Introduction

One of the earliest forms of film history to appear was autobiography, in the shape of recollections of film pioneers, which were often published in trade papers and newspapers. One fine (and little known) example of this are the memoirs of Anton Nöggerath, translated below. Together with his father, Nöggerath was responsible for an important share of film production, exhibition and distribution in the first fifteen to twenty years of the cinema in the Netherlands, but he also worked in the film industry in the early days in Britain and the Nordic countries (which is the main focus of the memoirs).

A generation or two ago, during what might be called the period of ‘anecdotal film history’, the recollections of film pioneers were often taken literally. At that time there was less concern than latterly about the likely truth of what had been written or spoken, and film history was more often undertaken by journalists than by historians. When film history became a ‘serious business’ and anecdotal history was unmasked as false, nostalgic and often denigrating, recollections were usually considered unreliable and the baby was thrown away with the bath-water. However, provided such recollections are checked and counterpointed with archival research – consulting evidence which can confirm or contradict the information in the memoirs – these are sources which can add a colourful and valuable dimension to the otherwise dry accounts and personalities from the ‘almighty’ trade.
The Recollections of Anton Nöggerath

press. They help us to understand the past in a more vivid way, despite their possible distortions and falsifications. Their controversial nature may be a stumbling-block to film historians (see the Melbourne-Cooper-discussions in KINtop and in this issue); nevertheless such unconventional evidence will gradually (re-)gain its place amidst all the possible sources for film historical research.

In the case of the following recollections of Anton Nöggerath, his experiences are described in such a detailed manner that one must suspect he kept diaries, to base his story on afterwards. At the time these episodes were published, Nöggerath was a settled film businessman and was considered to be one of the senior members of the trade in the Netherlands. The memoirs appeared in the Dutch film magazine De Kinematograaf under the title, ‘Chapters from the life of a camera-operator’ starting 15 February 1918 and probably ending 3 January 1919. They were unearthed some years ago by film historian Geoffrey Donaldson, who copied the relevant issues. Many numbers of the magazine were then missing from the run held in the Nederlands Filmmuseum including episodes 3, 4 and 6 (and more have since disappeared). Also issues immediately after the 3 January number (part 16) are missing, so we cannot be certain the run of memoirs had ended, though it seems very probable that it had. In translating, reprinting and editing the memoirs we have omitted the sections not involving filmmaking (summarising the deleted sections in italics) and have added paragraph titles.

Franz Anton Nöggerath junior (1880–1947) came from a well established entertainment family in the Netherlands. His father, the flamboyant Anton Nöggerath senior (1859–1908), owned one of the most popular music-halls in turn-of-the-century Amsterdam: the Flora theatre in the Amstelstraat, near the Rembrandtplein, at the heart of the amusement centre of the city. Its relatively cheap seats, its diverse international repertoire, its central location and its large capacity (1400 seats after rebuilding in 1902–1903) drew large crowds night after night. Nöggerath senior was swift to introduce film shows to his theatre. Already from 25 October 1896, only half a year after the first Lumière shows in Amsterdam, a certain Madame Olinka gave shows in the Flora, using the Kinematograph projector of H.O. Försterling & Co. The next year Oskar Messter showed films there.²

Messter was the representative in Germany and Austro-Hungary of the British/American company, Maguire & Baucus, which, from 1898 became the Warwick Trading Company, and possibly
through Messter, Nöggerath senior started to negotiate with Warwick. The result was that in December 1897 Nöggerath became Warwick's representative for the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway. His agency for Warwick was an important one, as this company had become one of the biggest distributors of film in Europe. Warwick released British films from manufacturers like G.A. Smith and James Williamson, but also distributed foreign films like Georges Méliès' Star Films and the Lumière Brothers' productions. As well as this, in 1897 Nöggerath senior bought a projector from Messter and in 1898 a better one from Charles Urban (Warwick's manager). In the Flora he could now screen films at the end of the vaudeville show on a regular basis.

In September 1898 Nöggerath hired a Warwick camera and cameraman to shoot the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. This was his first step in film production, and from such factual films he moved on to produce staged actualities à la Méliès, fiction films, and 'singing' films, partly shot on the rooftop of the Flora, where he set up a small studio. He named his company 'FilmFabriek Anton Nöggerath'. Most films however were probably not shot or directed by himself but by employees like Leon Boedels (the 'factotum' of Flora), Johann Vierboom, his brother Carl Wilhelm and his second son Theodore.

Nöggerath senior himself was probably more involved with film imports and exports and with the engagement of foreign artists. He was responsible for the distribution of his own films, but also released them through Warwick's worldwide distribution. In his letterheads he proudly proclaimed that he had started his distribution company in 1897, which was called 'Bioscopisch bedrijf' and later on F.A.N.-Film, the abbreviation of his initials. He was indeed the first established Dutch film distributor. 'The Royal Bioscope' or 'Royal Biograph', as he called his shows after Urban's Royal Bioscope, became the permanent closing act in his vaudeville shows in Flora, but Nöggerath also became the regular supplier of films to other music halls, such as the Casino-Variété in Rotterdam and to travelling cinema owners like Alberts Frères and Christiaan Slieker. Nöggerath senior toured all around Europe (or others did this in his name - this is unclear) to show his 'Royal Bioscope'. In music halls in neighbouring countries like Germany, Nöggerath's shows could be seen as the closing act in variety shows. Through all this travelling he probably gained an advantage compared to other Dutch showmen in being alerted to new developments on the international film market. This knowledge was especially important in the Netherlands, which was almost entirely dependent on importing foreign films, due to the lack of a national film production (apart from the modest manufacture by Nöggerath himself and by travelling cinema owners).

If Nöggerath senior was a key figure in the early cinema in the Netherlands, his son (the writer of the memoirs) was no less influential. Franz Anton Nöggerath junior (1880–1947), was born in Neheim, Germany, and was to become a trusted part of his father's entertainment business. In 1897, the year of his deal with the Warwick Trading Company, Nöggerath senior sent his son to Britain to learn the film trade as a trainee at Warwick. However, as the memoirs point out, this was not so much a training in film distribution as one in film production, and
Nöggerath junior became a laboratory employee and cameraman. In 1900 he married an English actress, Eleanor Fox, aka 'Nellie Hope', and all their children were born in England. According to his memoirs, Nöggerath left Warwick in 1903, at the same time as Charles Urban left and formed his own company. Nöggerath however returned to Warwick the following year, and in 1906 he started his own company, printing and developing negatives for others. After 1903 he also worked for Arthur Melbourne-Cooper, in whose films he acted. According to Geoffrey Donaldson and Tjitte De Vries, Nöggerath acted in The Motor Pirate (1905), and his daughter Amanda (b. 1906) appeared in Noah's Ark (1909). She was the fourth of his five children, and was born in St. Albans, where Melbourne-Cooper was active.

When Nöggerath senior died on 21 December 1908, his son returned to the Netherlands. De Vries suggests that Nöggerath junior might have stayed in St. Albans until 1910 or 1911. However it seems unlikely to me that he stayed in Britain after the death of his father. It is true that (as historian Luuk Bruins states) Nöggerath senior’s wife ran the Flora even before her husband died, and staff members like Johann Vierboom ran the cinema. So after he took over the business Anton junior’s presence was only needed for the engagement of artists and the import and export of film (as his father had done before him). But he was responsible for the purchase of film and his distribution notably expanded in 1910 and maybe even before that. Also he produced in 1909 the Dutch film De Greep. As it was a star-vehicle for the famous stage actor Louis Bouwmeester (adapted from a popular play that Bouwmeester had previously appeared in for Nöggerath) I find it hard to imagine that Nöggerath was not in the Netherlands during the production of this film.

