

BSFFS 2019 Timetable Day One

THURSDAY 11th APRIL 2019

Lucas Lecture Theatre, King's College London, Strand, London, WC2R 2LS

10.00 – 11.30 – Session One – Screenings selected and introduced by Tony Fletcher

All For the Sake of Mary (Harry Lauder, 1920) [fragment 5mins approx. 35mm]

Island Maiden (1912) [fragment 11mins approx.. 35mm]

The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots (Denison Clift, 1923) [DVD extract]

All of the above with piano accompaniment by Meg Morley

11.30 – 12.00 Coffee

12.00 – 1.30 – Session Two – Papers

12.00 – 12.20 Neil Parsons – on *The Pageant of South Africa* (SA 1910, 1500ft; UK 1911, 629ft)

12.20 – 12.40 Peter Domankiewicz – Whatever Happened at Clovelly Cottage?

12.40 – 1.00 Alex Kirstukas – ‘Every Detail Perfect’: Collaboration and Performance in the Films of G. A. Smith and Company

1.00 – 1.30 Discussion

1.30 – 2.30 – LUNCH

2.30 – 4.00 – Session Three – Papers

2.30 – 2.50 Neil Pettigrew – Colette Brettel and her Shameful Secrets

2.50 – 3.10 Ian Christie – A family business? The operation of Britain's first film studio

3.10 – 3.30 Malcolm Cook – Animated Advertising in Britain in the silent period

3.30 – 3.40 *Bonzolino* (1925) (BFI Player) with piano accompaniment by Meg Morley

3.40 – 4.00 Discussion

4.00 – 4.30 Coffee

4.30 – 6.40 Session Four – Screenings

4.30 – 5.10 *Jessica's First Prayer* (Bert Wynn, 1921) 35mm 40 mins.

5.10 – 6.40 Peter Yorke introduces *The Maid of Cefn Ydfa* (William Haggart, 1914) 38 mins.

With piano accompaniment by Meg Morley

BSFFS 2019 Timetable Day Two

FRIDAY 12th APRIL 2019

Lucas Lecture Theatre, King's College London, Strand, London, WC2R 2LS

10.00 – 11.00 Session Five – Papers

10.00 – 10.20 Liz Watkins – A Spectator Viewed: Gender, Emotion and the Polar Expedition Film

10.20 – 10.40 Toby Haggith – Roll of Honour Films

10.40 – 11.00 Screening – Roll of Honour Films (extract from digital source) Piano: John Sweeney

11.00 – 11.30 – Coffee Break

11.30 – 1.00 Session Six - Papers

11.30 – 11.50 Martin Spence - The Lord's Day in Penge: cinemas, Sundays and local politics

11.50 – 12.10 Lucie Dutton – Contrary to the Public Interest: Lord Kitchener's Death on Screen

12.10 – 12.25 Screening – *How Lord Kitchener Was Betrayed* (Percy Nash, 1921) [12 mins extract – BFI Player] Piano: John Sweeney

12.25 – 12.45 – Discussion

12.45 – 2.00 LUNCH

2.00 – 3.30 Session Seven – papers

2.00 – 2.20 Ben Burrows – Seeing Sound in Silent Pictures

2.20 – 2.40 Laraine Porter – Women Working in the British Industry in the 1920s

2.40 – 3.00 Geoff Brown – 'Dead as the Wooden Battleship': The fate of Silent British Features in the Transition to Sound

3.00 – 3.30 Discussion

3.30 – 4.00 Coffee Break

4.00 – 5.30 Session Eight – Discussion and Special Screening

4.00 – 4.30 Discussion and preview of BSFF 2019: Bryony Dixon, Laraine Porter

4.30 – 5.30 Special Screening: Toby Haggith introduces *Peace on the Western Front* (1930) [34mins Digital File] with piano accompaniment by Meg Morley and live narration

Abstracts

Thursday Session Two

12.00 – 12.20 Neil Parsons – *The Pageant of South Africa* (SA 1910, 1500ft; UK 1911, 629ft)

