorded at the same time or soon afterwards. Melbourne-Cooper did not remember how the sound recording was done, or how the Walturdaw's Talking System worked. Melbourne-Cooper made talking and singing films of

> Clara Butt (several)
> Madame Casavati, soprano (at least two)
> Meud Wright, mezzosoprano (several)

and many others. Clara Butt with her deep voice which easily reached the outer corners of the Crystal Palace, was not only quite a success here but after her singing film of 1904 also in many local cinemas and at many fair-grounds. All the singing or talking films of Melbourne-Cooper were made at the Crystal Palace, because the Alpha Trading Company had the sole rights to film at these premises, a contract which was acquired by film pioneer Birt Acres through his friendship with the owners of the Crystal Palace. In the Walturdaw catalogue of 1904 there are quite a number of "Singing Pictures" and they were issued with gramophone discs. Most probably the sound was recorded at the same time and the synchronisation was either a natural ear and eye facility of the projectionist or achieved by a primitive rod connecting system.

Melbourne-Cooper did not think highly of these films. The projectionists could never get them synchronised, as he recalls, and the problems really started when the film was broken and some images were missing from the film. There is also a report in The Bioscope of those days that the shows of singing and talking pictures were quite unsuccessful because the projectionists were too inexperienced to keep sound and image in sync. Still a lot of advertising went in the showing of films of famous characters of those days like LITTLE TICH, filmed by Melbourne-Cooper, and HARRY LAUDER in a declamation (filmed by someone else).

The Gaumont company introduced around this time in England the Chronophone Sound system, where first the sound was cut in a wax disc via an acoustical horn, and after recording the disc, the film was shot, which eliminated some background noise problems of which the camera rattle was the worst.

The Hepworth Film Company and the Barker Company also made a number of singing pictures of well-known music hall stars like Marie Lloyd and George Robey.[21] As Melbourne-Cooper recalls they tried not only to solve the problems of synchronisation by all sorts of shaft systems but also with electrical connections between gramophone player and projector. Later it was tried with a clock dial. In front of the gramophone, usually standing at the bottom of the screen was a clock-like device with a big face and tic-tac pointer. The same dial could be seen in a corner of the screen and all the projectionist had to do was to turn the speed of the film with the tic-tac of the gramophone dial so that the projected pointer moved at exactly the same speed.

An improvement by Gaumont was the Chronomegaphone for the recording of the sound. It used compressed air to amplify the sound through big horns located behind the screen. Many cinemas around 1908 in England had a sound system like this, and R.F. Burstow in his series of articles "The Early Days of Sound" in Movie Maker remembers the success of a four-reel version of FAUST. In 1920 DREAM STREET with Carol Dempster was shown to capacity houses, and this D.W. Griffith picture with synchronised sound discs got good reviews in the USA as well as in England. In 1913 Eugene Lauste worked on an optical sound-on-film system in France and England. Ten years later Dr. Lee de Forrest produced experimental sound films in his Clapham workshop under the trademark Phonofilm. He produced in America the optical sound film LOVE'S OLD SWEET SONG with Una Merkel and several American theatres installed his Phonofilm-system. In England he got good notices with SENTENCE OF DEATH with Miles Mander who also directed this and several other Phonofilms, which had its greatest success at the opening of the Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 when the first cinema in England was built with this system. The big chances for talking pictures arrived with the first valve-amplifier sound systems which made it possible to play sound films in big theatres as well and which gave exhibitors the possibility to cut out the cost of personnel to play intermission music.

The German "Work-of-Three"

Three clever German engineers, Josef Engl, Joseph Massole and Hans Vogt patented in 1918 the system of Tobis Klangfilm. The most important (and for sound quite revolutionary) device of their firm, Tri-Ergon, (The Work of Three) was that of the sound-drum connected with a flywheel which solved most of the sound recording and sound reproducing problems. Tri-Ergon took a lot of care to patent their inventions not only in Germany but in France, England and the USA as well. Gaumont in England was licensed to make use of it for their new British Acoustic systems, but the three engineers had many battles in court with the big American companies which ignored the German patents when the talking picture became a craze. These costly court battles made Tri-Ergon almost bankrupt, but in the early thirties, when Fox with its Movietone system (litigated from Tri-Ergon) had proved the superiority of the optical sound-on-film system over that of the Vitaphone of Warners, the multinational companies General Electric, Western Electric and the Bell Telephone Company held a conference with the German Siemens and AEG firms to divide the world market between them: Europe, Asia and Japan for the German firms who bought the patent holding Tobis Klangfilm, and the rest for the Americans. In fact this established the foundation not only for the movie industry but also for the modern recording industry which is to-day much bigger than the first.

Conclusion

I only intended to give a short survey of the history of sound-on-disc film and this paper is no more than that. It therefore does not aim to reach conclusions, but only to stimulate research into the history of the very early sound films.

The importance of such an historical research lies in the fact that the modern device of television has spoiled us by presenting the best of entertainment, or rather: what we think is the best. Such an opinion is only subjective, i.e. subjective to to-day's fashions and customs. Morals, fashions and habits of three-quarters of a century ago can now be more objectively studied, and especially the research on the products of mass entertainments gives us a fairly good insight in the way our grandparents lived, worked, struggled for life and struggled to keep up to their principles. And only from a broad view of society as it was then, we in turn will be able to study more objectively the history of film. The very early sound films also give us an idea about the performances of then popular singers and actors, about the taste of an audience who made them popular and about the workings of mass entertainment such as music halls, fairgrounds, cinemas, etc.

If video systems with variable image and/or sound speed devices (and with Dolby or Philips Noise suppressing system) could be acquired by the national film archives, they would then have an up-to-date tool to re-reproduce the old sound films. Such a system would be a stimulant to the two groups of collectors, those of early records and of films, (groups which are now separated by a gap of ignorance) to loan their discs and films for a limited period to their national archives in order to have videotapes made of it. The two groups of collectors could be stimulated by the idea of having a videotape with the sound or the picture on it that was produced so many years ago with the film or disc in their possession.