So Nöggerath junior was back in the Netherlands in 1909, and together with his stepmother Lily Nöggerath-Alscher, he managed a number of entertainment venues: the Amsterdam based...
Flora; another variety theatre in The Hague also called Flora that opened in January 1909; and the new cinema his father had opened in Amsterdam in September 1907, the Bioscope-Theater. This was one of the first purpose-built cinema theatres in the Netherlands. After a false start in the years 1907–1910, when in an effort to attract patrons it had to show more theatre and vaudeville than films, in the 1910s with the rise of the feature film the Bioscope-Theater became one of the leading cinemas of Amsterdam. It always offered first class musical accompaniment, and lectures were also given with the films. When prestigious films like Quo Vadis? were screened, there would be a large orchestral accompaniment.

Nöggerath junior soon enlarged his father’s distribution branch and became one of the four main distributors of the early 1910s in the Netherlands, together with the Dutch branch of Pathé, Jean Desmet, and Johan Gildemeijer. He was responsible for the introduction of Italian films around 1908–1909, for the massive presence on Dutch screens of the productions of Gaumont, Vitagraph, Éclair and others, and for the promotion of feature films. He was soon equalled in this by Jean Desmet, an ex-travelling cinema owner, who had opened cinemas in Rotterdam (1909) and Amsterdam (1910), quickly to be followed by others.

Nöggerath did not forget his film production training in Britain though, and in 1911 opened a small glass film studio (7.5 x 12 m), in an area called Vreedelust, just outside Amsterdam. He engaged the stage actors Caroline van Dommelen, Cees Lageman, Louis Chrispijn junior and others. Actors like Chrispijn and Van Dommelen often directed their own productions, Van Dommelen thus becoming one of the first female film directors in Holland. Nöggerath’s productions were a potpourri of historical dramas, modern dramas and comedies. He even managed to engage the famous stage actors Louis Bouwmeester and Theo-Mann-Bouwmeester to play in films like Koning Oedipus (1912) and Onschuldig veroordeeld (1912), but the films were ruthlessly criticised by the press.
fortunately none of these productions have survived, except for De Greep (filmed in 1909, before the studio was built) and a fragment of a comedy with the popular comedian Buziau. Apparently at the end of 1913 Nöggerath halted his work in film production. The whole production adventure had been a financial disaster and a harsh lesson, and thereafter the Dutch in general invested in film exhibition and film trade, but not in filmmaking.

By this time Nöggerath’s activities included printing Dutch intertitles for the foreign films he distributed in a studio in Amsterdam. He also provided this service for his competitors like Jean Desmet. From 1913 however, Nöggerath concentrated on the release of blockbusters like Quo Vadis?, The Last Days of Pompei and L’Enfant de Paris (all 1913) as well as the Italian diva films, and other prestigious productions like Max Reinhardt’s The Miracle and Griffith’s Judith of Bethulia.

By 1918, the year of these memoirs, the market had changed considerably. Nöggerath was no longer the main film distributor, nor the main film exhibitor. One of his last milestones in exhibition was the projection of Intolerance in the Flora. This special release, in a theatre instead of a cinema, was a method used before with other prestigious films like From the Mangero to the Cross. Intolerance however was distributed by a newcomer on the Dutch scene, Sun-film. New and aggressive distributors like Loet Barnstijn were taking over the market. Under the name of ‘Nordisk’, the Ufo took over from independent distributor Johan Gildemeijer, the main importer of German film. New cinemas were built. The German Ufa bought a large operetta theatre at the Rembrandtplein, an amusement venue at that time, and transformed it into the first cinema of over 1000 seats. In the same year Abraham Tuschinski cleared the ground for his picture palace, which, after many mishaps would eventually open in 1921, just a few doors away from Nöggerath’s Bioscope-Theater, in the same street.

Film had become institutionalised, an industry, and pioneers like Nöggerath had to satisfy themselves with a smaller share or they would simply have to quit, as happened to his rival Jean Desmet. Desmet sold the Cinema Palace, his main cinema in Amsterdam in that very year 1918 and advertised the sale of all his other cinemas too. He started a new life, in real estate.

Nöggerath concentrated his energy on his theatre business, staging big revues in the Flora: comic shows on popular themes, and with popular singers, comedians and lots of sing-a-long songs. In 1921 he stepped out of his distribution company FAN-Film, which continued under the same name under Piet Vermeer. In the late 1910s and early 1920s Nöggerath was successful with his large revue shows, but a few years later Fortune looked the other way. Because of the competition with cinemas and the ‘malaise’ in the theatre world, funds dried up. Nöggerath could no longer keep up the payments on his long lease and he went bankrupt. The city forced him to clear the theater in 1923 and the next year it was rented out to Luigi Difraen.

Nöggerath was forced to sell Flora and the cinema by auction on 21 December 1928. They were sold (together with his canal house behind it at the Herengracht) to Jean Desmet, who wanted to turn them, together with two adjacent canal houses, into a huge entertainment palace, containing a theatre/cinema of over 2000 seats, a roller-skating rink, a wintergarden restaurant and cafés. However, Flora and the popular adjacent Wiener Café burned down a few months later, on 12 February 1929. The building preparations dragged on, not least because of the huge lease payment that the city now demanded of Desmet, and the lack of interest from possible investors in the 1930s due to the financial crisis. The ruins of the Flora remained a memento mori for decades, until in the 1950s a new cinema, also called the Flora, replaced it. Nöggerath’s own cinema, the Bioscope-Theatre, renamed Theater Nöggerath in 1923, was first rented out to the Van Royen family, who ran several local cinemas in Amsterdam. After the war, in 1949, it was sold to the Tuschinski holding, who annexed the theatre as his own picture palace. Thus the cinema became part of the Tuschinski complex, even if it was well-known until the 1960s as the ‘Nöggerath’. Nöggerath himself had to start all over again, not so far from where he had begun with his travel films for Warwick. He ended up with a travel agency, only this time others would do the travelling.
Chapters from the life of a camera-operator

Related by Mr. Nöggerath...
Based on a series of interviews with Mr. Nöggerath who lived in England for 15 years.

Part 1 (De Kinematograaf 15 February 1918)

Work with Maguire & Baucus/Warwick Trading Company

Being an amateur photographer meant that I always had an interest in photography, so it won’t surprise you that when my father gave me the choice either to make a career in the ‘hotel business’ or in the ‘film business’ (then very new in this country) I immediately chose the latter. My old man thoroughly approved of my choice because he strongly believed the kinematograph would soon be a big success: in short he was very much in favour of it. I myself was more taken by the adventurous side (remember I was just 17 years old at the time, and had only recently come out of short trousers). So it was that I set off for London in December of the year 1897, with little more than basic clothing, my amateur knowledge of photography, and a few words of school English.

There I joined the firm of Maguire and Baucus (soon to be the Warwick Trading Company), of which Charles Urban was the managing director. At that time most films were American, but Maguire and Baucus were already busy making films themselves. The staff consisted of Cecil Hepworth, who had the entire dark room under his supervision and worked with a developing apparatus of his own invention. With this machine he could print, develop, wash, fix and rewash films. (To this day Cecil Hepworth still uses this same apparatus – though with some necessary improvements of course). Joe Rosenthal was the camera operator. They used the ‘Originators Bioscope’ which came from America. In those days we mainly used ‘Lumière fils’ raw stock, but we later changed to film stock from the Wrench Company, made in London.

My first daily tasks with Maguire and Baucus were fetching films, sweeping the floors and running errands! Not really very exciting, it’s true, but through this and that I soon came to be more ‘in touch’ with the company proper. When so young one is always very curious, and people said several times: ‘That bloody Dutchman is poking his nose into everything’.

But thanks to this curiosity, I soon had the chance of a break. I saw a film being shot by our company – the launching of the ‘Oceanic’ – and I was allowed to splice the negative. I should add that in those days all scenes were taken outdoors and were actualities. Dramatised scenes were practically unknown. The negatives were never longer than 50 or 55 feet and the cost was two shillings and six pence for every foot of film. The image was rarely steady.

