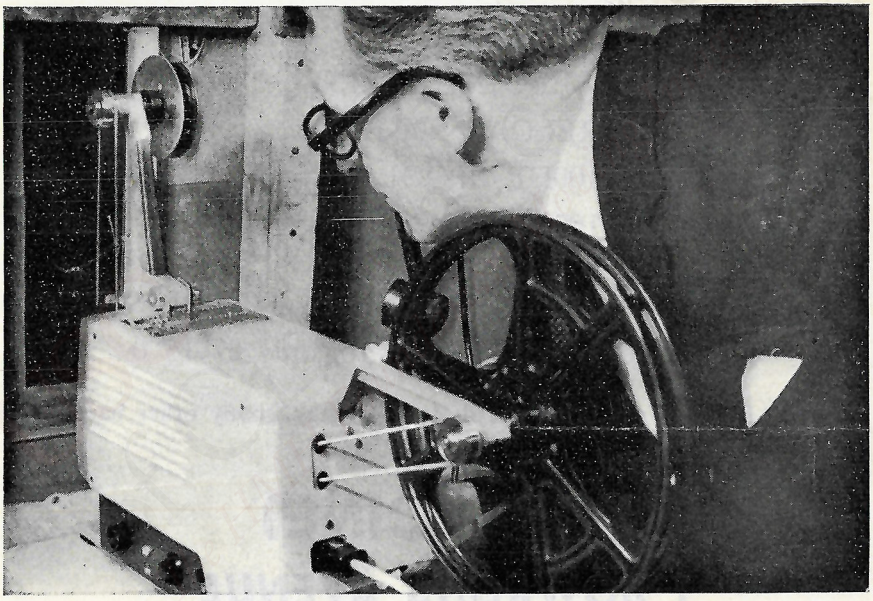
the 9,5 review



SUMMER 1966

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the 9·5 review

Published Quarterly

Editor: MALCOLM CUTMORE *Art Editor:* TERENCE H. BAVE

Volume 4, No. 4 Summer 1966

Editorial

The most important event for Group 9.5 this year will be our Annual get-together at Kensington Central Library Cinema, which is being held on Saturday 19th November. This will commence at 2.30 p.m. with a display of equipment, and there will also be demonstrations. This will last until approximately 5 p.m. when there will be a break until 6.30 p.m. when the evening show will commence. Tea and refreshments will be provided free of charge in the interval at around 8 p.m. We are hoping to make this our best evening yet. Tickets will be 8/6d. each and are now available from our Secretary: Gus Phipps at 105 Troughton Road, London, S.E.7. Book now (cheque postal order or cash) and avoid disappointment. A stamped addressed envelope would be appreciated.

The librarian of our sound section library Mr. G. H. Brown has had to resign from this post, and temporarily these films may be hired from Ken Finch who runs the silent section at "Little Mead", Willow Wood Road, Culverston, Meopham, Kent. Any member who would like to fill the post of librarian for our sound section please drop a line to me (Malcolm Cutmore). Another important date to remember is Saturday 17th September, this is our Annual General Meeting and the posts for officers and committee members will be open for re-election, and any member wishing to play a more active part in the running of the group will have his or her opportunity at this meeting.

This edition of the Review has again been increased to twenty pages enabling me to include a very interesting article from member Gordon Clarke on Kevin Brownlow the one-time nine fiver who has since scored a great success with his documentary feature film *It Happened Here* now on general release.

Cover Picture: George Whitfield with his Pathe Europ.

Service Please!

A report on current services for the ninefiver.
by Gordon Clarke

Ninefivers have acquired a reputation for fending for themselves and tinkering with all kinds of weird and wonderful gadgets and perhaps it is for this reason that specialised 9.5 film services tend not to be advertised in the photographic press. But it is true to say that there is no service which the ninefiver might require which is not provided by some organisation in the United Kingdom.

Titles are an obvious example which springs to mind. For those without titlers, S. J. Secombe of 124, Broadway, Exeter, Devon, provides a colour and black-and-white titling service, with designs and wording to suit the customer's own requirements. There is a wide variety of styles to choose from and a catalogue costs sixpence. There is also a very comprehensive range of stock titles. D. Beresford of 19, Bowditch Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire is another supplier of 9.5 mm. made-to-order titles, but here, although prices are cheaper, there is no choice of designs. All the ninefive specialist dealers carry a range of ready-made titles.