Also the national archives could make individual tapes of either sound or image from the items in their collections and exchange lists of these recordings with other FIAF archives in order to locate the missing picture or sound that was connected with it. I believe that in this prospect video systems could be of great help to stimulate and enhance research on the history of film.

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THE FILMS OF ARTHUR MELBOURNE-COOPER

Tjitte De Vries and Audrey Wadowska

Introduction

Arthur Melbourne-Cooper (1874-1961) had his ALPHA TRADING COMPANY from 1901 till 1911 in St. Albans, Herts. During, before and after this time he had an estimated total output of 3000 films. The Alpha Film Studios in St. Albans, who have employed during the eleven years of existence hundreds of actors, actresses, cameramen and technicians (of whom several made fame in later years), alone stands for more than 2000 film titles of which sometimes more than 70 copies per title were being sold to the U.S. Due to the common practice of those days of selling films per foot and not renting them, and because Melbourne-Cooper was a film director and producer, and not a distributor, many of the Alpha film titles can be found to-day in the old catalogues of G.A. Smith, Warwick, Pathé, Nordisk, etc.
A catalogue of the films of Melbourne-Cooper is in preparation.

Arthur Melbourne-Cooper was the son of the Hertfordshire photographer and photo pioneer Thomas Melbourne-Cooper. At 18 Arthur was a fully trained professional photographer and became employed by Birt Acres, who in that year (1892) was converting his camera for taking in rapid succession a series of animated photographs on glass plates for the use of celluloid rolls with a width of 35mm. One of his first jobs was, as Melbourne-Cooper remembered in an interview by Ernest Lindgren in a BBC program in the fifties, to fetch a roll of celluloid film from the Blair Company in London and to take the roll on a carpenter's lathe in order to cut it to widths of 35mm. With the new, not yet patented camera, Acres went to the opening of the Manchester Canal on January 1st. 1894, where Melbourne-Cooper acted as the camera operator. In later years Melbourne-Cooper made many films on his own account due to a rapidly increasing demand after the first public showings in the first half of 1896. He used his father's studios at London Road in St. Albans after his working time for Acres. In 1901 he had his own film studios in this place, first at Bedford Park, later at Alma Road.

Many Melbourne-Cooper films can be easily detected as such for the scenes from St. Albans, its streets and surroundings. On other films Melbourne-Cooper's daughter Audrey Wadowska has done more than 23 years of research, and she is still doing so.

A biography on Melbourne-Cooper is planned to be published in the next three years, a comprehensive book on his films, with descriptions and a catalogue as complete as possible, will be published a year later.

On the following pages evidential details are given on the Melbourne-Cooper films which are shown from 22nd. - 26th. May in the Brighton Film Theatre for the Selection Committee of the 34th. FIAF Congress' Symposium.

NOTES ON FILMS BY ARTHUR MELBOURNE-COOPER

Great Britain 1900

BLACK AND WHITE WASHING (Not complete, made in 1898 before the establishment of the Alpha Studios). Was shown in St. Albans at the '98 Fair. The story-line was recalled later by the Alpha boy-actor Algy "Pam" Pamphilon. It is in the early Warwick catalogues. Urban called Melbourne-Cooper in these years his first "agent", as terms like "producer" etc. were used later.

GRANDMA'S READING GLASS (Complete. Made in 1899). The first of a "children and close-up" series. Melbourne-Cooper started in 1897 a series "children and pet animals", and in '98 a series "children and reversals". They were very popular in those days. On a taped recording in the fifties Melbourne-Cooper recalls exactly how he made this film, but he has not seen it again. The copy in the NFA was acquired after his death. The film was discovered by Mrs. Audrey Wadowska, Melbourne-Cooper's daughter, in Denmark, because Melbourne-Cooper was the "agent" for Mr. Olson of the Nordisk Film in Copenhagen. Via the NFA she obtained a print and could then establish the basic evidence that this was a film made by Melbourne-Cooper. The eye in the famous interpolated close-up belonged to Melbourne-Cooper's mother. Mrs. Wadowska still has a big old-fashioned sepia but sharp, portrait of her grandmother. When the eye from the film is compared with this, it is unmistakably the same eye that belonged to Mrs. Catherine Melbourne-Cooper born Dalley. The two children have been identified as Bertha Cooper, Melbourne-Cooper's youngest sister, and Bert Massey, son of the neighbours who had several children who played parts in Melbourne-Cooper's "kiddie films" as Charles Urban used to call these series. (Photographs can be inspected during the Congress). Because the film appeared in the GAS-film catalogues of Smith who was employed at that time by Urban as a booking manager, GRANDMA'S READING GLASS is often, but understandably, credited to G.A. Smith.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT (Complete. Made in 1899. Original title THE CASTLE OF BRICKS). From the "children and reversal" series made by Melbourne-Cooper. This one has the same backdrop as in GRANDMA'S READING GLASS. The children are identified as Ralph Massey (older brother of Bert) and Mary Massey (younger sister of Ralph, but older than Bert). The toy bricks belonged to the Melbourne-Coopers. The story outline, and the way it was made, was very detailed when recollected by Melbourne-Cooper on a taped recording in 1957. The film appears in the Warwick catalogues as THE CASTLE OF BRICKS, but later in the catalogue of 1903 of GAS-films under THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.

THE OLD MAID'S VALENTINE (Considered to be complete. Made in 1899. Original title AN OLD MAID'S VALENTINE). As it was very common in those days, the woman is a man dressed as the old maiden. The film has the same backcloth as in the foregoing two. Like Smith, Melbourne-Cooper made a great number of "facials" but as he explained later, he always tried to do it differently. That is why there is a shade of a story and punch in it. The film follows the brief synopsis in the Warwick catalogues. The actor is not yet identified.