Part 2 (De Kinematograaf 22 February 1918)

The films were mainly shown in music halls and in polytechnic institutions: for example in the Alhambra (Robert Paul’s films) and in the Empire (Lumière films from Paris, whose invention we will discuss later). These outlets still had a monopoly, but after six months the programmes became more general. The main title of the film was projected by a lantern slide, as subtitles or intertitles did not exist yet.

After some time I went out with the crew and was allowed to carry the camera (I was very proud of this indeed!), and to load the film in the camera and set the focus of the picture. Around the end of 1898 the aforementioned Joe Rosenthal went to South Africa for the Castle Line, to shoot promotional films for this shipping company. This gave me the opportunity to be actively involved in the cinema business, and prepare to do the camera work myself. The apprenticeship began.

In the meantime, Hepworth had left Warwick and started on his own. In collaboration with his cousin Wix (ie. Monty Wicks) he made the Hepwix films, which the older folks amongst us will remember. At the time the company was run very secretively and everybody was very tight-lipped, so making it very hard for outsiders to find out anything.

When Hepworth left, Rosenthal was asked to do his work, and I gained a little more freedom as well. However, we couldn’t use Hepworth’s inven-
tions any longer because he had taken them all with him. Therefore, we just had to develop and print films on square frames. How many metres did they take? From 50 to 60 m. The Wrench machines could load two of these frames. Something I now don't understand is, why at the time we shot 500-600 m of one event, but projected it in separate episodes of 30 m. (We often have films in episodes today – I guess that proves there is nothing really new under the sun!)

From the start the cinema in England was very well received. Besides the Wrench camera, there was the Lumière, the Edison and the Prestwish [Prestwich] apparatus. The Lumière device did not have many users, because every frame of the negative only had one circular perforation, as opposed to the familiar square one. Because of this and because the circular holes were placed so far from each other, it made the films unsuitable for many projectors. The Lumière machine however, after some alterations, proved very usefut as a printing apparatus. The Edison machine made so much noise that it was hardly ever used, whereas the Prestwish apparatus had many advantages over the rest: it was small, compact and light in weight, and in my opinion it would have been a real success if Prestwish had put more effort into it. I believe he sold it to Gaumont, because the present Gaumont machines, except for some improvements, are constructed exactly like the Prestwish model. As well as cameras Prestwish also made perforating and projecting machines. These latter had little success.

The Lumière frame was 2.5 cm in size, and 16 frames a second were taken, contrary to the ones (in those days not very satisfactory) First Green which was some 4 cm large running at 9 frames a second. Later (in 1901/1902) the Biograph apparatus had a picture size of 6 by 4 cm and did not use any perforations at all. The American Biograph-Mutoscope[e] projected an image 8 times as large as the others.

Fig. 7. Advertisement for the Prestwich camera. [From Hopwood’s Living Pictures (1899)]

Here episodes III and IV are missing. These probably contained information on Nöggerath’s travels through Great Britain and Ireland, and the first part of a story of how he filmed British naval manoeuvres and mock battles against an ‘enemy’ force. So part 5 here begins part way through the naval shoot.

British naval manoeuvres.
Part 5 (De Kinematograaf 15 March 1918)

After taking the shot of the collision I suffered a disaster! ... The whistle was blown to indicate the test firing was to begin, and the gun crew ran to their positions, knocking aside anything that was in their way – including me, my camera, my film boxes, everything! All my work, which had taken
such an effort, went to the dogs. Did I look happy! Also my film box broke open, and all the undeveloped film spooled out over the deck.

After that event the Commander showed up. He saw me wearily gathering my things together and asked me what had happened (‘what is the matter?’). I told him of my misfortune, and he immediately knew how to cheer me up. He called for one of his sailors and ordered him to fix up my camera and my film boxes. And I have to admit that this fellow accomplished his task so splendidly that almost the following day I could shoot again.

The sixth day we filmed the loading of coal, a terribly dirty job, during which everybody looked like a negro. The work took 5–6 hours, and I managed to take some interesting shots of it.

The following night my sleep was suddenly disturbed by heavy shooting on the ship. I suspected some sensation and so I rushed, half dressed, towards the deck, where a rare and beautiful spectacle was awaiting me. All the search lights of the whole squadron shone over the water, and the guns fired constantly at something—I saw for a little while the stern of an enemy torpedo-boat destroyer. The noise continued for another half an hour, and then peace returned, and I went back to my little cot.

The seventh day, as we steamed along, was the well-merited biblical day of rest, while on the eighth day at breakfast I received a sensational message: ‘The enemy is in sight.’ And puffing out my chest, I declared with boyish pluck: ‘I am not afraid!’ Still full of excitement I prepared my camera. However, the enemy was, to my great astonishment... invisible. I positioned myself on the Commander’s bridge and tried to chat with the officers, but had to search for the enemy with my own binoculars. Some little clouds of smoke on the horizon betrayed their presence. That was ten o’clock in the morning. It would take another half hour before we would reach them, so I went below decks to have my breakfast at leisure. At four in the afternoon we manoeuvred into position, and at half past four we were drawn up in battle-array opposite each other. However, my entire filming of the fight was a failure. I succeeded with the preparations for the fight, but of the battle itself nothing at all! Every time the gun was fired right under me, the film in my camera BROKE (which I still can’t understand), so that I only managed to film bits and pieces.

After this big battle, in which two of our own ships including my own, the ‘Gibraltar’, failed to survive, and we were considered to have gone down with all hands, we had to hoist the ‘Blue Peter’ and return to our harbour. After two days of rest there we started the journey back to England, and soon I was in Portland.23

Here episode number 6 is missing. It probably related the story of the first part of Nögerath’s trip with the trawler ‘Nile’ to the Bay of Biscay.

Fig. 8. Jack’s Game of Cricket on Board HMS. ‘Gibraltar’ (Warwick Trading Co., 1900). Probably shot by Nögerath junior. [Collection NFTVA. (See endnote 23)]
Fishing in the bay of Biscay, a football-match and trying to film a car-crash. Part 7 (De Kinematograaf 29 March 1918)

Nöggerath describes his life aboard ship during a fishing expedition in the Bay of Biscay. Amongst other things he films the landing of a shark of about 3 metres in length. He enjoys the trip apart from the fact that it is very slippery aboard. The film was apparently well received, Walter Gibbons, the British distributor, sending a letter of appreciation dated 8 July 1901, noted, ‘...and your fishing subjects are also very fine’.25

After I had shot the fishing film, I stayed mainly in a number of provincial towns in order to film actualities there, such as Southampton, Newcastle, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool, etc.26 I recall that at about that time I did a remarkable piece of filming.

Competition among cameramen – as I have already pointed out – already existed in those days. In this case it was between the Bio-Tableaux and the Warwick companies.27 A football match was to take place at the Crystal Palace grounds – the final. Warwick and Bio-Tableaux both had special permission from the Crystal Palace management to take the necessary shots. As we knew that all Warwick’s competitors would be there on this occasion, we took the necessary measures beforehand and brought our camera to the changing-rooms of the players by six o’clock in the morning. In order to have a successful shoot, we had already held a ‘council of war’ beforehand, and everything was prepared down to the smallest details. In addition I knew the terrain already as I had already shot the rugby finals for two years. So the game could begin.

Part 8 (De Kinematograaf 5 April 1918)

By around two o’clock some ninety thousand people were already present. I knew many football players, and so I already had something of a beat on Warwick’s competitor [That is, the man from Bio-Tableaux]. Shortly before his arrival on the field, I showed up with my camera and placed myself in front of the entrance in order to film the players. That very much annoyed my adversary (Mr. Every, nowadays with the Kineto Ltd.).28 He immediately tried to have me expelled from the field by a police officer, but no one wanted to assist him, because they were too busy doing other things.