For those who wish to have their 16 mm. films, whether sound or silent, re-perforated to the 9.5 mm. format, this operation can be carried out by LGP (Cine) or Nine Five Cine, Paxton Road, St. Albans, for just 4/6d. per 100 feet.

It is possible to make quite acceptable frame enlargements from the large 9.5 frame and LGP (Cine) of 1, Bowrons Avenue, Wembley, can provide this service in black-and-white, while S. J. Seccombe can undertake the work in black-and-white or colour.

If at any time you want to have your 9.5 mm. films reduced to 8 mm. or "blown-up-" to 16 mm., you can call upon Colour Technique Ltd., 90c Field End Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middlesex, The Camera Shop (John Davis) Ltd., of 40, Station Road, Bognor Regis, Sussex, or C.R.S. Films, High Street, Chasetown, Walsall, Staffs. If it's straight 9.5 to 9.5 copies you need, then LGP (Cine) are the people to handle it.

If you buy your film without the cost of processing included in the price, you can send the black-and-white or Ferrania-colour stock to Microfilms Ltd., South Hawkesworth Street, Ilkley, Yorkshire or to Nine Five Film Services, 6, Carvoza Road, Truro, Cornwall. If you prefer to do your own processing, Microfilms can supply one of the famous Todd Tanks. Alternatively, one of the well-known Russian daylight developing tanks can be obtained from LGP (Cine); or Charles Dando of 135, Markham Road, Bournemouth will supply you with equipment and know-how.

For those of you with stripe projectors, a striping service is available from RCA Film Services, Zonal House, Westfields Road, London, W.3., or from E. & T. Magnetics of 157, Long Lane, Bexley Heath, Kent. RCA Film Services also operate the Perma-film process which, at modest cost, protects your films against scratching.

If you're in need of mechanical aid, Valentine-Cook Limited of 29, Highfield Road, Bushey, Herts., are the 9.5 repair experts and carry stocks of spares for many Pathescope machines. For the more ambitious, Don Pickering of 10, Gosforth Road, Blackpool, Lancs., can build parts to your own specifications.

And when your projector is A.1. again, you may want to hire some films. There are a number of libraries for 9.5 mm. users; amongst the best are Wallace Heaton Ltd., 127, New Bond Street, London, W.1.; Kirkham Film Services Ltd., Henry House, Henry Street, Warrington, Lancs.; Meteor Film Services, 12, Central Road, Worcester Park, Surrey and Watsofilms Ltd., Film House, Charles Street, Coventry, Warwickshire. Rates and conditions of hire vary from library to library. (And don't forget Group 9.5's own libraries for sound and silent films!)

And just in case anyone is nursing a full-blown ninefive feature, you *can* have optical sound too. Rank Film Library (1, Aintree Road, Perivale, Greenford, Middlesex) will shoot a negative track on 16 mm. which you can then have reperforated to 9.5 mm.

All this goes to show, there's nothing you can't do or get in ninefive if you really want to. Any of the firms mentioned in this round-up of 9.5 services will be only too glad to let you have fuller details of their particular field if you write to them enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

THE NINE-FIVE COLLECTOR

HOW TO SEE A CLASSIC by Maurice Trace

One of the most infuriating things about 9.5 is the general inaccessability of some of the most famous classics. The titles of these films are now part of the 9.5 legend — "Caligari", "Siegfried", "Napoleon", "Metropolis", etc. — but so few ninefivers have actually seen them.

The reason is of course not hard to find. Most of these films were released on our gauge in the early thirties. Due to several factors their stay in the catalogue was not prolonged. Although such titles as "The White Hell of Pitz Palu", "Faust" and "The Spy" were still available in 1954 they were very much the exception. The majority of the recognised classics were withdrawn from the catalogue after

only a short spell and today not many copies have survived, while nearly all of those which have are closely guarded in the collections of enthusiasts.

When a copy does arrive on the second-hand market the price asked is usually astronomical. Some years ago the three reel version of "Caligari" fetched £25! Add to these prices the fact that most of these films carry notched titles and it is little wonder that the ordinary nine-fiver is not particularly interested.

Although understandable this is a pity as one can be greatly entertained and also learn a lot about filming from these pictures which are landmarks in the progress of the cinema. But there is a way out. The "Classics" section of the Meteor Film Library contains many of the films collectors are anxiously searching for. The prints are in good condition and the notched title frames have been replaced by the ordinary running titles. So now at least you can see what all the fuss is about.