Great Britain 1901

THE LASSIE AND HER DOG (Complete. Made in 1898). This is one from the series "children and pets". It was made at Ridge Hill farm near St. Albans. The girl is a daughter of the Obyson family of this farm. The Ridge Hill farm is on the way from St. Albans to Barnet, where Birt Acres had his studio and workshops, where Melbourne-Cooper used to work till the early 1900s. He knew the Obysons very well, and stopped by many times to make short "kiddies films". When I interviewed the people of the Ridge Hill farm some years ago they still remembered several films Melbourne-Cooper made here (unfortunately they did not recall any titles). These early children and pet films of Melbourne-Cooper were already in the programs of film shows in 1896 in Barnet. This film appears in the Warwick catalogues of 1898-1899. The pub next to the Ridge Hill farm, "The Wagon & Horses" still exists, but a lot has changed since the motorway was built.

STOP THIEF! (Incomplete. Made early in 1901. Original title LOST! A LEG OF MUTTON!) The actor dressed as a woman is Stanley Collier. The house seen is in Bedford Park, St. Albans, which was part of the Alpha Film Studios. This is one of the very early Alpha productions. At the end of the film should be a close-up of what was left of the leg of mutton after the dogs were chased out of the barrel: a giant bone...Then the disappointed butcher is shown. The other exteriors are in St. Albans.

Great Britain 1902

PING-PONG (Approx. complete. Made in 1902). The building site was near St. Albans. The working men are unidentified technicians from the Alpha Studios. On a tape recording in 1958 Melbourne-Cooper remembers the complete story-outline with all the details, without ever having seen the film again after it was completed and sold to Williamson.

Great Britain 1903

DESPERATE POACHING AFFRAY (Not complete. 1903). Original title THE POACHER. The exteriors are country scenes near St. Albans. It was sold to Gaumont. (Haggar also made a poacher film, which is not this one. Haggar's title is THE DESPERATE POACHING AFFRAY).

THE SICK KITTEN (1899, fairly complete). Original title THE LITTLE DOCTOR. The Manx cat of the Coopers is in this film which is from the "children and pets" series. The boy is George Barns. The girl is Beatrice "Bee" Massey. It is filmed in the studio at London Road, St. Albans.

BADEN VERBOTEN (Not complete. Made in 1901 or 1902). Original title NO BATHING ALLOWED. The film should end with a cop-chase. The water is a reservoir at London-Colney near St. Albans, where Melbourne-Cooper made many outdoor films. The lake as in this film could still be seen until ten years ago after which the site has changed. The lake is smaller now, but it is still used for skating in the winter. It is in the Walturdaw catalogues.

Great Britain 1904

THE BLACKSMITH'S DAUGHTER (Fairly complete, originally 700ft., a length which was of some novelty then. Melbourne-Cooper remembered complaints of distributors about this length. Made 1904.) Melbourne-Cooper made originally in 1895 at Barnet THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH, an outdoor film of a Barnet blacksmith at work, but not too faithful to Longfellow's famous poem which was during the turn of the century recited with projection of glass slides in Sunday schools and reading rooms. This tearjerking story was very popular with the kitchenmaids and a review in 1904 in a tradepaper said: "THE BLACKSMITH'S DAUGHTER follows the story very faithfully". The exterior of the blacksmith shop is in Shenley, street scenes near Bedford Park. The girl is Jessy (Jessamin) Ford.

Great Britain 1905

FATHER'S PICNIC ON THE SANDS (Approx. complete. Made in 1903 or 1904). The fat lady and the gentleman with the beer barrel are Mrs. & Mr. Brown, a well-known music hall comical couple, who used their real names also as their stage or film names (as was often done in those days). Melbourne-Cooper used this comical couple several times. Mrs. Brown appears in several films, especially in the "outing series" which Melbourne-Cooper turned out around that time like OFF FOR THE HOLIDAYS and at least 6 others. This film appears in the Cricks & Martin catalogues, the other titles in other catalogues as well.

MACNAB'S VISIT TO LONDON (Fairly complete. Made in 1905). (It was retitled THE SCOTCHMAN). The young girl is Ruby Vivian, actress. The Scotchman is Arthur Melbourne-Cooper as MacNab. The station is St. Albans. The Alpha trademark is in one frame. The review in The Optical Lantern said:"It is a screaming comic, sure to bring the house down". The scenes with the kiltless MacNab were then considered as very daring.

TRAMPS IN CLOVER (Approx. complete. 1904). The country scenes are at the Pinnock's Farm in St. Albans. The street scene is in Radlett. The tramp on the right is Charles Raymond, the tramp on the left is George Dewhurst. Both were regular Alpha actors.

Great Britain 1906

MOTOR PIRATES (Not complete. 1906). The pirate car is a disguised Panhard. The other car has a Hertfordshire registration number. The first scene is taken at Shenley. The following scenes at London Road, St. Albans. The last scenes at the Black Pond, Bernard's Heath, St. Albans. The scenes before these are at Colney Heath. The Alpha trademark is on the pirate car. The driver of this is Anton Nöggerath Jr. The one who is leaping off to the other car is Bert Melbourne-Cooper. Original title is THE MOTOR PIRATE. The missing scene should have a Napier in it, filmed at Newgate, St. Albans. The London Napier agent, the Albamarle Garage, loaned the Napier to Melbourne-Cooper, and loaned two young ladies as well, who do appear in the film.

STOLEN COAT CHASE (Not complete. 1903). Original title THE STOLEN COAT. The chase scenes are in St. Albans, but the first scene is in London, the shop of Lupinsky & Brandon, Elephant & Castle, a shop then famous for "a new suit for 30 bob". Melbourne-Cooper was at this time in London to make a series of films of the famous strong man Sandow, and stayed in this district. Film was sold to Warwick.