In the meantime, stifling a chuckle at my competitor’s lost opportunity, I looked for a place to record the match. It really was my lucky day! Whenever I stood, everywhere I had ‘bonne chance’. Three ‘goals’ were scored, and all three were ‘snapshot’ by me! The second goal created a gigantic furor. The crowd danced like madmen, enthusiastically waving their hats, handkerchiefs, bonnets, and sticks. The whole scene was recorded by me. Such a football match had never before been recorded on film, and probably never will be again (this was recently confirmed by my colleagues at Ruffles).29

My next ‘big event’ was a voyage to Iceland. But before that I had to do a job for the management of the well known Drury Lane Theatre (London). In that theatre a play entitled Hearts are Trumps was to be performed, in which a car would fall over a cliff and crash. I was asked to take a panoramic shot [i.e. tracking shot from the car] of the road and of a car, which would appear to tumble down the cliff and into the sea. A car with chauffeur arrived from London: I still remember how the whole of Plymouth seemed to look on it as some kind of marvel. They had not seen a car before in the city! However, in spite of all my preparations – me with my camera on a plank, attached firmly to the wing and partly to the seat of the car, on which we securely fastened the panoramic head (inspected thoroughly beforehand) that would topple over nicely with the tumbling, which firmly held the ‘organ case’ [i.e. camera] next to my companion, on what the modern motorist would look upon as a very primitive car – it didn’t work. That is: my companion, at the very last moment, did not want to risk his skin!

The article adds: ‘The usual bad luck of a work-loving cameraman. We can see the despair reflected in Mr. Nöggerath’s eyes ...’. From Nöggerath’s description it is not entirely clear what exactly was involved in this car crash shoot.

The whole trick did not happen! The beautifully made fake rock with which we would collide with some speed, then put on the brakes suddenly, turn the panoramic-head, shoot the parts of the car
prepared earlier (a professional secret revealed!!) – the sensation itself! Because ‘our mutual friend’ refused, did not dare to do it, with what he called those ‘imperfect’ brakes ... [The article adds: ‘Such a villain’, the interviewer sighed, who would have loved!! to give its readers a real piece of sensation in these sensation-less times ...’] I got a shot of the road though, which more or less gave an idea of what was intended, but I’m sorry to say that it did not meet my principals’ requirement. The play was put on, for Heaven’s sake, without ‘the crashing car’.30

Across Iceland

In September of that same year (1901) I took a trip to Iceland.31 We departed on the trawler Nile from Hull, and completed the journey in five days. During the journey I filmed some minor fishing activities, and a scene in which the fishermen hosed each other down, in order to get rid of some of the fish odor and the slimy material which they picked up during the landing of the catch. When screened shortly afterwards this film entertained audiences greatly, and masses of copies were sold. Everybody talked about it! In Holland too some might remember this film.

Nöggerath has to land in Iceland by rowing boat because of an international fishery law prohibiting fishing vessels within 5 miles of the coast. With the help of a local teacher he reaches Reykjavik.

Upon my arrival I put up at the only hotel of any significance. I looked around the town for two or three days, to see what there was. During this time the above mentioned teacher gave me a lot of information and help, and I decided to make a trip right across the island from South to North, and to shoot the most important attractions.

The teacher introduced me to one of his students, who served as my guide. On his advice first of all I bought some five ponies (it is better in Iceland to buy these little horses – costing pst. 4 to pst. 5 each – rather than to hire them) and with these, and armed with my camera, I went to seek my Icelandic adventures.

Part 9 (De Kinematograaf 12 April 1918)

On a Sunday afternoon, after I had bought the ponies in the morning, I went out for a short test ride. I chose therefore the best pony for myself, and then there was one for my guide, one spare and two for carrying luggage (the pack-ponies). The following Monday, at seven in the morning, we departed on our journey through Iceland, and headed first for Thingwallr [Thingvellir] a distance of about 25 km.

Nöggerath stays overnight at a farm, where he is appalled by the primitive housing and the foul smell of semi-rotten food. The next morning he has to catch the ponies that have wandered away, and then continues to Mount Hekla, a volcano.

When we arrived at Mount Hecla [Hekla] it was a great disappointment for me to see the mountain so calm and quiet. I immediately got the impression that my journey had been in vain. When I climbed to the top of Hecla with my camera, in the crater I could see nothing but snow. We set up the tents nearby for our stay that night, and the following day we continued our journey, having seen nothing worth mentioning.

Part 10 (De Kinematograaf 19 April 1918)

Our goal now was the Big Geyser [Geysir], which we reached after travelling two days. Here I put up
in the Grand Hotel, called ‘The Geyser’. This hotel can be pictured as a little wooden house with eight to ten bedrooms, all very small – the size of a bathroom. [...] The next day I took off to inspect what could be filmed, but when I arrived at my destination, the daylight had faded already.

From the hotel terrace one had a view over a vast plain, and at a distance of about 500 ft the Big Geyser stood, shrouded in steam. I say ‘stood’, because it gave the impression of a giant mushroom. On our right a small hot water fountain called ‘The Little Devil’, was busy spurting (every five, ten or twenty minutes), and sometimes the columns of water reached a height of 5–6 m. I filmed this the next day, as well as a panorama of the surroundings.

In the meantime the Big Geyser just stood there, as innocent as a newborn babe. The second day again nothing happened. I was really waiting for it! In the morning I watched the direction of the wind, placing my camera so that I had the wind behind me (sometimes I had to move it five to six times a day). But in the evening I could dismantle it again; nothing needed to be done.

But that night I was woken from my sleep by a terrible rumbling. The entire hotel trembled and the wash tubs tinkled. My guide, who naturally had been wakened by the noise too, came to me immediately with the words: ‘The Geyser is spurting’. I hurriedly pulled on my clothes and ran outside. I still heard the heavy roar and the rushing of the water... I waited... after ten minutes again the usual nocturnal silence. I waited one hour more, two hours, three hours... again in vain. The Geyser had only ‘spurted’ a bit. Naturally I looked very disappointed, but my guide promised me: ‘Tomorrow it will surely happen!’

So again I was up early, placed my camera, and installed a chair next to it, in order to wait for the right moment. ... And fortunately enough my guide was right. At about three in the afternoon, after a terrible roar and shaking of the earth, the Geyser spurted: a magnificent sight, almost indescribable, and of which the first 30 m of film were splendidly successful. Large clouds of steam followed, which soon covered me too, obscuring the shot, so that I soon had to stop filming. After the Geyser was active for a quarter of an hour we dared to move closer to it.

I placed my camera on the edge of the Geyser, in order to take a shot of the crater (to imagine how the crater looked, think of a very large basin, with an opening in the middle) in which one saw water boiling. And we nearly lost our lives due to our curiosity, because right at the moment when we had filmed the crater and interior, we suddenly heard a terrible rumbling, and my guide yelled: ‘Quickly, away from here’. Carrying my camera on my shoulders, we ran as fast as we could, escaping just in time! Then all of a sudden the Geyser went up again at full speed, and spurted; we hadn’t left a second too early. The risks of the film-cameraman... But I had achieved my goal: the Big Geyser had been filmed! ...

That same night Nöggerath was sitting outside when he saw the Northern Lights, a most impressive sight.

Part 11 (De Kinematograaf 26 April 1918)

The day after my narrow escape from death (getting shots of the Grand Geyser) we left for the Gullfoss to film the waterfalls there. After riding some six hours, we had them in our sights, but on the way we had to negotiate some harrowing places, so were still not free from danger. While crossing the river, which was rather deep, we had to sit on our knees on the saddles of our ponies, while these animals tried to swim to the other side. We truly looked like cowboys, and every time I see riders in the pictures, it reminds me of my Icelandic trip.

Although the waterfalls presented a very nice view, films had already been taken of Niagara Falls and similar images of nature, so they were of no interest. After having camped there one night, we left to shoot the ‘sheep-herding’. For this we had to travel two days and we arrived late in the evening.