The pros and cons of such films as "Metropolis" (5 reels) and "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (3) have been aired many times and only recently Ivan Watson was caught up in an argument over the former in the columns of ACW. These films are controversial and not easy entertainment but whatever you have heard you can now make up your own mind by hiring these titles from Meteor.

On the lighter side you can see Rene Clair's delightful comedy "An Italian Straw Hat" (2) or the spectacular "Cassanova" with the redoutable Ivan Mosjoukine. One really rare title for hire is "Kriemhild's Revenge" (4)—the second part of Fritz Lang's outstanding saga based on the legend of Siegfried.

When watching these films one must remember that they were made well over thirty years ago. Naturally since then techniques have changed and in some respects many of these films will seem strange to audiences used only to the modern styles. One title in the Meteor catalogue, "Christus", may well appear ponderous with a forced style of acting—but this was made over 50 years ago. It is a fascinating Italian production of the life of Christ made in 1914 with many scenes shot on location in the Holy Land.

Modern audiences will however appreciate such films as "The White Hell of Pitz Palu" (4) which comes up as fresh as when it was first shown in 1929. I recently projected this film to a group of people who had considered the silent cinema to be nothing but a joke. However they were completely caught up by this powerful film and it was warmly applauded at the end.

Well there you are. Classic films recognised by critics and collectors everywhere. Perhaps they will bore you or perhaps you will be enthralled. The address of Meteor Film Services is 12, Central Road, Worcester Park, Surrey. Now at least you know where to find some of the cinema's masterpieces.

ANIMATION

by E. R. Frasi

I have been paging through some back issues of the 9.5 Review and find that very little is mentioned on the subject of animation, which I would have thought is an ideal subject for the lone worker, or smaller groups.

I've always been interested in cartoon and all forms of animation and have made this type of film on all three gauges. I would like to give a short survey of my films hoping that it might encourage other people into making short animated films.

The easiest type is I think the McLaren style, which is drawing images directly onto clear film. I employed this technique on four films. Two on 9.5 mm. and two on 16 mm. The first was made in 1957 and received a two-star award in that year, titled "Fantasy in Ink". 1963 brought me a third prize in "Centre Sprockets" film competition with "Slim Jim" which is available from L.G.P. Cine.

This type of film making has its rewards, there is no problem of lining up a camera parallax, exposure etc. You've even got instant play back. I have also made four films of the conventional cartoon type. It would be best for anyone if making a cartoon film to employ some help as the work involved does become a little tedious at times. Together with two of my friends we formed the Animated Film Unit and each share in the work of the films.

In two of the earlier films we used aeroplane dope and cellophane wrapping paper for the animated drawings but these have the disadvantage of not laying quite flat on the background, even under a pressure frame of glass. Therefore some sequences are not as clear as one would like.

In 1964 I made a film called "Just Fantasy", in this I used plastercine which I moulded into small balls and moved them around changing the shape from one thing to another. One sequence started with one ball gradually getting bigger and bigger and at the same time five smaller balls appear. The first one flattens out, the five other balls turn into fingers, there having a hand. I next introduced a longer shaped piece and this eventually formed a worm. It dodged over the palm of the hand which was trying to grasp it, which it eventually did. The sequence ends with the hand turning back into smaller balls gradually disappearing into the distance.

Anyone I think could do this type of film changing the shapes very slightly between each exposure. My two young daughters had a go at it on a short length of film with pretty good results. Colour matching does not matter very much with a film of this sort.

My main interest at the moment is a hand drawn sound-on-film. I was fortunate enough to

purchase a Pathe Vox 9.5 mm. optical sound projector at a reasonable price, and this has aroused my interest in 9.5 mm. optical sound. A friend of mine devised a little tool for me enabling very fine lines to be scratched on to black leader film, almost hair like and this holds possibilities. The sound track area on 9.5 is about 1/16 of an inch wide so you must use something capable of drawing very fine lines. I have only seen one film of Norman McLarens; this was "Beyond Dull Care" which is a really first class film of its kind.

McLaren made this film in 1949 and he used 1200 ft. of film which was finally edited to about 900 ft. to fit a musical track. The jazz music is very easy on the ear, while the visuals, which could take quite a long time using a camera, are fascinating to watch.

Disregarding from division McLaren sprayed paint through netting scratching various designs, colouring and a manner of other things all onto clear film, sometimes also by the look of it onto black film as well. This is another type of film which could be tackled by the lone worker even if the sound is loosely synchronised. I shall have a go anyway and see how it makes out.