RESCUED IN MID-AIR (Not complete, originally 600 ft. 1904). The professor is Samuel Chote. The "girl" is Stanley Collier. The story outline was from a story of a penny magazine. It is in the Kemp Niver collection for Gaumont sent it in 1904 for copyrighting in the US. In The Optical Lantern appeared a full write-up of this film.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Great Britain 1901

THE HAUNTED CURIOSITY SHOP W. Booth made this for R. Paul.

CHEESE MITES The magnified shot as shown: Melbourne-Cooper made several of these. This shot should be in a longer film as part of a story. But as a loose shot this one is not identifiable, which was remembered by Stanley Collier.

HERE LIES MARY JANE... This is definitely Smith's film, for Melbourne-Cooper's DON'T FOOL WITH THE PARAFFIN has a different story outline, and his backdrop painters have not painted this style as far as I know.

Great Britain 1904

THE STATUE DEALER This has bobbies in it. W. Booth made one which should be in Paul's catalogue.

BIRD NEST ROBBERS Most probably by Melbourne-Cooper. The film should be much longer, as the boys treat the birds quite gently. But we can only be sure after showing it to locals from St. Albans who should recognize the exterior.

Great Britain 1905

AN INTERESTING STORY Melbourne-Cooper did the camerawork for Williamson because of his skill in trick photography. Walturdaw shortened it and released it as PRESSED BY A STEAMROLLER.

Great Britain 1906

HOW A BRITISH BULLDOG SAVED THE UNION JACK This film was made by Dave Aylott for Cricks & Martin. Aylott (who was then a known actor, learned film directing from Melbourne-Cooper, who had many trainees in the Alpha Studios) was in several Alpha films. He recalled this film later on a taped interview and wrote about it in a never published manuscript. Film was shot on locations south of London, possibly in Mitcham.

LADY AND PUPPIES (Approx. complete. Warwick catalogue 1898. Original title GIRL AND PUPPIES; in the early Urban catalogues appears a whole list of these appealing shorts). The girl is a daughter of Mrs. Obyson of the "Wagon & Horses" inn at Ridge, shot at the Ridge Hill Farm where the animals came from and where Melbourne-Cooper stopped regularly on his way from St. Albans to the workshop of Birt Acres where he was a part-time employee.

WOMAN, DOG AND PUPS (Approx. complete. Warwick catalogues 1898). Same girl as in LADY AND PUPPIES. Original title GIRL PLAYING WITH HER PETS.

CATCHING THE MILK THIEF (Approx. complete. Filmed December 1897. Title correct). This film was shown in St. Albans February 1898 and got a write-up in a local newspaper. Local people are the actors. Shot at a farm just outside St. Albans.

POLICEMAN BEATEN (Approx. complete. Correct title). Made in 1898. Re-issued in 1901 with trademark ATC (Alpha Trading Company on leader). (Smith made the same subject with a blanket). Because of the popularity of the subject new prints were made in 1901. It is thought that the garden is behind the photographic studio of Thomas Cooper in London Road, St. Albans. The policeman is George Dewhurst who played this role many times. This gave Melbourne-Cooper some trouble with the local police, why in later films the helmet badge and tunic buttons were removed from Dewhurst's "uniform".

THE LADY'S ANKLE (Approx. complete. Made 1900). Melbourne-Cooper recalls this film very clearly shot-by-shot on taped interview. There is some story about it for it brought him into some early censor trouble after showing it in St. Albans at a Sunday school, when the vicar threw his hat over the projection lens when the lady's ankle was shown in interpolated close-up. The film shown at the Brighton Congress is probably not Melbourne-Cooper's version.

<u>In addition to</u> -

RESCUED IN MID-AIR The exteriors are: the church at Shenley,
Alexandra Rd., St. Albans,
Alma Rd. (the big house) St. Albans

THE SITUATION OF MOVIES IN MEXICO FROM 1900-1906

Department of Cinematographic Investigations of the Film Library of the U.N.A.M.

The almost total absence of testimonials and chronicles, as well as the virtual disappearance of the Mexican silent productions, determined that the Mexican cinematography preceding sound feature was unknown for a long time. Thankfully, the enthusiasm of a chronicler like José María Sánchez García during the 40's and 50's, the zealous hemerographic investigations currently developed by Aurelio de los Reyes, among others, as well as the patient preservation work of a collector like Mr. Edmundo Gabilondo Mangino, have made possible to draw near to the cinematographic atmosphere that prevailed in Mexico during the years of silent movies.

In the middle of Porfirio Díaz government, precisely on the 14th of August 1896, the first public cinematographic performance took place. By then, the country was fully incorporated to the model imposed by the industrial powers to the peripheric nations. The long "pax porfiriana" (1877-1910) permitted the flourishing of an economy based on the expansion of the haciendas as the expence of peasant lands. It was a period of remarkable economic growth, thanks to an overwhelming invasion of foreign capital (mainly North American, British and French), except in agriculture.

According to the press of that time, the novelty was brought to the country by C.J. von Bernard and Gabriel Vayre, Lumière's employees. The exhibition took place in the mezzanine of a Drugstore at Plateros, the most elegant street down town Mexico City. Some of the films exhibited were THE TRAIN'S ARRIVAL (L'ARRIVEE D'UN TRAIN), BABY'S LUNCH (LE DEJEUNER DU BEBE), LEAVING THE FACTORY (LA SORTIE DES USINES), THE WATERER AND THE KID (L'ARROUSEUR ARROSE), DEMOLITION OF A WALL (LA DEMOLITION D'UN MUR), ECARTE GAMBLERS (LA PARTIE D'ECARTE), etc.

Following the spirit of the time, the cinematograph was received in Mexico as a "great scientific invention." The country was willing to incorporate to the "concert of civilized nations" and tried so to demonstrate being a progress loving society, but the big public made it popular and was transformed into amusement, a necessary pastime for a city lacking entertainment.

Edison's vitascope was not accepted so well as Lumière's apparatus, because of the French influence on people's habits.