Film histories trace back the origins of Trek and Zulu features to *Voortrekkers* (forerunner of *The Covered Wagon*) and *Symbol of Sacrifice* (forerunner of *Zulu* and *Zulu Dawn*) made in South Africa in 1916-18. But there was an earlier epic film that reflected a different set of values. *The Pageant of South Africa* was filmed on the Cape Town foreshore in October-November 1910, and was shown by the Warwick company in London in February 1911. The model for the pageant was drawn more from British/ Canadian precedents than white South African values. Its writer, producer and director direct from England was Frank Lascelles (né Frank William Thomas Charles Stevens), and its cinematographer was probably either Remmy Nissen or Tommy Crellin. Four colonies (Cape, Transvaal, Natal, Orange Free State) that had been engaged in bitter civil war less than a decade previously were now, in 1910, being united as one Union of South Africa. Inspired no doubt by his historical pageant previously staged in Quebec, Lascelles celebrated peaceful reconciliation between races and nationalities through displays of colourful pageantry. The pageant acknowledged the original owners of the land by employing Khoesan (so-called 'Bushmen' and 'Hottentots') and BaSotho people (representing all Bantu-speakers) as actors, while making them bow before the moral might of coastal invaders—Portuguese explorers, Dutch, French, and British settlers. Successive scenes portrayed pre-1870 events in Cape Colony, Basutoland and the Orange Free State, totally ignoring the previous four decades of Anglo-Boer conflict and virtually ignoring the war-torn histories of the Transvaal and Natal that were to be featured in *Voortrekkers* and *Symbol of Sacrifice*. *The Pageant of South Africa* delivers a contrasting vision for a New South Africa to the actual story of increasing racial segregation and suppression that was to be pursued from 1913 onwards

12.20 – 12.40 Peter Domankiewicz – *Whatever Happened at Clovelly Cottage?*

The film dubbed "Incident at Clovelly Cottage" is the very first 35mm film shot in Britain. One of its makers would become known as "The Father of the British Film Industry" and the other would be the first to give a Royal film show. It was also the beginning of one of the most dramatic and public falling-outs at the start of that industry: yet the actual content of the film and the circumstances of its shooting remain foggy.

The engineer Robert Paul and photographic expert Birt Acres had first met only six weeks before making this film, with the purpose of creating a camera to produce content for copies of the Kinetoscope that Paul was manufacturing. Nobody has ever asked how it was possible to achieve this feat of invention so quickly when the rest of the moving picture pioneers spent months or years in development. A closer look at how they may have achieved this reveals some unexpected connections.

Pieces of this film have been scattered about different places in the world and sometimes two different films are listed. I have been piecing it together in both the historical and literal senses. I have digitally reconstructed and reanimated some fragments to get a clearer impression of the action of the film, revealing that although they aimed to create films for the Kinetoscope and Paul optimistically sent the film to Edison to propose collaboration, the results are not what we have been led to expect.

12.40 – 1.00 Alex Kirstukas – 'Every Detail Perfect': Collaboration and Performance in the Films of G. A. Smith and Company

In the wake of Georges Sadoul's influential 1945 definition of the 'Brighton School', the fiction films produced by George Albert Smith between 1897 and 1903 have long been discussed primarily in terms of their editing technique; even after teleological readings of film history have been widely questioned, the Smith films are often positioned as technical achievements marking significant linear steps towards the grammar of classical cinema. However, this assessment has tended to obscure a striking feature of the extant Smith films: the extent to which, more perhaps than any other early film oeuvre, these films rely on the interplay of nuanced performances and film technique to build detail-rich, self-contained narratives in an essentially collaborative fashion. Founded on early accounts of film screenings, evidences of modern viewers' encounters with early film, and the historiographical commentaries, this paper uses examples from two Smith films (*The Kiss in the Tunnel*, 1899, and *Let Me Dream Again*, 1900) alongside related films by others (*The Kiss in the Tunnel*, Bamforth, 1898?, and *Rêve et Réalité*, Pathé, 1901) to offer a performance-oriented, detail-focused method of analysis and comparison. Particular attention is paid to the contributions, in front of and behind the camera, of Smith's actor-filmmaker collaborators Tom Green and especially Laura Bayley.