THE GROUP THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Much as I enjoyed the showing of members' films at St. Gabrield's Hall recently, I was dismayed that our sights were apparently set so low. There was an all-too-evident superfluity of very rudimentary errors. Surely the club should be a forum for criticism and discussion which help to improve individual members' standards, but surprisingly no criticism (and let's remember that this word embraces favourable as well as unfavourable comment) was voiced on the quality of any film as a film.

The most glaring mistake I noticed was the jump cut. This is the pitfall into which the novice most easily drops, but it is also the first fault which the more experienced film-maker can overcome. It is clear that many people do not realise the jar that is caused by switching off the camera as a person or object approaches and then switching on again so that the subject appears to jump several feet forward on screen. This, one of the most noticeable flaws any film can have, can be overcome so easily, either at the time of shooting or during subsequent editing. In the first instance, simply take your camera to a new position and shoot from a different angle; this effectively conceals any jump. The second methods involves the use of the cut-away shot, apparently unknown to the majority of nine-fivers! As an example, suppose you are filming a parade. You

have to stop filming as one float approaches; you want to film the same object as it comes nearer without changing your shooting point. Always shoot sufficient material of crowds, individual spectators, other fillers such as clock faces, so that you can insert these at the editing stage. It is clear that some of us do not edit our films at all!

I also lamented the almost complete absence of titles. (I must confess here to the beam in my own eye as my film was an offender in this respect, though it depicted an event which had taken place only the week before and had been hastily edited for the occasion). Most of us can attempt a simple title, or one can be made to order by a specialist such as S. J. Seccombe.

As far as presentation of the films goes, it apparently does not matter whether they are shown the right way around or back-to-front. Most 9.5 films should be projected with the cell-side towards the lamp and if we all attach suitable leaders to the front of our films there should be no difficulty.

A very understandable preoccupation amongst the membership seems to be with processing. Ninefivers have suffered so cruelly at the hands of ham-fisted processors that one can well imagine that they should judge a film first and foremost by the quality of its colour processing. But let's not lose sight of the content and technique. Whilst on the subject of colour processing, a bouquet should go to Mervyn Richards of Nine Five Film Services whose study of Ferraniacolor, extensive tests and careful attention are ensuring that ninefivers can now obtain colour results which they need never be ashamed to screen.

Looking forward to this year's annual 9.5 event on 19th November, I hope that we shall not only be able to screen even better films than last year's good selection, but that this time we shall be able to have genuine sync. sound. I appreciate the difficulties involved when running a powerful -projector in a large hall without tape-sync. facilities, but if all films could not be striped, suitable background music could be played from tape and commentaries voiced "live" during the performance if necessary. Our public image must stand comparison with the 16 mm. user, let alone the 8 mm. man.

And on the question of our "image", would it not be a good idea to contact cine clubs all over the British Isles (their addresses appear weekly in ACW's Club Newsreel), telling them about Group 9.5, perhaps sending them a copy of the *Review*, and finding out how many ninefivers—or potential ninefivers—they have in their ranks? Why be insular and live up to our reputation in some quarters for preaching to the converted? In the absence of commercial ninefive advertising we must be aware of the continuing need to blow our own trumpets! This is the time and place for examining our image, since this magazine goes out almost exclusively

to the committed ninefiver, so we can wash our dirty linen here without doing so in public. We can do this at our London meetings too and, for the loneworker, this magazine can reflect on paper something of the atmosphere of a club meeting.

Gordon Clarke

Programme for London Group Meetings SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 1966

Sept. 3—**"Technical Evening"** —Everything from loading a charger to making a splice. We hope to be able to solve your problems and answer your queries. The evening will finish with two films, one bad, one good.

Sept. 17—**"Annual General Meeting."**

Oct. 1—**"Chairman's Evening"** —A special film show with the accent on entertainment. Please bring along your family and friends.

Oct. 15—**"Holiday Film Show"** This is your chance to show your holiday films, past or present, at home or abroad.

Oct. 29—**"Film Education"**— Special films will be shown on film making and film technique. A must for all cine enthusiasts.

Meetings commence at 7.30 p.m. at St. Gabriel's Hall, Churchill Gardens, Pimlico, S.W.1, and finish at 10.30 p.m. An interval is provided when tea and refreshments are served.

Film Library News **The Latest from Ken Finch**

The first item of news from the Library this time is that George Brown has given up the Sound section. George was extremely keen on the project and has decided only after a great deal of consideration that owing to the lack of support from the membership of Group 9.5 the Sound section could not make progress.