The projector and the above mentioned films were left when Lumiere's employees departed, carrying with them some 20 "views" of General Díaz in different aspects of his public and private life. Immediately appear enthusiastic promoters which multiply the halls for exhibition; many places were only canvas tents improvised in any square.

The years 1900-1906 were characterized by the migratory nature of the exhibitors. By 1900 the Mexican capital city had more than 20 exhibition halls, but competition, a new public health law and administrative "red tape" got rid of most of them. On the other hand, there were great difficulties to obtain

new material, as there were no distributing firms. Many promoters who realized the impossibility of holding programs with such a short variety of views, went on touring the country, not only to large and well communicated cities, but also to small and isolated places.

During these precarious tours, the promoters or impresarios - who were also the cameramen - would film local scenes and happenings where they were showing the films. In reality these were films that tried to capture "mexican subjects" to attract the possible spectator's attention. Such subjects were local scenery, bullfights, people leaving the church, etc. The purpose was to have people watch themselves on the screen. Thus was the Mexican cinema born.

Among those impresarios - cameramen who travelled the country generally in small family units, we can mention Guillermo Becerril, Federico Bouvi, Carlos Mongrand, Salvador Toscano, Jorge Stahl, Enrique Mouliné and Enrique Rosas.

Enrique Rosas is outstanding by being the first one to trascend the simple scenery or "views", short and spontaneous taken such as INUNDACIONES EN GUANAJUATO, EL PRESIDENTE RECORRIENDO LA PLAZA DE LA CONSTI CION and several others, when he structured his films to truthfully describe the different aspects of an event, such as the visit of Porfirio Díaz to Yucatán in 1906, a documentary composed of 50 still shots and 7 with movement. Rosas opens the way for others to follow, who without the financial and technical resources to film a structured script, coupled to the itinerant nature of their jobs and the auxiliary function of national productions in the exhibitions, would continue till the midst of the next decade to film mostly documentaries.

During the first years of the century, some halls in the bigger towns and some itinerant exhibitors, would alternate their film showings with other spectacles to make them more attractive. The material was from very different origin, but mostly French.

Among other important films that were exhibited in Mexico at the time, we can mention a Passion in 1900 (LA PASION DE JESUCRISTO, probably LA PASSION DU CHRIST produced by the Lumiere Society; in 1905, Edwin S. Porter's THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (EL ASALTO Y ROBO A UN TREN, 1903); also in 1905, Georges Melies' TRIP TO THE MOON (LE VOYAGE A LA LUNE, 1902) and in 1906 a ten chapter French series, THE THIEVES OF PARIS (LES VOLEURS DE PARIS) from the Pathé Brothers.

In 1906, with the opening of the first agencies and movie distributors, the itinerant exhibitions disappeared, and the different companies searched to install themselves in one or another city of the country. At the end of that year, Mexico City had seventeen cinematograph halls: Teatro Riva Palacio, Teatro Apolo, Salón Rojo, Sala Pathé, Sala de Variedades, La Mezquita, Sala Cosmopolita, Pabellón Morisco, Teatro Zaragoza, Salón Parisiense, Salón Mexicano, Salón High Life, Salón Vista Alegre, Salón Internacional, Salón Iris, La Tabacalera and the Teatro Principal.

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PARTICIPANTS IN THE 1978 CONGRESS

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Mr Harold Brown, Preservation Officer, National Film Archive	London
Mr Freddy Buache, Executive Committee of FIAF, La Cinémathèque Suisse	Lausanne
Mr Noël Burch, Film historian and writer; invited expert	
Mr Manuel Gonzalez Casanova, Filmoteca de la U.N.A.M.	Mexico
Mr Michael Chanan, The Polytechnic of North London	
Ms Anna Chodnikiewicz, Filmoteka Polska	Warsaw
Mr Clive Coultass, Imperial War Museum	London
Ms Susan Dalton, Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre Research	
Mr Robert Daudelin, Executive Committee of FIAF, Cinémathèque Québécoise	Montreal
Mr Vladimir Dimitriev, Gosfilmofond	Moscow
Mr Ray Edmondson, National Library of Australia	Canberra
Mr Chris Ellicott, Regional Department, British Film Institute	London
Ms Brigitte van der Elst, Executive Secretary, FIAF	Brussels
Ms Marguerite Engberg, University of Copenhagen	
Ms Janette Faull, Acquisitions Department, National Film Archive	London
Ms Cristina Ferrari, Cinemateca Uruguaya	Montevideo
Mr Stanley Forman, Education and Television Films Ltd.	
Mr David Francis, Executive Committee of FIAF and Congress Organizer, Curator, National Film Archive	London
Mr Myrtil Frida, Ceskoslovensky Filmovy Archiv	London
Dr Walter Fritz, Oesterreichisches Filmarchiv	Prague
Mr Farrokh Gaffary, Filmkhaneh Melli Iran	Vienna
Mr Jon A Gartenberg, Museum of Modern Art	Tehran
Mr André Gaudreault, Université Laval	New York
Ms Dorothea Gebauer, Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde	Quebec
Dr Ludwig Gesek, Oesterreichisches Filmarchiv	Wiesbaden
Mr Tom Gunning, Film historian; invited expert	Vienna
	New York