1.00 – 1.30 Questions and Discussion

Thursday – Session Three

2.30 – 2.50 Neil Pettigrew – Colette Brettel and her Shameful Secrets

Colette Brettel – a forgotten British actress of the 1920s. Who was she? What did she contribute to silent films? How good an actress was she? How many films did she act in and how many survive? What became of her? And what were her shameful secrets? All of these questions will be answered by my talk. She was on the stage – mainly as a chorus girl – for several years before being ‘discovered’ and going into films in 1920. She played the young Cathy in the first version of *Wuthering Heights* (1920). She starred in the prestigious British production, *The Prodigal Son* (1923) which at three hours in length, was Britain’s longest-ever film. She travelled to Iceland to make it. She also starred in another significant British film *The Colleen Bawn* (1924), much of which was filmed in Ireland. She was on the verge of becoming an even bigger star when the 1924 recession put a halt to British film production. Fortunately Colette had met Dutch actor and director Ernst Winar while working on *The Wolf of Tibet* in 1923. They married and moved to Germany. There she made many films, several of which were released in Britain. She often co-starred with Winar or was directed by him. She became extremely popular in Germany, appearing in around 30 films, once alongside Marlene Dietrich, and once alongside Lil Dagover. One of her surviving films is *Paragraph 182 Minors* (1927), which tackled the controversial subject of underage sex. Colette, although 28 years old, played a 15-year-old girl who is taken advantage of by a middle-aged man. She moved back to Britain in 1930, but was unable to revive her career, and never made another film.

2.50 – 3.10 Ian Christie – A family business? The operation of Britain’s first film studio

R. W. Paul’s New Southgate studio was established sometime during the second half of 1898 in Muswell Hill on the northern edge of London. A trade advertisement in October described how ‘a staff of artists and photographers’ had been at work producing 80 fiction subjects which it was claimed would ‘rivet... the attention of beholders’. Only one of these survives, and in regrettably truncated form. But Paul’s detailed illustrated catalogues enable the output of that Autumn and the following years to be scoped. What has not received enough attention is the staffing and operation of the studio, which employed at various times, and presumably trained many of Britain’s pioneer generation of filmmakers. In particular, there has been little attempt to gauge the contribution of Paul’s wife, Ellen, whose theatrical experience seems likely have played a leading part in its running. This presentation will explore what can be gleaned from available evidence.

3.10 – 3.30 Malcolm Cook – Animated Advertising in Britain in the silent period

This paper will address the concurrent emergence and entanglement of animation and advertising in Britain between the First World War and the coming of sound in the late 1920s. The First World War provided a crucial stimulus for both animation and filmed advertising in Britain. Propaganda films, especially *The Battle of the Somme* (1916), demonstrated the persuasive power of film, attracting the attention of the advertising industry. However, there was considerable debate about the effectiveness and desirability of the use of film for selling, with exhibitors reluctant to risk the confidence their customers had in them. In the 1920s animated advertising by companies like Cineads, Adlets, and Publicity Films became a common feature of cinema programmes, and also expanded beyond the screen. For example, George Studdy’s popular cartoon canine Bonzo was being used to advertise cigarettes in an animated billboard in London’s Piccadilly Circus. The novelty of early synchronised sound cartoons proved irresistible to advertisers, resulting in films such as Joe Noble’s *Mr York of York, Yorks* (1929), a commercial for Rowntree’s chocolate.

As well as mapping the basic developments of animated advertising in this period, this paper will raise some of the major conceptual concerns arising from it, contributing to new research into ‘films that sell’ (Vonderau, Florin, and De Klerk, 2016). The role of animation in these wider debates will be addressed, as it offered a compromise and solution to conflicts between advertisers and exhibitors. Variations and developments in the local, national, and international contexts of advertisements and the brands they promoted reflected the complex flow of goods within the empire. The organisation of the advertising ‘campaign’ indicated the fundamentally intermedial nature of animated advertising in this period.

[3.30 – 3.40 Screening – *Bonzolino* (1925)]

3.40 – 4.00 – Questions and Discussion

Friday – Session Five

10.00 – 10.20 Liz Watkins – A Spectator Viewed: Gender, Emotion and the Polar Expedition Film.