Nöggerath sleeps in a cave, together with some shepherds, who offer him rotten food (again) and play music. In spite of it all, he does off.

When I woke up the next morning, my first job was to look around for what might be appropriate for the cinema. The first thing that struck me were dozens of large folds (pens), in which thousands and thousands of sheep were kept. Hundreds of farmers moved among them, looking for the brand of their own sheep, in order to transport these ani-
mals to a separate field, during which some were carried, others pulled. A lot of noise.

Around ten I had my camera ready to take my shots: the arrival of the sheep with their shepherds, the herding of these animals into the folds, the farmers searching for their own animals, the owners on the road to their farms with their sheep, the traffic around the wagons, the party – especially dancing. All this was filmed by me. Other incidents occurred during our trip, but these were unimportant as far as filming goes, and the next day we returned to Reykjavik.

Part 12 (De Kinematograaf 3 May 1918)

From Reykjavik I made several minor trips, among others to the ‘sulphur mines’ where I took several shots (showing a hard crust of earth on marshy soil which is tilled). Also I filmed the so-called flounders (known here as ‘dabs’, a fish that is dried on stone in the open air) and the salting of a part of the flesh of a whale which is consumed as food. Some other minor incidents, which I also saw, were filmed at the same time.32

Nöggerath misses the last boat to Britain for that season. But the reputation of his fishing film and two bottles of whiskey convince the captain of a trawler to give him passage. Nöggerath even functions as steersman, although almost collides with another ship.

Coronation of King Haakon of Norway. Part 13 (De Kinematograaf 17 May 1918)

After 1901 things were relatively quiet for me, partly because I was mainly working in the dark room for about a year and a half, though naturally I shot some actualities in between. In 1903 I joined the ‘Automatograph Co. Ltd.’,33 but I returned again to Warwick in 1904, where my main job was working in the dark room.

Early in 1906, when I was working for myself, I received a request from somebody with whom I

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Fig. 10. Anton Nöggerath struggling with his tripod at the filming of King Haakon’s coronation festivities in Trondheim (1906). [Front Nieuw Weekblad voor de Cinematografie, 1935]
did business, a certain Mr. Krause, to shoot the coronation ceremony of King Haakon in Trondheim, Norway. I agreed to do so.34

My employer would arrange everything: good seats, facilities, etc. etc., and promised to pay me a good price. It was arranged that what I shot that day would be projected the same evening (I would take along with me my developing dishes and two tентers as part of my luggage). Needless to say I accepted this trip only too eagerly.

We were almost shipwrecked off the Norwegian coast — in a fjord we ran on to a rock-shelf, but as the ships that sail in Norway are apparently prepared for these accidents (they possess a double bottom) we remained unharmed. Still we were grounded for three hours and the ship started to list dreadfully, but as the land was very close and I could swim rather well, the event didn’t frighten me. Most other passengers though were very worried.

Arriving in Trondheim, I was expected and was picked up from the harbour. Trondheim is a peculiar old Norwegian city, and the Cathedral where the coronation ceremony would take place, dates from the year 900.35 It had just been restored. Most buildings in T. are of timber, and the city is surrounded by mountains. In summertime there is continuous daylight: I went to bed with the sun shining through one window, and I awoke with it shining through the other one.

Naturally the coronation ceremony was an event of great consequence, and many visitors couldn’t get a roof over their head let alone a hotel room. The second day of my arrival I went to a kind of community building where cinema shows were given, and where two big rooms were put at my disposal for developing the films. As I mentioned before, I had taken tентers and developing trays with me, but I also needed to find a large washing tub for developing, and a fresh water supply, and a dryer (a turnable drying-rack). A washing tub was quickly found, and just as quickly a serviceable drying-rack was constructed from some shelves and some nails. Two large gas-stoves were added, and in a day and a half I was ready to begin. To test my ‘installation’, in order to see if everything worked, I took some shots of Trondheim: street scenes, a ride on the tram, the waterfalls (which supply the electricity for the power-station etc.). After shooting this I developed and dried it, and was easily ready to be able to show the films the same day of the shooting.

In the following days other camera-operators arrived: Mr. Black for Gaumont, Mr. Barker of the Warwick Trading Co. at the time, and Mr. Ole Olsen, a Dane by nationality.36 Two days before the coronation ceremony, King Haakon came into town, accompanied by his spouse and the prince. They were ‘shot’ by the cameramen: the four of us stood there cranking. All the cameramen from London positioned ourselves next to each other: at some distance away we saw somebody totally unknown to us, also in position. His camera looked like a cigar box to which a crank was attached. While waiting I went over to the great unknown, whose mysterious equipment interested me even more than the person. I introduced myself, at which he mentioned his name to me too: Ole Olsen from Copenhagen, accompanied by his small servant (who made a rather poor impression on us).

In the meantime the King was spotted, so I hastily returned to my camera. During the ceremony I stood near Ole Olsen a few more times, while Mr. Barker, as a real ‘businessman’, even tried to sell him a decent camera, but in vain. Ole Olsen is none other than the founder of the Nordisk Films Co. 37 When I was later (in 1913) shown round the Nordisk studio in Copenhagen by Mr. Ole Olsen himself, I again met his servant — the ugly little chap from way back when — who was now the leading cameraman at Nordisk.38 Needless to say we recalled our old memories of Trondheim on the earlier occasion. This just shows how from small beginnings better things can later come.39

My shots of the coronation ceremony turned out to be very successful and were shown the very same evening. I also made an extra copy to take with me to London, which was screened the day of my arrival, at a matinee in the afternoon.40

Queen Victoria. Part 14 (De Kinematograaf 14 June 1918)

The interviewer asks Nögerath to relate some details about the relationship of the British royal family with early cinematography.

In general Queen Victoria was quite willing to have herself photographed.41 I have an interesting recollection of her 70th birthday (actually it was
Queen Victoria’s 80th birthday, when a huge party assembled at Windsor. Through the assistance of the court photographers Russell & Sons, I had managed to get permission to film these events. Already early on the morning of the festivities, we, that is Russell with his snapshot camera and I with my film camera, presented ourselves at the palace of Windsor (i.e. Windsor Castle). After passing through many underground passages, this way and that, we arrived at last in a large hall, from which we had an excellent view of the private apartments of the Queen through one of the windows, at a distance of about 25 m. When we arrived she was just having her breakfast. I was rather surprised to discover that Queen Victoria was clearly an invalid and not able to walk any more. She was regularly assisted in everything by her inseparable Indian servants. And to think that England’s Queen at that time was always presented in photos, in magazines, in newspapers, etc. as (free) walking and (free) standing!

In the same room was the Crown Princess Alexandra, and Queen Victoria’s grandchildren. They all fell victim to the cinema. Later on I filmed the serenade of the choral society, after which H.M., seated in a bath chair (invisible to the audience), expressed her gratitude. The chair with its precious load was moved around by the Indian servants. In the afternoon I took a shot of the Queen as she took a ride through the park in her special little cart, the pony being led by a Scotsman. [This was John Brown.] This shot had to be taken under difficult circumstances, because I didn’t want H.M. to notice it happening, and so I had to position my camera hidden in the bushes. Nevertheless the shot [it says: the photo] came out alright.

After our task was completed, we were led back through the underground passages and arrived in the glass house where palm trees grew; next to this was the ‘dark room’ of Crown Princess Alexandra (who was an enthusiastic photographer!). My heart beat faster at the sight of such a splendidly equipped dark room, where H.R.H. herself developed the plates, etc. It was very tempting to develop my film there, but my guide thought it better not to do so.

After this I shot at Buckingham Palace several times, including a visit of the German Emperor. For this, the cortège passed along Oxford Street, where, opposite Maple & Co. a banner was stretched tightly across the street, on which these – in those times so meaningful – words were written: ‘Blood is thicker than water’. Thanks to the fact that I was favourably placed, these words were later very clearly visible on my film.