Ms Roni Harris, Brighton Film Theatre	
Mr Florentino Soria Heredia, Filmoteca Nacional de Espana	Madrid
Ms Vanessa Hinton, Congress Co-ordinator	
Mr Roger Holman, Chief Cataloguer, National Film Archive	London
Mr Seppo Huhtala, Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto	Helsinki
Mr Rodolfo Izaguirre, Cinemateca Nacional	Caracas
Mr Clyde Jeavons, Deputy Curator, National Film Archive	London
Ms Karen Jones, Det Danske Filmmuseum	Copenhagen
Mr H M Karim, Information Department, Republic of Indonesia	
Dr Lawrence F Karr, American Film Institute	Washington
Mr Sergei Khomutov, Gosfilmofond	Moscow
Mr Chol Yong Kim, National Film Archives of D.P.R.K.	Pyong Yang
Mr Yong Sok Kim, National Film Archives of D.P.R.K.	Pyong Yang
Ms Christine Kirby, Curator's Secretary, National Film Archive	London
Mr Wolfgang Klaue, Vice President of FIAF, Staatliches Filmarchiv der D.D.R.	Berlin
Mr Peter Konlechner, Oesterreichisches Filmmuseum	Vienna
Mr Peter Kubelka, Oesterreichisches Filmmuseum	Vienna
Mr Jerome Kuehl, Thames Television	London
Mr John Kuiper, Executive Committee of FIAF, International Museum of Photography	Rochester N.Y.
Mr Sam Kula, National Film Archives of Canada	Ottawa
Ms Karol Kulik, National Film School	Beaconsfield
Mr John Luijckx, Nederlands Filmmuseum	Amsterdam
Mr Einar Lauritzen, Honorary Member of FIAF, Film Index	Stockholm
Mr Jacques Ledoux, Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique	Brussels
Ms Lia van Leer, Archion Israeli Leseratim	Jerusalem
Dr Alfred Lehr, Oesterreichisches Filmarchiv	Vienna
Mr Rolf Lindfors, Svenska Cinemateket	Stockholm
Dr Lodoletta Lupo, Cineteca Nazionale	Rome
Mr Gus MacDonald, Granada Television	London
Ms Madeleine Malthête-Méliès, Film historian and lecturer	Paris
Mr Donatien Mbaloula, Cinémathèque Nationale Populaire et Museum du Cinéma	Brazzaville
Ms Janet McBain, Archivist, Scottish Film Council	Glasgow
Ms Aglyea Mitropoulos, Cinémathèque de Grece	Athens
Mr Istven Molnar, Executive Committee of FIAF, Magyar Filmtudomanyi Filmarchivum	Budapest
Mr Ib Monty, Curator, Det Danske Filmmuseum	Copenhagen
Mr Charles Musser, Film historian	New York
Mr Anthony Needham, Brighton Film Theatre	
Mr Cosme Alves Netto, Cinemateca do Museu de Arte Moderna	Rio de Janeiro
Ms Orly Ofrat, Film researcher	
Mr Liam O'Leary, Film archivist	Dublin
Dr Slavoj Ondrousek, Ceskoslovensky Filmovy Archiv	Prague
Ms Eva Orbanz, Stiftung Deutsches Kinemathek	Berlin
Mr Sun Tae Pak, National Film Archives of D.P.R.K.	Pyong Yang
Mr Marin Paraianu, Arhiva Nationala de Filme	Bucharest
Mr Enno Patalas, Münchner Stadtmuseum	Munich

Mr Ted Perry, Museum of Modern Art	New York
Ms Claire Pickett, Acquisitions Department, National Film Archive	London
Mr Vladimir Pogacic, President of FIAF, Jugoslovenska Kinoteka	Belgrade
Mr Ulrich Pöschke, Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde	Wiesbaden
Ms Aura Puran, Arhiva Nationala de Filme	Bucharest
Ms Corrine Ramming, FIAF Secretariat	Brussels
Dr Heinz Rathsack, Stiftung Deutsches Kinemathek	Berlin
Mr Rudolfo Restifo, Cinemateca Nacional de Venezuela	Caracas
Mr Manuel Felix Ribeiro, Cinemateca Nacional	Lisbon
Ms Seona Robertson, Film archivist, Manchester Polytechnic	Manchester
Mr Young Suh Roh, Korean Film Archive Incorporated Foundation	Seoul
Prof Robert Rosen, U.C.L.A. Film Archives	Los Angeles
Mr Barry Salt, Department of Film, Slade School of Fine Art; Invited expert	London
Mr Frantz Schmitt, Centre National de la Cinématographie	Bois d'Arcy
Mr Win Sharples, American Film Institute	Washington
Mr Roger Smither, Imperial War Museum	London
Mr Paul Spehr, Library of Congress	Washington
Mr Zdenek Stabla, Ceskoslovensky Filmovy Archiv; invited expert	Prague
Mr Jon Stenklev, Executive Committee of FIAF, Norsk Filminstitutt	Oslo
Mr Robert Summers, Museum of Modern Art	New York
Ms Frances Thorpe, FIAF Periodical Index	London
Mr Charles Turner	Amsterdam
Mr Jan de Vaal, Treasurer of FIAF, Nederlands Filmmuseum	Havana
Mr Pastor Vega, Cinemateca de Cuba	Rome
Dr Mario Verdone, Department of Film, University of Rome; Invited expert	Berlin
Dr Herbert Volkmann, Honorary member of FIAF, Staatliches Filmarchiv der D.D.R.	Rotterdam
Mr Tjitte de Vries, Film historian and film critic	London
Ms Audrey Wadowska, Film historian	Stockholm
Prof Rune Waldekranz, University of Stockholm	London
Mr Terence Watson, Imperial War Museum	Stockholm
Ms Anna-Lena Wibom, Svenska Cinemateket	Stockholm
Mr Roman Witek, Filmoteka Polska	Warsaw



JACK AND THE BEANSTALK
Edison 1902 (F457)



THE BATTLE OF THE YALU
Biograph 1904 (F489)



TOM, TOM, THE PIPER'S SON
Biograph 1905 (F515)



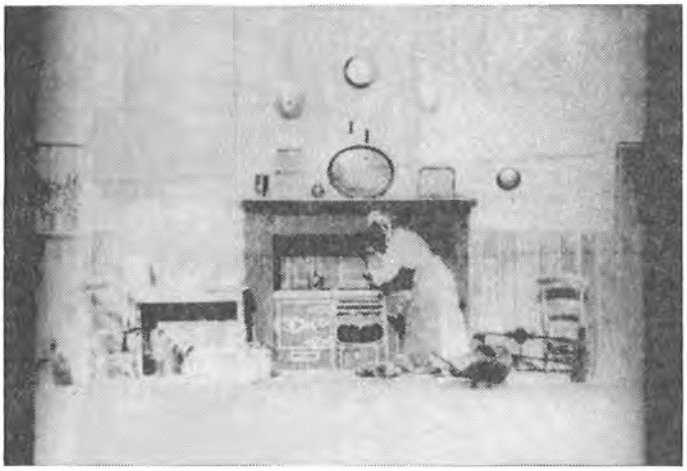
THE STORY THE BIOGRAPH TOLD
Biograph 1903 (F486)