Abstract: Polar expedition films (1913-1924) traverse the boundaries of nonfiction and commercial entertainment, their images becoming the site of negotiation between commercial film companies, expedition contracts, photographers and exhibitors. Whilst my presentation at the BSFSS 2018 focussed on the interlacing of scientific research and the use of editing and colour familiar to travelogue and educational films as popular entertainment, the ideological implications of these techniques and their reception requires further examination. Thus an analysis of the topography of exhibition and reception finds a space in which ideologies conflict: from the depiction and of masculinity, homeliness and cheer in a sparse Antarctic landscape (Strange 2012) to accounts that fetishize emotion and the ideation of widowhood. The film and image in its performance and reception form a socially and politically contested space. For example, scholars such as Jennifer Petersen have noted that imperialist ideologies were realised and reshaped through expedition films as narratives of global travel (Petersen 2013). I argue that the commodification of emotion in film and spectatorship – from tints and tones that were designed to be used sensuously (Yumibe 2012) to the use of auditorium lighting that emphasised selected details in narrative (Waller 2014; Watkins 2018) – extend to newspaper reports framing their reception. The films and photographs of expeditions led by Scott, Shackleton, Mawson entwine the depiction of homosocial familial existence (midwinter dinners, lantern slide lectures, artworks) with the ‘dangers and difficulties besetting expedition work’ (*Australian Kinematograph Journal* 1913). The cultural and technological mapping of the Antarctic shaped a masculinist space saw the commodification of the ‘emotional labour’ of explorers (Strange 2012). An examination of the ways in which the depiction of the work of exploration is classed and gendered opens a space in which to consider – in a specific context – the questions of spectatorship that Hansen and Hennefeld (2016) have more broadly discussed as the refiguring of public-private sphere hierarchies. Cinema is a socially contested space in which – the imperialist ideologies of travelogues, entertainment, education and the commodification of emotional labour intersect with the potentialities of an active female gaze. In the reception of expedition films, the commodification and fetishization of emotional labour is encapsulated in the figure of the widow and entangled with the ascension of a female spectatorship to new social experience and the political activism of women’s suffrage.

10.20 – 10.40 Toby Haggith – Roll of Honour Films

Within months of the beginning of the First World War, British society was spontaneously showing solidarity with men fighting in the war with a variety of types of rolls of honour or, more accurately, rolls of service being compiled and ‘exhibited’ publicly. The cinema industry joined this movement, initially by listing members of its staff who had joined up in the trade journals and by proudly displaying their names in cinema foyers and even showing their photographs on the screen at the start of regular film shows. Sometime around the spring of 1915, cinemas began running rolls of honour films, compiled from photographs, lent by their patrons, of local fighting men. These were an extremely popular innovation and the idea was adopted in cinemas across the country, with cinemas in at least 20 towns producing roll of honour films, and in multiple series. Arising out of recent research into examples of the genre held at IWM, Dr Toby Haggith will place the phenomenon in the context of other forms of civilian solidarity with serving men and show that the genre was more extensive and enduring than has been supposed.

[10.40 – 11.00 Screening – Roll of Honour Films]

Friday – Session Six

11.30 – 11.50 Martin Spence - The Lord's Day in Penge: cinemas, Sundays and local politics

This paper will tell the story of the 1922 local council election in Penge, South London, an election dominated by the question of cinema opening on Sundays. This may seem a surprising issue to decide a local election, and there were plenty of other controversial questions which might have taken centre stage: the council's decision to build a public housing estate; local unemployment; and the presence of a new and belligerent local Labour Party in what had previously been a solidly Conservative district. But surprisingly, it was Sunday opening, and the role of the council as the local licensing authority, which became the key issue.

This paper will argue that there were several reasons for this, including the decisions of neighbouring licensing authorities; the publicity-seeking instincts of the proprietors of the Kings Hall cinema in Penge; and the status of local churches as moral leaders, a status enhanced during the War. Drawing on local newspapers, minutes of Penge Urban District Council, minutes of the local parochial church council, and Home Office records, I will show that, while the 'Sunday opening' election in Penge in 1922 was an entirely local affair, it opens up a fascinating insight into the wider national debate on Sunday opening, and the regime of local cinema licensing, in the 1920s.

11.50 – 12.10 Lucie Dutton – Contrary to the Public Interest: Lord Kitchener's Death on Screen

Lord Kitchener's death on board HMS *Hampshire*, which hit a mine off Orkney on 5 June 1916 just days after the Battle of Jutland, gave rise to numerous conspiracy theories. His body was never recovered, although in 1926, one Frank Power claimed it had been found in Norway, and even produced a coffin, which was found to be a hoax. Such conspiracies found their way on to film, to the consternation of the authorities.