Because of Mr. Brown's resignation, I now hold the Sound films which he purchased for the library or were donated. Obviously the number now left available is rather small because his own prints loaned to the library have been withdrawn. I am in the process of contacting the members of his section and will ensure that both sections of the library do continue. There will be more films made available in due course, but it depends on the support given. No support, no films. Overwhelming support, hundreds of films. As I have said so often before **it is up to you.**

The supplement to the catalogue is in the process of being typed and duplicated and will now include a Sound supplement as well and it is for this reason that our members have had to wait so long. I am sorry about this but these things do take time.

I am also proposing to amend the hire charges to include the cost of postage as an all-in charge for each film as we have found from past experience that postage varies as the variety of spools and cans used vary so much in weight.

There will be a reduction for personal callers of course and some form of reduction for those who book more than five reels at a time, of say a one reel film free for every five reels paid.

Amongst the additions to the Silent section, fully detailed in the new catalogue supplement to be issued shortly, are two reels of Walt Disney cartoons in full colour. These are re-perfs from 16 mm. and are really good quality. Another film in the course of preparation is a compilation of the very first 30 and 60 foot notched Pathescope releases. If any one has any of these early films, usually in the old closed type spools, up in the attic or elsewhere and has no further use for them I would be pleased to add them to this compilation film. Dare I hope for sufficient to make 2 reels? There will also be a copy of the classic U.F.A. film "Faust" available shortly but it needs a great deal of loving care as nearly every sprocket hole on all of the reels are cracked due to brittleness which is caused by bad storage. I often wonder how many film collectors are storing films which will slowly turn into millions of single frames when projected.

The New 3m 9.5 Ferraniacolor

Now readily obtainable in East London and Essex from

A. A. SNELL & SONS

126 BOUNDARY ROAD, WALTHAMSTOW, LONDON, E.17

Telephone: Coppermill 5222

MAKING A GOOD SPLICE

To achieve neat and solid splices needs care, practice and patience, and perfection depends largely on your own efforts, particularly in regard to scraping and cementing.

To remove the emulsion from the film before joining, the emulsion should be moistened by the tip of the tongue and then scraped thoroughly, but not so excessively as to wear it thin. Scrape thoroughly around the sprocket hole, yet be careful not to break the corners of the hole. I also recommend that the celluloid base (or shiny) side of the second piece of film be also lightly scraped, for not only does this ensure that both surfaces are quite free from grease and dirt, but it also gives a slight roughness or "key" to enable the cement to do its job better in dissolving the two contact surfaces. Be careful of the scraped bits of film resulting from the particular job and remove them carefully from the table; do not blow them away—these minute bits have a nasty habit of settling in the most awkard—and unwanted—places.

The two ends of film are now placed in the splicer and the application of the cement must be carefully done; too much of it will result in a permanent kink in the film due to excessive action of the cement on the celluloid, while delay in clamping down the pressure plates will mean a feeble joint.

A brush is the only successful way of applying the cement. First dip it in the cement and then carefully dispose of the surplus by wiping against the neck of the bottle. Apply quickly but thoroughly to the scraped portion so that it appears wet but without any semblance of a "pool". Immediately bring the other film into contact and then clamp down the pressure plates. Do not hurry the removal of the pressure from a film joint; by waiting a full minute or longer the surfaces of the joint are kept in perfect contact until the cement has dried and the joint perfectly set.

Good splices will last for a very considerable time, but it is as well to examine them from time to time, and if they show trends of becoming unstuck or can be peeled when a determined attempt is made to do so, then they are really *bad* joins. M. C.

"NIVE FIVE DUFAYCOLOR"

Readers Write . . .

In the last issue of the *Review* K.W. asks (page 12) if any examples of pre-war Dufaycolor (9.5) exist today. I still have several films and still have the Dufay handbook. I remember the wonderment with which Dufay was greeted in 1937. I found it more suitable for stills than for cine work, as on projection the enormous magnification from 9.5 made the resau pattern far too prominent. There was even less latitude in exposure than with modern colour film, but for all its faults Dufay was a brave

pioneer. It was certainly preferable to the early P.C.F. with its disgraceful judder which forced many users to send their cameras to Fosters for modification.

J. E. Metcalfe,
Plumtree, Nottingham.

Regarding the 9.5 Dufaycolor, it may interest you to know that I have in my possession several lengths that I took with my movie camera when it first came on the market in 1937. Then we thought it wonderful as it was the only colour film available for 9.5 mm. Of course it is nothing to compare with the results we get with colour film today.