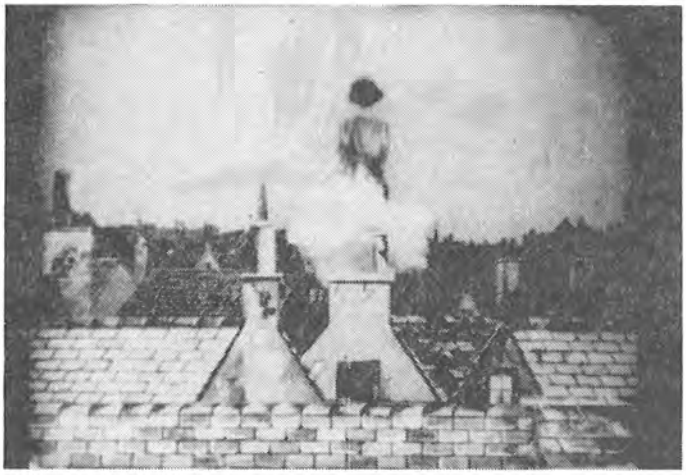
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BETWEEN THE DANCES
Biograph 1905 (F506)





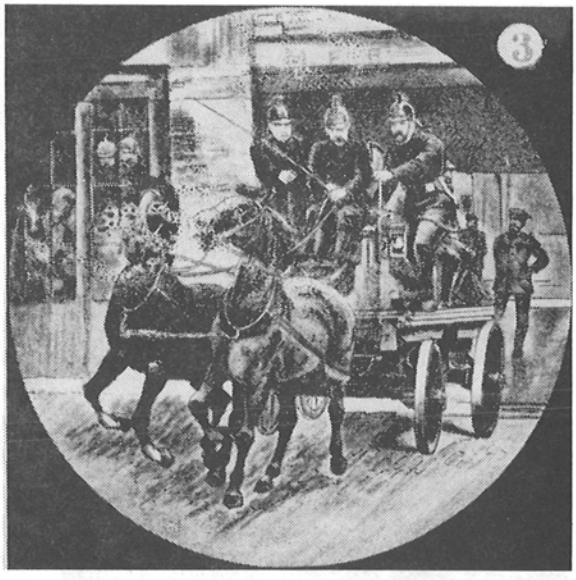




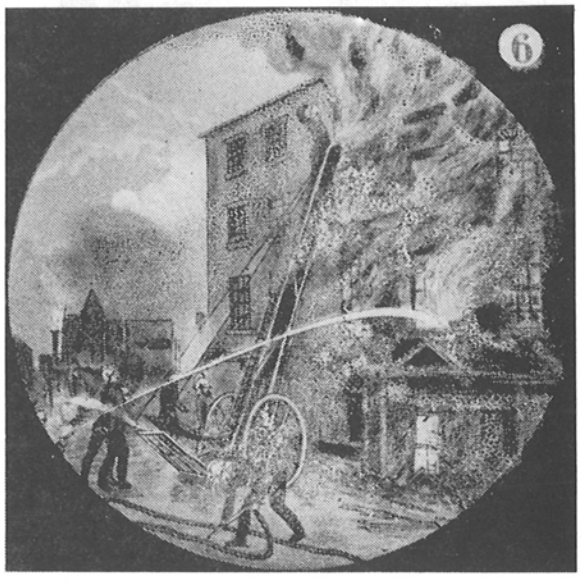
MARY JANE'S MISHAP
G.A. Smith 1903 (F71)





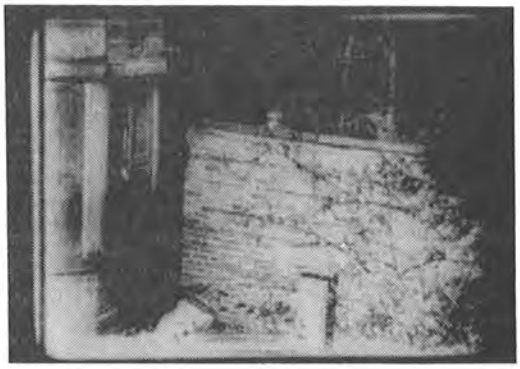




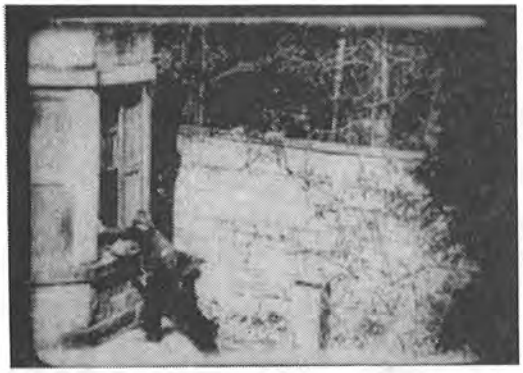


FIRE!
James Williamson 1901 (F34)

TWO LANTERN SLIDES FROM AN EIGHT SLIDE BRITISH TRANSFER SET ENTITLED "FIRE!"
Compare with Williamson's film FIRE! (Courtesy Charles Musser)