In 1921, Percy Nash made *How Kitchener was Betrayed* - a tale of a fictional German plot to sink the *Hampshire*. Nash already had form for controversial films based on real-life figures; in 1916, his proposed film about King Edward VII was firmly quashed by Buckingham Palace and the Home Office. His Kitchener film led to the War Office protesting in 'the strongest possible terms' at a 'deplorable lack of taste'. It was, they advised the Home Office 'a malicious fabrication' that would 'cause great pain and distress to the relatives and friends' of Kitchener. Kitchener's sister, the Admiralty, and Members of Parliament called for the film's withdrawal; the Home Office put pressure on the British Board of Film Censors; representations were made to the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum to refuse Nash the use of Official War Films; the Foreign Office took steps to prevent distribution overseas; and attempted screenings led to High Court injunctions.

And in 1926, Frank Power of the Kitchener Coffin hoax, promoted a film with accompanying lecture called *The Tragedy of the Hampshire*, which included various conspiracy theories. In this case the Home Office and the BBFC were helpless: the film itself was unexceptionable, and they had no power to stop the lecture.

Drawing on correspondence from the War Office, Home Office, BBFC, and contemporary newspaper and trade press reports, this paper will explore the sensitivities surrounding these Kitchener films and the steps taken by the authorities to suppress them.

12.10 – 12.25 [Screening – *How Lord Kitchener was Betrayed* [fragment] (Percy Nash, 1921)]

12.25 – 12.45 Questions and Discussion of Morning Papers

Friday – Session Seven

2.00 – 2.20 Ben Burrows – Seeing Sound in Silent Pictures

It has become a truism to say that silent pictures were never silent. Not only was silent film accompanied by music, but frequently accompanied by sound effects, a narrator or even voice-actors. But it is also true to say that they were never silent because the film-makers themselves embedded sound, including music, into the visual images that they presented. One of the best known examples of this is the scene in Alfred Hitchcock's third film 'The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog' where the Lodger is pacing his rooms with a heavy tread: a specially-made transparent floor was used to show the soles of his shoes from the perspective of Mrs Bunting his landlady in the room below. Hitchcock himself said that they did this simply 'because we didn't have sound.'

This paper will consider the difference between an image that represents sound (a 'sound image') and the sound itself, examining ways in which such 'sound images' communicate meaning beyond simply the sound they picture. Through this we will show that silent film is replete with sonic imagery: bringing sound into the visual domain, providing objective and subjective viewpoints, and enhancing other elements of the story as they are influenced by the sound events. How did the silence of the silent era provide unique ways for the film-maker to communicate using sound? The advent of the sound era enforced a transition to the use of the sound itself, so we will conclude by examining creative possibilities of sound in the contemporary audiovisual experience which go beyond the simple replacement of a picture of sound with the sound itself.

2.20 – 2.40 Laraine Porter – 'The Film Gone Male': Women Working on the Transition to Sound in the British Film Industry 1929-1932.

Taking its cue from an article, 'The Film Gone Male' written by Dorothy Richardson for *Close Up* in 1932 and using empirical data provided by the recently available BFI Filmography, this presentation will look at women working across the British film industry in the transition from silent to sound cinema between 1929 and 1931. It will consider the impact of the new technology on women's roles in front of and behind the camera as sound dominated the agenda from production to reception. It will also question whether sound, largely understood and documented as a male-dominated invention, further marginalised women as producers and masculinised the experience of cinema as Richardson asserted.

2.40 – 3.00 Geoff Brown – 'Dead As The Wooden Battleship': The Fate of Silent British Features in the Transition to Sound

Dead as the wooden battleship, dead as the magic lantern: such were the similes used in 1929 by some in the British and American film industries to describe the fate of silent cinema in the new talkie era. Other voices predicted a lingering half-life. Either way, most British film companies faced a common problem: what to do in 1929 with their unreleased stock of silent films already completed? Foregrounding the activities of British International Pictures and the distributors Equity British, this talk explores the aesthetic, practical and technical problems in keeping silent feature exhibition alive or sonically titivating silent product to keep the films 'up-to-date'. Topics include the problems generated by the quota provisions of the 1927 Cinematograph Films Act; management divisions; the 'goat gland' phenomenon; Equity British's dangerous re-release of Stoll's back catalogue, some films going back to 1921; and the brave (or foolish) output of young filmmakers like John F. Argyle, trying their hands at silent features just when talkies cemented their grip. British silent cinema's death, it turns out, was neither quick nor painless.