Re the quiz, question 4 in the last edition of the *Review*, another husband and wife who appear in the star roles in a nine five film, (this time the husband being a renowned operatic singer) is Richard Tauber and Diana Napier in "Land Without Music" and they spent part of their honeymoon in this city at the now demolished Pump Room Hotel.

P. W. Wilkins,
Lower Oldfield Park, Bath.

A NINEFIVERS DIARY

Strange that Ivan Watson should think that 3M's decision not to undertake 9.5 processing themselves would send the gauge plummeting to disaster, especially as he has always remarked on its staying power despite all setbacks. But, as always, he is continuing to give us some much needed publicity and we should be grateful for the way ninefive topics have a habit of cropping up in Uncle Ivan's column.

It is highly probable that the £2,000 continuous processor which, it was announced, would handle our 9.5 Ferraniacolor films would have been operating under contract to 3M anyway, so the fact that they are now known to have contracted the processing out should worry no one. Surely it is of no consequence who is actually processing the film, so long as results are consistently good—as indeed they are at present at Truro. The 3M Company have taken an active part in organising this work and have surely kept faith with ninefivers, while Mr. Richards is to be congratulated on his highly accomplished processing.

It is a pity, though, that when 3M-Ferrania booked a two-page advertising spread in ACW's Colour Guide issue, they made reference only to 8 mm. We cannot expect enormous and costly advertisements on this scale devoted entirely to 9.5 mm. film, of course, but would it not be possible to add some phrase such as "available in 9.5 mm. too!" or, better still, to illustrate a piece of 9.5 alongside the 8 mm. film? It is a proven fact that people who have never seen a piece of ninefive film, have difficulty in visualising how it looks from descriptions such as "all picture; no margins; central perforations."

Advertising of 9.5 mm. goods is still almost non-existent in British cine magazines and, whilst we can make some small contribution ourselves, ideas such as stickers on envelopes (presumably to indoctrinate the postman) or angry letters to ACW are definitely no substitute for commercial advertising and tend to perpetuate the theory that ninefivers are slightly odd.

Three cheers for Tony Shapps' splendid—and practical—suggestion for collective advertising by a coalition of manufacturers and dealers, outlined in Ninefive News Service, though his proposal for a "fighting fund" smacks of putting cinematography on the footing of a charity which might be distasteful.

Many Group 9.5 members are already members of ACO too, but for those who are not, I heartily recommend joining at once. The monthly magazine produced by George and Anne Whitfield is lively, authoratative and interesting. There is no subscription and all you have to do is send twelve large (about 8½ by 5½ stamped addressed envelopes for a year's issues to 82, Grange Crescent, Riddlesden, Keighley, Yorkshire. And that's pretty good value!

Finally, there's still just time to send in your ideas or contributions for our children's film or the Group 9.5 Newsreel. We still need new material for both these ventures.

A SPARE LAMP PLEASE

R. W. Fletcher writes

When reading the Spring issue of the 9.5 *Review* I was particularly interested in the tip to always have a spare projection lamp handy. My experience may be of interest.

I have shown my films to many local audiences and right from the start carried a spare projector lamp. Some time ago I was called to do a film show for an association of disabled people who were being entertained by our village. This was a great moment for me as it would be my largest audience ever.

When preparing for the event I gave my tape recorder and projector a good look over, cleaned and oiled where necessary, and then looked at the old lamp. Knowing that this could be the most likely part to go wrong, I fitted my new spare and placed the old lamp in its place to act as reserve. As I never trust anything new I switched on the projector and tested the new lamp for a short while.

The time for the show arrived and all was set ready—the audience in their place—many in wheel chairs, and the vicar who had offered to switch off the hall lights at a signal from me was in position. I started up the projector and tape recorder, gave the signal for the lights to be switched off and just as this happened—bang—my new lamp had blown. So the old faithful had to come back out of retirement and made a good job of it.

The vicar asked me about what had happened and I explained adding that it proved the old proverb of never forsaking an old friend for a new. I'm glad to say that Messrs. Atlas replaced the lamp free and without question.

IT HAPPENED HERE

by Gordon Clarke

Before he was seventeen, Kevin Brownlow was the proud owner of one of this country's most outstanding private collections of 9.5 mm. classics and an acknowledged expert on the cinema, contributing articles on the history of the film to the cine press.