With Hale’s Tours to France and Italy.
Part 15 (De Kinematograaf 27 December 1918).

Note the gap of six months since the last episode was published, due to Nögerath suffering a bout of ‘flu.

At about this time I also received an offer – and certainly not an unimportant one – from Hale’s Tours, a company which specialised in taking actualities. For this company I took a shot sitting on the front of a locomotive – this shot was later shown in a hall like a railway compartment, that was moved as if it were a train carriage. Some readers will remember this spectacle, as it was put on at the time at the Entos ground too.

My first work had mainly been in the dark rooms; later I was travelling too. One of those trips took me to France, Monaco, Italy and Germany, a very interesting tour. This trip, organised by F. Cook, [i.e. Thomas Cook, the well known British tour company] was awarded as a prize by the Evening News to thirteen young ladies who collected the largest share of coupons from that newspaper.

So it was that in April 1908 I went in the company of these young ladies and an interpreter, armed with my camera, from London to Paris. I took some shots of them boarding the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry and of the amusements aboard, and also getting into the train.

Late on Saturday night we arrived in the French capital and stayed in the Hotel Palais d’Orsay. We stayed a few days in Paris to visit different attractions, and drove for this reason in a so-called char-à-banc around the ‘ville-lumière’ (naturally I carried my inseparable camera everywhere), while after another night of rest, the Mediterranean Express carried us on Monday morning to Monte Carlo. There we stayed some two days, enjoying all the attractions as well as the sights outside and inside the Casino – the famous gambling tables – and continued by rail after this to-
wards Rome, where we spent another four days and lodged in the Hotel Continental, a superb building. In Rome, it goes without saying, I was very busy with my camera, and ran no less than 800 m through the machine.

From Rome they went to Naples, and from there to Vesuvius and Pompei.

Part 16 (De Kinematograaf 3 January 1919)

Nöggerath describes the ruins in Pompeii, buried under lava in 79 A.D., paying especial attention to the original drainage system.

I took shots of a few things – panoramic shots of the streets, of the ruins, etc. Our next walk led us to the museum and the different objects that I saw there proved to me again, that there’s nothing new under the sun. Take for instance the locks I saw there. They were in those days already so perfect, so finely worked with their fine details, that even today they could not make them better. Then there were water taps and pipes that were finished with so much eye for detail (e.g. in the joints in the lead pipes), that no modern craftsman could improve on them.

Next we got an impression of the terrible circumstances under which Pompei had perished. I’m sure you have already heard of the petrified dog, which shows the pain it experienced when it was buried under the boiling lava. Well, this statue best shows what man and animal suffered when the eruption took place. In the museum one could also see petrified male and female bodies, which were placed in glass coffins so that one could see the corpses (which were of course totally naked) from below too. I filmed all these things.

Nöggerath goes on to describe a wine merchant’s house, a bakery and a fountain in the streets.

We also visited a patrician’s house, where the rooms were still perfectly intact. In the middle was the garden, surrounded by a colonnade and from which different rooms led off. These rooms were painted in a remarkably beautiful way and depicted the household, the collecting of fruit etc. I now have copies of these paintings – all painted lengthwise – hanging on the wall in my place. The kitchen in this house gave us an idea of the enormous speed with which the city was buried, as we could even see the roast chicken still in the pot hanging over the fire. Now we passed a part of the city where sheer lewdness reigned. This was not accessible to the ladies, but after I had completed all my shots, I went there to have a look. And there one could get an idea of the great depravity of the public in those days. Houses still stand where one can see in writing and in images how they had sexual intercourse and how the senses were stimulated and depraved. For understandable reasons I cannot dwell upon this any further.48

De Kinematograaf notes that their reporter heard a lot of this from Nöggerath, but demurely ignored most of it when writing this article.

However, this part of the city is now no longer accessible to the public. And with this also our visit to Pompei ends.49

At the bottom of the article it says ‘to be continued’, but in the surviving numbers of De Kinematograaf which follow, no further episodes of the Nöggerath-recollections can be traced. In fact in the introduction to Nöggerath’s memoirs it was stated that they would finish with an account of his visit to France and Italy, which is indeed how this episode 16 ends, suggesting that it was indeed the last part.

Much of the information to accompany these memoirs was generously given to me by Rommy Albers (Filmmuseum), Eggert Bernhardsson, Ansje van Beusekom, Herbert Birett, Stephen Bottomore, Luuk Bruins, Thomas Christensen (Danish Film Institute), Geoffrey Donaldson, Rob Du Mée, Nicholas Hilley (BUFVC), Ilse Hughan, Luke McKernan (BFI/NFTVA), Bodvar Bjarki Petursson (Kvöymundasafn Islands), Mrs. B.W. van Royen-Fontaine, Casper Tybjerg, Tjitte de Vries. Ine van Dooren translated the first two episodes. Stephen Bottomore helped me to correct my English. Thorgeir Gudlaufsson translated the Icelandic article. Thank you all, especially Geoffrey Donaldson, Stephen Bottomore and Luke McKernan.

Important secondary literature dealing with Nöggerath is: Ruud Bishoff, Hollywood in Holland. De geschiedenis van de Filmfabriek Hollandia 1912-1923 (Haarlem: Toth, 1988), 15–16; the same Bishoff in his chapter on Dutch silent cinema in: Karel Dibbets/ Frank Van der Maden (eds.), Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse film en
bioscoop tot 1940 (Houten: Wereldvenster, 1986), 56–64; Geoffrey Donaldson’s magnum opus Of Joy and Sorrow (Amsterdam: Filmmuseum, 1997); and his earlier article on Nöggerath senior in the series ‘Wie is wie in de Nederlandse film tot 1930’, in: Skrien 128 (1983), 34–36; and finally the Masters thesis of Luuk Bruins, De programmering van film als variéténnummer door Franz Anton Nöggerath sr. (Utrecht: University of Utrecht, 1998). I should also mention the reprint of Nöggerath junior’s Ons Bioscopisch bedrijf voorheen en thans (1911, reprinted in 1975, with a foreword by Ruud Bishoff). But just as important are contemporary sources such as the business archive of Jean Desmet, now at the Filmuseum and containing reams of letters and accounts from Nöggerath; trade papers and newspapers; a clippings book owned by Rob Du Mée with ads for Flora and the Bioscoop-Theater from now lost issues of newspapers and fairground magazines; some films of Nöggerath senior and junior (far too few); and one modern source: the Filmuseum’s database on early cinema in Amsterdam.

Notes


3. For a long time, it was believed that no films of Nöggerath senior were available anymore. However, together with Rommy Albers (Filmmuseum) I discovered that some Dutch actuality films at the Filmuseum from the years 1900–1903, previously ascribed to the Mullens brothers, actually are probably all Nöggerath productions, such as the Wedding Ceremony of Queen Wilhelmina and Prince Hendrik (1901) [this film was also advertised in the Warwick catalogues], Maas-Bridge at Rotterdam (1899), Masquerade Festivities at Utrecht (1901), Arrival of Paul Kruger in Rotterdam (1901), Arrival of the Boer Generals (1902) [the translations of the titles are mine]. Geoffrey Donaldson has claimed that all the films shown in the Rotterdam music hall Casino at the turn-of-the-century, including all the above-mentioned titles, were made by Stefan Hofbauer. This probably has to be reduced to all the films shot in Rotterdam and even then they might have been commissioned by Nöggerath. Geoffrey Donaldson, ‘Film in Rotterdam/ De eerste jaren. Stefan Hofbauer in Rotterdam’, in: Skrien 98 (1980), 36–41. The NFTVA has an actuality film of Nöggerath senior too, previously identified as a Warwick production: The Hook of Holland Disaster (1907) or as it was called in the Netherlands De Ramp met de SS. Berlin bij Hoek van Holland.