3.00 – 3.30 Questions and Discussion

[4.00 – 5.30 Session Eight Discussion and Special Screening inc *Peace on the Western Front* (1930) introduced by Toby Haggith]

SCREENING NOTES – Session One (introduced by Tony Fletcher)

All For The Sake of Mary (515ft. fragment)(1920)

This film survives at the BFI as a complete 4,000ft. feature along with seven extracts of out-takes. It is the only silent feature written, produced and directed by, and starring Harry Lauder and was made not long after his visit to Charles Chaplin in Hollywood. The film starts and ends in Scotland with the middle section set in South Africa, where he (Lauder) has gone to make his fortune in order to return and win the girl he loves.

The main feature has a secondary title: "The Ups and Downs of Jock MacFergus". However, one of the out-takes has a different main title :- "I Love A Lassie – A Simple Story of Scots Folk"; another out-take is entitled "Mack's First Love". Neil Parsons had written that in the early summer of 1920, Harry Lauder was touring music halls in South Africa while making a film "The Emigrant" or "The Wooing of Jack Kyle".

The fragment which I am showing contains several shots which are not in the final version including a scene of Harry Lauder poaching before he goes to South Africa, and on his return home to meet Mary (Effie Vallance). At the end he sings and dances to the camera.

Island Maiden (892ft.)(1912)

This film was donated to the BFI by Collingridge & Co. who were a company that extracted silver from nitrate film. Among the other films they donated to the BFI was the William Haggart film "The Life of Charles Peace". Both films have a preamble at the beginning claiming how important they were. Before I viewed "Island Maiden" I believed it to be a Gaumont film made in France, however, afterwards I was not so sure and felt that it may have been made on location in Scotland. Am I correct?

The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots (A Game of Thrones!)

Production Co.: Ideal (a Denison Clift Art Production)(7,684ft.)(1923)

Camera: William Shenton

CAST:

Mary Stuart	Fay Compton
Francis II King of France	Donald MacArdle
Catherine DeMedici	Irene Rooke
French Cardinal	Ernest A. Douglas
Queen Elizabeth	Ellen Compton
Earl of Bothwell	Gerald Ames
Ruthven	Harvey Braban
James, Earl of Moray	Lionel D'Aragon
Melville	Arthur Woods
George Douglas	John Stuart
John Knox	Edward Sorley
Rizzio	Rene Maupre
Edwin	Michael Dane
Lord Darnley	Ivan Samson
Sir Francis Walsingham	Hubert Carter
Lord William Douglas	Sydney Seaward
Mary Livingstone	Betty Faire
Mary Beaton	Dorothy Fane
Mary Fleming	Nancy Kenyon
Mary Seaton	Julie Hartly- Milburn

“The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots” began the British Week at the Scala on Nov. 5th 1923. A review in ‘The Cinema’ stated that the drama opened with scenes at the French Court when Mary was Queen of France (filmed on location at the Chateau of Chantilly), and portrays her troubled life in Scotland, her surrender to Queen Elizabeth, and finally, her execution at Fotheringay.

The film, written, produced and directed by Denison Clift, was advertised as a ‘Denison Clift Art Production’ and was 8 reels long. The story was probably based on two sources:- ‘The Borderer’ by Fred Terry and a stage play:- ‘Mary Stuart’ by John Drinkwater at the Everyman, Hampstead in Sept. 1921, with Laura Cowie as Mary and Randle Ayrton as Bothwell.

A review of the film describes six thrilling situations – The Murder of Rizzio; The Blowing Up of Darnley at Kirk o’ Field; The Mobbing of The Queen in the Edinburgh Streets; The Night Attack on Borthwick Castle and Capture of the Queen; The Thrilling Escape from Lochleven; and the Final Moving Scene.