At this time, Brownlow had already been working for some three years on an ambitious 9.5 mm. film of his own, called *The Capture* and based on de Maupassant's short story, *Les Prisonniers.* When production started he had only the 2/6 a week of his schoolboy's pocket money to finance the project, yet shooting with his hand-held Pathe de Luxe motocamera, he set his sights on professional standards. Even then, Browlow (whose mother and father are artists) displayed a rare visual talent. Here, coupled to the enthusiasm of youth, was an ability for creative film-making which belied his years. As a collector, Brownlow had studied the work of the early French and Russian directors and often emulated them. His amateur actors and actresses, whose average age was twice his own, showed complete confidence in his ability and respected him sufficiently to stand for his autocratic and sometimes brutal direction!

Quite apart from the question of finance, *The Capture* presented its young director with other difficulties, but he surmounted them all with characteristic initiative and perseverance. He persuaded a theatrical costumier to loan him uniforms free of charge for as long as he needed them and then roped him in to the cast as well.

A converted garage became the studio in which he shot his interiors, lit by one photoflood.

Soon Kevin Brownlow wanted to attempt even more ambitious films. He conceived the idea of producing a drama, beginning with the hypothesis that Germany had won the war and the Nazis were occupying England. By this time, Brownlow, the ardent ninefive collector, was shooting on 16 mm. and using professional laboratories to process his film. He insisted on working with a properly constituted production unit, with his assistant directors, cameraman, lighting, property and continuity people all meticulously organised.

He was dogged by the nerve-wracking problems of coping with a very large cast and, more startling, opposition from the police who, understandably, did not react favourably to the sight of uniformed nazis disporting themselves in the streets of Lon-

don. Then there was the matter of obstruction; Brownlow evolved his own technique of dispersing crowds by turning and asking for volunteers. The onlookers vanished. Nevertheless, the police banned him from shooting in Soho streets.

Costumiers quoted from 25/- to 35/- per week for the hire of one SS uniform. Brownlow needed 40; so the only solution was to set his helpers to the task of making them specially.

This was to be a dramatic and spectacular film—and Brownlow started by mounting the most demanding scene first—a nazi rally in Trafalgar Square, with all the problems entailed in assembling an amateur cast of "nazis" at the base of Nelson's column, organising vast crowds and warding off the police.

He was shooting on 16 mm., out of his own pocket, with a loan from the company he was working for. His painstaking search for authentic costumes brought him into contact with Andrew Mollo, who became his co-director through the protracted struggle to produce, and then to gain distribution for, this remarkable film. At that time, they were determined that, if they could not afford to film the whole feature, at least they would complete some representative sections to give vent to their ideas.

All this was in 1957. Now, nine years later, the 35 mm. feature, *It Happened Here*, is on circuit release through United Artists. It includes a lengthy satire on propagandist documentary films in which the original 16 mm. scenes are utilised, together with an ingenious commentary to show how we might have been brainwashed under nazi rule.

The 35 mm. film was only possible, of course, when financial backing had been found, but still it was produced with a predominantly amateur cast on a shoestring budget of £7,000.

When the film was completed, the battle was not over. Getting it distributed was quite a different matter, for several reasons. The film had not been crewed according to the ACTT's regulations, it was a professional film using amateur players and therefore liable to upset Equity too, and—more than anything else—the subject was so controversial that some distributors thought it too hot to handle. But the version now released is just as it was made, with the exception of one six-minute cut.

It Happened Here comes to the screen with a thrust behind it, because of the tale of the producers' ten-year fight to put it there and the reputation it has already acquired at film festivals.

After an introduction explaining the supposed events which have led to the present state of occupation and an outline of the present course of the war, the film opens with the German authorities ordering the evacuation of all civilians from an area where partisan outbursts are rife.

The film depicts not a country cringing under austere nazi oppression, but one which has—on the surface at least—learned to live under nazi government, in which collaboration has become accepted and respectable,

in which German soldiers are dating British girls. But there is a strong resistance movement, with partisans always active and ready to strike at every opportunity and there are some grim moments, like that in which Pauline Murray, as a nurse, sees several of her friends killed in a skirmish between partisans and nazis.

This is the memory she takes with her to London. She now feels that she must do something useful and take up nursing again, even if this means doing it under nazi direction, so she joins the Immediate Action Organisation. Her old friends, Dr. Fletcher (Sebastian Shaw) and his wife are appalled by the sight of Pauline's fascist I. A. uniform and she in turn by the discovery that they are sheltering a badly wounded partisan. Her attempts to obtain morphine for the patient lead to the arrest of the Fletchers and Pauline herself is posted to a country hospital, which she discovers, to her horror, is a centre for extermination. She refuses to carry out this work and is arrested but the train on which she is travelling is attacked by partisans and she is released.