4. The Warwick catalogues mention the shots of the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland (1898), of her visits to Rotterdam and Amsterdam (1899), and of her Royal Wedding in The Hague (1901).


6. The Motor Pirate was distributed under various titles like The Motor Valet, Motor Pirates and Raid of an Armoured Motor Car. The film was bought by Walturdaw amongst others. E.G. Turner of Walturdaw claimed later that he sold hundreds of copies to the United States. The criminals in the film operate in a tank-shaped armoured car, not unlike those in science-fiction cartoons or in Jules Verne’s tales.

7. Nöggerath when in London, seems to have lived in Richmond.

8. Perhaps he kept two addresses until 1911, one in St. Albans and one in Amsterdam? Perhaps his family didn’t come over immediately? On the other hand the introduction to Nöggerath’s memoirs states that he had been in England for 15 years, implying a later date of returning to Holland.


10. See for Nöggerath’s studio: De Kunst 193 (1911), 7–8. For the films produced there: De Kunst 239 (1912), 748–749. On the occasion of the jubilee of an employee of the Nöggeraths, Peter Gronen, De Kunst described the development of the activities of the Nöggerath family up to that moment: De Kunst 247 (1912), 45–46.

11. Accounts and correspondence for these intertitles can be found in the Desmet business archive, at the Filmuseum.

12. Beautiful blueprints for the ‘Flora Palace’, as it was called, by architect Jan Wils, renowned for being responsible for the Olympic Stadium (1928) and the City Theatre (1933) are still in the possession of Desmet’s family.

13. Nowadays it is the fashionable discotheque.
14. Interview with Mrs. B.W. van Rosayn-Fontaine, 4 October 1994. Nøggerath's son Cecil was for a while employed as projectionist in De Munt, a cinema once owned by Desmet but in between the wars by Van Rosayn, and in the former cinema of his father. Later on he married a programme seller and left for the United States.

15. After he had lost all his possessions and capital, Anton Nøggerath was forced to work with travel agency Lissone. After that, he had his own travel agency, called Record, until 1936. The Second World War ended all this. Information from Geoffrey Donaldson to the author, 9 September 1994, partly based on Donaldson's correspondence with Nøggerath's son Cecil.

16. It is not clear what this means — it may simply refer to the Bioscope camera, associated with Charles Urban.


18. The Oceanic was launched on 14 January 1899, an event covered by two films in the Warwick catalogue, each entitled Launch of the Oceanic. Reportedly Charles Urban had arranged an exclusive with the Harland and Wolff shipbuilders of Belfast to film the construction of the liner over two years (1897-99), and then the launch itself. The catalogue does not mention the construction scenes, if they were ever made, and the film was not in the end an exclusive. The Filmuseum owns a version of the launching by the American Mutoscope & Biograph Company. Barnes (4), 234.


20. Regarding Prestwich see e.g. Barnes (2), 51-64, Barnes (3), 112-122.

21. It is not clear what Nøggerath means by this. The Friese-Greene camera — if this is what is being referred to here — never had any hope of commercial use. The speed of 9fps sounds about right though. Herbert/McKernan (1996), 53-54.

22. Actually Biograph were making films on this wide film from 1897.

23. The Naval Manoeuvres series of 1900 comprised the following titles in the Warwick catalogue: The Attacking Fleet off Ireland, The Defending Fleet at Berehaven, Manning and Lowering Ship's Boat from the Deck of HMS. Gibraltar, Arrival of the Small Boat — Raising Same with the Crew on Board Ship, Off for a Land Attack, Jack at Play, Jack's Game of Cricket on Board HMS. Gibraltar, Jack at Work, Jack Scrubs his Hammock, Serving out the Groag, Hoisting Guns into Position, Jack of the Guns, Marines'Drill with Quick-Firing Guns, Bluejackets'Drill with Heavy Guns, Firing Heavy Guns from a Cruiser, Firing Guns from a Fort. The NFTVA owns Jack's Game of Cricket on Board HMS. 'Gibraltar', surely a film by Nøggerath. The description of the film in the Warwick Trading Company catalogue goes: 'Another game indulged in on board our battleships, showing the players battting with the shovel, using pails for wickets, &c. Everyone knows what a lively chap Jack is ashore, and we leave it to your imagination as to how he plays a game of cricket on the narrow decks of the vessel, further taking into consideration the rolling motion of the vessel, which makes this incident a most lively and humorous one.'

24. Walter Gibbons ran shows known as the Anglo-American Bio-Tableaux, and then as Gibbons' Bio-Tableaux. He had a close working relationship with Charles Urban, and hence with Warwick, the precise nature of which has yet to be researched. Gibbons however was suspected of foul play by Urban, believing him guilty of pirating dupes copies of Warwick films with the help of Anton Nøggerath. In his memoirs Urban wrote: 'This practice had been going on for a year [probably 1900-1901], but was operated so secretly that it was seven months before I was able to connect Thomas [A.D. Thomas, a well-known showman and rogue of the period] and Noggerath with Gibbons. I learnt that Noggerath, who was formerly employed by us in the laboratories, had suddenly left for Amsterdam...'. This is according to Urban's recollections, as kindly conveyed to me by Luke McKernan: Charles Urban, A Yank in Britain: Recounting Behind the Scenes of the Motion Picture Industry — Facts not generally Known (Who's Who and What's in the Early days of the Motion Picture Industry) (1942): soon to be published by The Projection Box. Gibbons ran the Poplar Hippodrome from June to October 1907, and, according to historian Barry Anthony, he had been a music hall singer at one time. For more on Gibbons' film career see: Barnes (3), 80-82, for Bio-Tableaux: Barnes (5), 113-115.

25. The Fishing Pictures series of 1901 comprised: Hauling the Nets, Hoisting the Catch Aboard, A Record Catch, Cleaning and Sorting the Catch, Sorting and Rinsing the Fish, Herring Boats Arriving at Grimsby, Landing a Catch of Herrings, Gutting Herrings at Grimsby, Loading Kippers for the London Market.

26. There are quite a number of Warwick films at this time shot in Liverpool e.g. Liverpool from River Mersey (1899), Glimpses on the Liverpool Overhead Railway (1900) and The Electric Trains of the Liverpool Overhead Railway (1900), but Nøggerath's remarks remain too vague.

27. In an interview with Walter Gibbons in The Magnet 4 May 1901, np., appears this exchange: 'What is
your latest subject?  The Tottenham Hotspur and the Sheffield United English Cup Final, of which I secured a grand film; indeed really the finest ever taken of a football match, and the size of which is three hundred and forty feet.' Gibbons's Bio Tableaux show was first presented in September 1900. See also The Magnet, 5 April 1902, 5.

28. This refers to John H. Avery, who worked as a cameraman for the Warwick Trading Company, travelling to film the Sultan of Morocco in around 1900 and to Australia in 1901. Then he stayed with Charles Urban when the latter split with Warwick, and Avery was still working as an actuality cameraman in 1907. See Supplement no. 1 to April 1901 Warwick Trading Company Catalogue, 263; Kinetograph & Lantern Weekly, 10 October 1907, 377.

29. Presumably meaning Ruffell's Exclusives, a British film company. The Football Association Cup Final was regularly held at the Crystal Palace ground at this time, and it can be suspected that Nöggerath refers to the 1901 final, between Sheffield United and Tottenham Hotspur. This was released as Football Match at Crystal Palace, and because the result was a draw Warwick also filmed Final for the English Cup, which showed the replay at Bolton. The NFTVA does not hold the Warwick film, but they do have Robert Paul's film of the replay.