Queen Elizabeth is played by Ellen Compton, the older sister of Fay, and this is her only film appearance. In the film the two women do not meet. There is at least one historically inaccurate incident in the film when Mary Stuart meets her young son (aged 3) before she was imprisoned. In reality, she saw her son for the last time when he was not yet one year old. In the film she calls him Esau.

A number of the scenes in the film were located where the original incidents occurred, ie. Holyrood Palace, Borthwick Castle, Dunbar Castle, Kirk o’ Field, Lochleven Castle, Bolton Castle, Fotheringay! Most of the actors are credited as they appear apart from Queen Mary’s Ladies -in Waiting.

Denison Clift

Christine Gledhill has written that Denison Clift had been a scenario writer for both Cecil B. DeMille and Thomas Ince in the USA and in 1919 he became Production Editor at Fox Film Corp. where he also directed three films. In Sept. 1920, (aged 28) he came to Britain to join the Ideal Film Co. Gledhill stated that Clift considered that British literature was a storehouse of richly imaginative stories, which if filmed in their regional and architectural settings, would be internationally successful. Two other Clift films which feature Fay Compton were shown in the British Film Weeks:- “A Bill of Divorcement” and “This Freedom” (with Clive Brook).

Fay Compton

The theatre actress, Fay Compton, starred in six of Denison Clift’s features which he made in Britain between 1921 – 1923. The three others, not previously mentioned, were:- “A Woman of No Importance”, “The Old Wives Tale” and “Diana of The Crossways”. In an early memoir, ‘Rosemary’, (1926) Fay Compton recalls that “The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots” was her favourite film to date and all that she had learned about film acting was down to Clift. Her previous film experience was with the British Actors Film Co. (two films) and The London Film Co. (two films). In all, she made only nineteen silent films.

She recalls in her memoir:- “Shall I ever forget the heat we endured during the film? (My favourite film), 90 degrees in the shade! What on earth it was in the studio under those lights, I can’t think. It made the love scenes – between Gerald Ames as the Earl of Bothwell and me, he clothed in heavy armour and I in a weighty velvet robe, embarrassingly difficult; we poured with heat and grease paint. Not romantic”.

Many thanks to Janice Healey and Mark Newell for additional information.

SCREENING NOTES – Session Four (part one)

Jessica's First Prayer (Bert Wynne, 1921)

Cast

Jessica	-	Joan Griffiths
Mother	-	Beatrix Templeton
Daniel Standing	-	Hargrave Mansell
Rev. Selwyn	-	Warwick Ward
Rev. Brighton	-	Peter Coleman
Gladys	-	Edith Reid
Winnie	-	Doris Millward

Credits

From a story by	Hesba Stretton
Photography	Silvano Balboni
Production Company	Seal Film Company
Direction	Bert Wynne

Jessica's First Prayer is adapted from a sentimental religious novel published in 1866 by Hesba Stretton (aka Sarah Smith). The book was a major bestseller apparently outselling *Alice in Wonderland* by a factor of ten. The story was popular as a lantern slide subject, and was also adapted as a sentimental hymn. Stretton followed up with a sequel, *Jessica's Mother*, and Bert Wynn's adaptation incorporates the narrative of both stories, although the novels do not include the revelation about Jessica's father that is included in the film.

Seal produced another adaptation of a Stretton story, also starring 'Little Joan Griffith' (as she was billed) as a street urchin, and called *Little Meg's Children*. Both films were released in 1923 and Griffith starred in a further film, *Dick's Fairy* released around the same time. Bert Wynne's short career as a director ended in 1927 with the film *Remembrance*, which was sponsored by the Royal British Legion.

'*Jessica's First Prayer* will head the programme at the Alhambra Picture Theatre during the second half of the week, and Alhambra patrons are sure to be charmed with the delightful story, and more particularly with the wonderful settings. Adapted from the story by Hesbe Stretton, there are many remarkable situations, and the film, interesting all the time, meanders on to a happy ever after ending. Little Joan Griffiths and Hargreaves Mansell play the principal parts which they interpret with cleverness.'