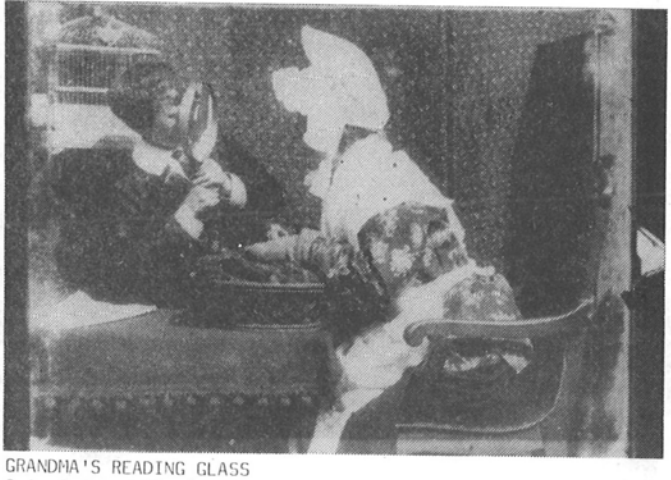




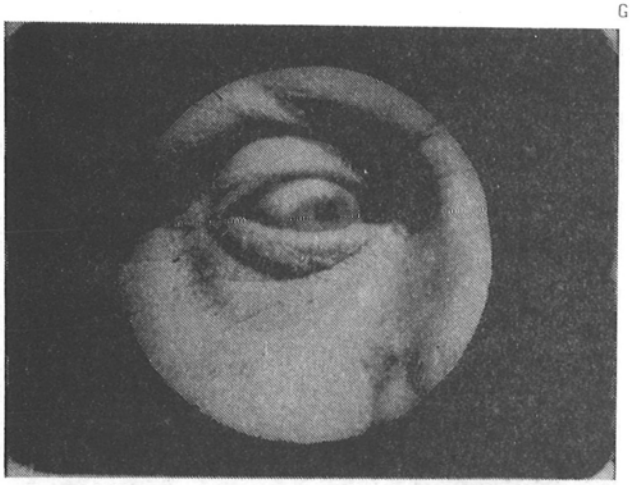


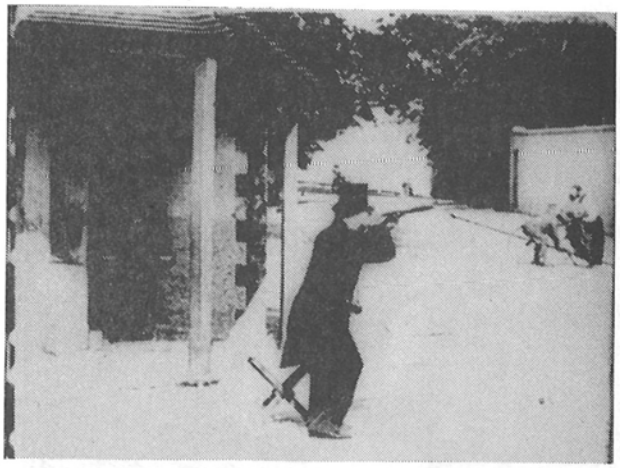


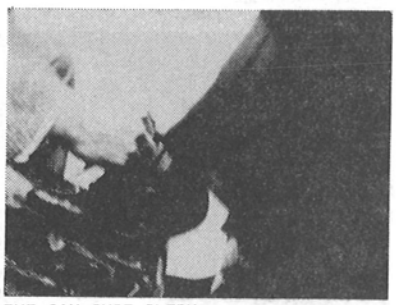
DARING DAYLIGHT BURGLARY
Sheffield Photo Company 1903 (F65)



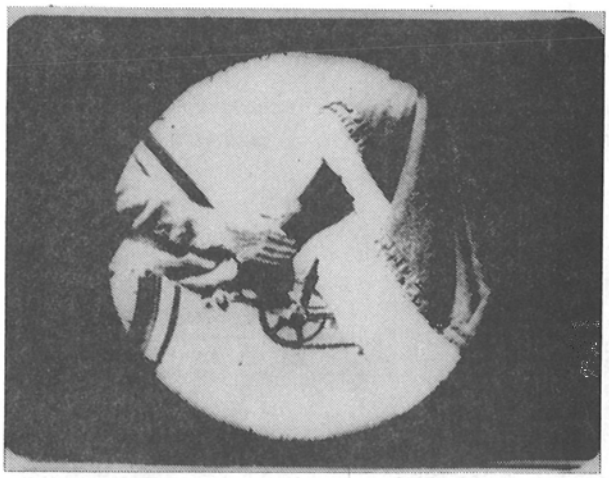
GRANDMA'S READING GLASS
G.A. Smith 1900 (F11)







THE GAY SHOE CLERK
Edison 1903 (F474)



AS SEEN THROUGH THE TELESCOPE
G.A. Smith 1900 (F1)

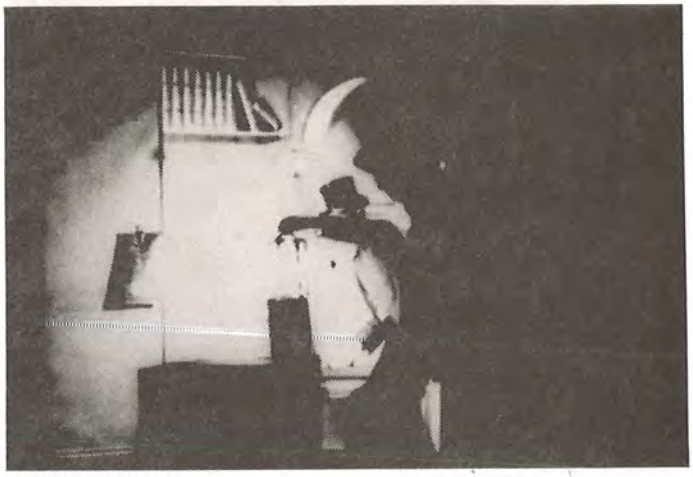


HISTOIRE D'UN CRIME
Pathé 1901 (F144)





SEVEN AGES
Edison 1905 (F513)



FALSELY ACCUSED
Hepworth 1905 (F91)



UN COUP D'OEIL PAR ETAGE
Pathé 1904 (F231)