30. This idea of a film insert into a theatrical production was to become quite common in the first twenty years of the cinema. Nöggerath has apparently confused two plays by Cecil Raleigh: Hearts are Trumps (September 1899) and The Great Millionaire (September 1901). Both were produced by Arthur Collins, and premiered at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, renowned at this time for spectacular productions, and both incorporated film projections courtesy of the American Biograph (or British Mutoscope and Biograph Company) from the Palace Theatre. But the relevant scene in Hearts are Trumps showed a film (a 'scinty-matter-graph') of a dance projected, which reveals the foolishness of one of the characters who appears in it. On the other hand the film scene in The Great Millionaire seems to correspond with Nöggerath's account, occurring in a scene showing a motor-car collision (which involved having a real car on stage). This was in Act 4, probably in scene 4 entitled 'The Road to Plymouth'. (Nöggerath mentions Plymouth in his account). The Showman (27 Sep 1901, 35) noted that the film showed 'the attempted escape of the great man's secretary, and his pursuit by Lord Deerwood on the Plymouth road.' The journal added that this film-assisted scene was one of the most popular features of the play, but that on the opening night it didn't work as well as expected. Another source claims that for this reason it was cut out after a few performances and 'the sensation was mechanically produced'. (Optical Lantern and Cinematograph Journal (August 1905); 214). See also programmes in the Theatre Museum, London and the manuscript of Hearts are Trumps in the Lord Chamberlain's collection, British Library.

31. In the Icelandic paper Thjódolur of 20 September 1901 (p.179) Nöggerath's presence was mentioned. He was said to be filming for Gibbons & Co. rather than Warwick. The paper commented that he had arrived too late for filming the whole catch and a group of tourists, but concluded that his work was nevertheless important for the promotion of tourism in Iceland. (The country was at this time being promoted as a tourist destination, and a number of travellers accounts and guidebooks were appearing.) Icelandic historian Eggert Bernhardsson considers that Nöggerath was probably the first person to have shot film in Iceland.

32. The films shot in Iceland were released as the Iceland Trawler series of 1902 (i.e. they were filmed in September 1901, but released in April 1902), comprising: Fishing and Pleasure Steamers under Headway, Fun on an Iceland Trawler, Landing and Cleaning a Catch, Cleaning the Fish ad Landing a Shark, Gathering Sheep, Women Cleaning Fish for Curing, Women Washing Clothes in Hot Springs. There was no mention in the catalogues of any geyser. Perhaps the shot was not successful? There is no evidence that the Iceland Trawler series was shown in Iceland, according to Bernhardsson.

33. This may refer to the Autoscope Company of Will Barker or the Automatic Cinograph of Cecil Wray.

34. Geoffrey Donaldson states that it was Melbourne-Cooper who sent Nöggerath to Norway in 1906 to film the coronation festivities of King Haakon in Trondheim. He bases this on an advertisement in the German trade paper Der Artist, in which the Alpha Trading Company (Melbourne-Cooper's company) offered the film to German exhibitors. Der Artist, 115, 24 June 1906. The film was announced as Die Krönung des Königs von Norwegen. The competing production of the Warwick Trading Company, entitled Die Krönung des Königs von Norwegen, was mentioned in Der Komet, June 1906.

35. The coronation took place in Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim on 22 June 1906. It was the first time since it burned down in 1531 that the whole building was used. This was also an occasion of considerable historical importance: Haakon was the first independent Norwegian king since the Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century, Norway was united with Denmark, and after the Napoleonic wars it became independent, but until 1906 the King of Sweden also ruled over Norway.

36. In January 1906, Will or Bill Barker merged his Autoscope Company (1901) with the Warwick Trading Company and became its Managing Director. In this position he also acted as cameraman for Warwick on major occasions.

37. The Danish Film Institute owns the film shot by Ole Olsen of the coronation festivities. It is called Kroningen i Trondhjem (Nordisk Filma Kompani, 1906) also known as Kong Haakons Kroning i Trondhjem. Direction and cinematography were by Axel Sorensen and Ole Olsen. The length was 240 m, and the Danish premiere was 22 June or 7 July in the Biografi-Theatret, Copenhagen.
38. The ‘ugly little chop’ was Axel Sørensen (from 1911 known as Axel Graatkjaer), who was the cinematographer for nearly everything made at Nordisk, and who was their leading cameraman in 1913, at least until July of that year, when he was fired, probably because he was negotiating with a German company. He went to Germany and became the highest-paid cameraman there, working for Asta Nielsen.

39. A photo of Nöggerath, busy with his enormous tripod at Trondheim was published in the Dutch trade paper Nieuw Weekblad voor de Cinematografie, 11 October 1935. In June 1906 Nöggerath sent postcards from Trondheim to Melbourne-Cooper’s daughter Audrey, and there are also postcards from Copenhagen, Hamburg and the Dutch coast from the same year from him to her (exact dates illegible), so he possibly travelled back over land. On the other hand, as the coronation was hot news, there was probably a rush to release it as soon as possible. In fact an ad by the Alpha Trading Company for Nöggerath’s film had already appeared in the German trade paper Der Artist of 24 June 1906. In this, Alpha stated that they had arranged to send the film from Norway to Germany immediately. Possibly Nöggerath sold copies on the spot in Denmark, Germany and Holland, which would mean that the British were about the last Northern Europeans to see it. Xeroxes of the above mentioned postcards are still in the possession of Geoffrey Donaldson. A photograph of one original, in the possession of Tjitte de Vries, was lent to me for this article. [Fig 10]

40. Nöggerath mentions leaving one copy of the film in Norway and bringing back a second copy to England. Perhaps this second copy was sold through Alpha? On the other hand, Donaldson (see note 31) states that Nöggerath during his trip to Norway shot at least two other Alpha documentaries: A Trip from Molde to Ramsdalhorn and A Panorama of Kristiansund. Was the previously mentioned Mr. Krause a pseudonym for Melbourne-Cooper or did Nöggerath mix things up? Melbourne-Cooper specialist Tjitte de Vries mentioned to me that both Alpha and Krause could have been involved, as Alpha made films on commission. However, it seldom happened that Alpha distributed its own films, as it released them normally through distribution companies like the Warwick Trading Company. The distribution of the Haakon-film was an exception.

1. John Barnes writes: ‘Queen Victoria had always shown a keen interest in still photography and no doubt she was also curious about the new animated photography.’ Barnes (1), 183.

41. In November 1899 Russell & Son shot the film Queen Victoria Reviewing the Life Guards at Windsor. Barnes (4), 226.

42. The films were released as The Queen’s Drive Through Windsor, ‘God Save Our Gracious Queen’, Scots Guards Firing the ‘Feu-De-Joie’, Scots Guards Leaving Windsor Castle.

43. The reference to the choir, led by Sir Walter Parratt, the bowing and the location of the private apartments of the Queen all match with the description of the film ‘God Save Our Gracious Queen’ as given in Barnes’ book. This film, nr. 5227 of the Warwick Trading Catalogue, can therefore be identified as shot by Anton Nöggerath. This cannot be proved for the others of the series. For the record, Anton Nöggerath was only 19 when he filmed the Queen. Barnes (4), 242-243. The catalogue description ends with the description of shots on Eton volunteers hastening from the grounds, when rain starts to fall, but Nöggerath doesn’t describe this. Perhaps it was filmed by someone else?

44. The only Warwick film of 1899 of a visit by the German emperor to Queen Victoria was a film shot at Windsor: The Arrival of the Emperor and Empress of Germany, at Windsor Station. The next time the emperor was filmed in Britain was at Queen Victoria’s funeral in 1901, but there is no suggestion of any shots taken in Oxford Street. Barnes (4), 286.

45. This was a typical Hale’s setup: in such carriage-cinemas which were established all over the world, the Hales companies showed shots taken from trains, as well as travel films in general.

46. ENTOS was a large shipping exposition in 1913 near Amsterdam, which also contained a large amusement park.


48. Hale’s Tours were exhibition operations, and so there is no list of Hales’ films as such. The Hales exhibitors would obtain films from producers or distributors, such as Selig or, in our case, Nöggerath.