Burnley News, 12th September 1923, p. 4,



Magic lantern slide series illustrating this story can be found at https://www.luikerwaal.com/newframe_uk.htm/?zomaarlife01_uk.htm
Notes by Lawrence Napper

SCREENING NOTES – Session Four (part two)

The Maid of Cefn Ydfa (William Hagggar, 1914)

Cast

Ann Thomas (the 'maid')	-	Jenny Lindon (Mrs. Will. Hagggar Jnr.)
Will Hopkins (poet & thatcher)	-	Will Hagggar Jnr.
Gweny (maidservant to Ann)	-	Jennie Hagggar (Will's eldest daughter)
Lewis Bach (a family retainer)	-	Will Fyffe (later star of stage & screen)
Children of Gweny & Lewis	-	Billy, Jo & Paddy Hagggar (children of Will Hagggar Jnr.)

Credits

Screenplay	James Hagggar (from the play by J.C. O'Dowd)
Photography	William Hagggar and anon 'cameraman from London'
Editing, Direction, Production	William Hagggar

Making the Film

William Hagggar had first filmed *The Maid* in 1902, running for about seven minutes, it helped to make his fortune. Denis Gifford preserves a trace of a longer version filmed in 1908 but nothing else is known of that. By 1912, Will Junior and Jenny wanted to make a much more elaborate version. They and their players would act it: it would be much more like their trademark play. Brother Jim would write the screenplay. But William, who in past years had either done all the camera work himself or closely supervised his sons Jim and Walter, was now in his sixties and had just remarried. They wanted to save him hard labour, so it was agreed that a cameraman from London should be engaged to do much of the work. William never had a studio, so scenery was set up on a 'cabbage patch' in Pontarddulais, near Swansea, and all the interior scenes were shot there. Other scenes were taken on location: houses in Pontarddulais and locations in Bridgend, Bargoed and Llanelly have been recognised. When William saw the result, he was horrified. He insisted on re-shooting many scenes, and undertook the huge task of editing together all the resultant footage. This must have taken long hours. William was busy going into politics. In 1913 he became a Guardian of the Poor, and in 1914 a Rural District Councillor. During the intervening winter he was seriously ill. But at last the film neared completion. It was trailed in *The World's Fair* in August 1914, advertised in the *Abadare Leader* for weeks in advance, and finally shown in Hagggar's cinemas in Abadare and Mountain Ash in December. At the same time, it got a mention in the *Kinematograph Yearbook for 1915*.

Later history

The film continued for several years to be shown to Welsh audiences by the two Hagggar travelling cinemas run by Will Junior and his brother Walter. Will and Jenny used to sit behind the cinema screen and recite their lines – and greet the audience as they left. Will's copy was destroyed in a devastating fire at Pontarddulais in 1923. Walter gave his copy a last showing at Cardiff's Olympia Cinema in April 1938, when it was reviewed favourably in the *South Wales Echo*. After that it was lost to view until 1984, when it was rediscovered in a cupboard under the stairs in the home of Peter Hagggar, Will Junior's grandson. Sent to the BFI for conservation, it could not all be saved. Of its original 50 minutes, 38 minutes survives.

Notes by Peter Yorke

SCREENING NOTES – Session Eight

Peace on the Western Front (1930)



International Productions

Directors: Fred Swann, Hans Nieter

Cast: Moore Marriott, Eric Pavitt

Dialogue: Elliott Stannard

Told by: Ratcliffe Holmes

Run time: 35 minutes.

Restoration credits

Project Manager: Matthew Lee (IWM)

Restoration Supervisor: David Walsh (IWM)

Digital Restoration: Deluxe

Researcher and Script: Toby Haggith (IWM)

Towards the end of 1930, two veterans of the First World War, one German and the other British, came together to shoot a film pilgrimage through the Western Front battlefields to impress upon younger generations that war, 'is not a childish game, a glorious adventure', but 'a hideous ugly thing.' Released in 1931 as a second feature, the film gained a following among the burgeoning peace movement and became an unofficial film for the League of Nations Union. The soundtrack was recorded on discs, now sadly lost, so a script has been created from the synopsis in the original press brochure and accounts of the battlefields and war-ravaged towns written at the time. This script, along with music composed by Stephen Horne, will be performed live to accompany IWM (Imperial War Museums) digital restoration of the print, at a special 'work in progress' screening. The screening will be introduced by Dr Toby Haggith, Senior Curator at IWM and the researcher on the project.