We find Pauline tending the wounded in a field hospital with Partisan radio broadcasts announcing victories which are clearly paving the way to liberation and victory.

And here the film stops somewhat abruptly and this could be held to be its one great fault.

The producers have resisted the temptation to overdramatise and have, on the contrary, excluded any element of melodrama and played down the sensational. Even the dialogue is written and delivered without concession to theatrical refinements; this is just as the everyday conversation of Britain under nazi occupation might well have sounded. It is to this general restraint, as much as to the quality of its black-and-white, newsreel type photography, and the pace of its editing, that this film owes its unique effect.

Keven Brownlow has said, "Our entire life was poured into it, and it gave us a hell of a beating on the way". Now he and Andrew Mollo have the satisfaction of knowing that none of that sustained hard grind was in vain.

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9-5 SOUND & SILENT FILMS FOR SALE

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Notes on Film Presentation

"Giving a Film Show" is an easier and less ostentatious title, but as so many pitfalls surround the would-be exhibitor the word "Presents" does help the "happy-go-lucky", "couldn't care less" approach. Normally the aim is to project a programme of films to an audience with the maximum pleasure and the minimum anxiety both to the projectionist and his audience. This maxim should apply both to the club-sponsored show to an audience of strangers, and to the individual's home show to the family. One or two keen types have converted an attic or loft as a permanent theatre, but they usually study and take a pride in their presentation, so these notes are primarily addressed to individuals or clubs who wish to present a film show in a small room or hall, generally at very short notice.

Mains and Equipment

The projector should be thoroughly checked to ensure working condition, the gate, film guideway and lens examined and cleaned. The electrical supply must be checked with the projector to avoid any AC/DC clashes or voltage discrepancies. The projector, lamp and lamp-house should next receive attention. Then comes one of the vital points of all—the projector throw—never exceed the illumination of the light source, screen brightness should never, under any circumstances, be sacrificed for screen size.

Films and Audience

Carefully prepare your running times and *check* all your films—that they are rewound correctly and that all joints are satisfactory. All damaged sections that might cause a break should be removed. Better safe than sorry.

Estimate the number of people invited and provide seats for that number. Check that a clear view from each seat is possible without neck craning and peering. One cannot expect luxurious seating in the home or hall, but one can hope to see the screen in comfort without bobbing about!

Room Lighting

Either have a switch near the projector that controls roof lighting or post someone near the switch and arrange a signal. And make sure he is a steady type, otherwise he'll flirt with the girl from next door and you will have to resort to shouting at him!

Also always arrange the projector and lighting wires to go round the room and not across. Audiences are not too happy when their feet become entangled in wires, besides you might trip up yourself, bringing down the projecting table. Perish the thought!

Sound Films

If the films are sound. Check your sound amplifier and do not try to fill too great a hall. Place the speaker high (and not behind the unperforated screen) so that sound can travel unimpeded to the audiences' ears. Accousti-

cal defects of the room or hall will have to be ignored, but remember this does have a great control on the audibility.

Summary

These notes are not comprehensive and they do not cover every point. Most comments are commonsense, but it is surprising how many people forget little items when they rush to prepare a quick show.

Remember one major factor —people like to see a film show in comfort, without strain and without the projectionist working himself up to a nervous frenzy behind their backs.

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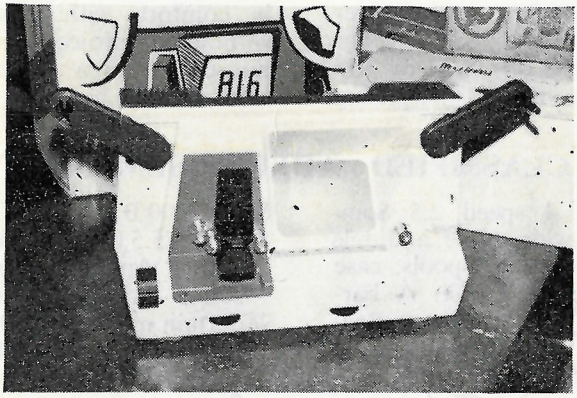
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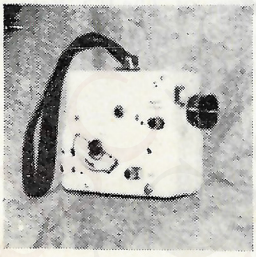
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