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Kilts, tanks, and aeroplanes: Scotland, cinema, and the First World War

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Abstract

This article charts commercial cinema's role in promoting the war effort in Scotland during the First World War, outlining three aspects of the relationship between cinema and the war as observed in Scottish non-fiction short films produced between 1914 and 1918. The existing practice of local topical filmmaking, made or commissioned by cinema managers, created a particular form of engagement between cinema and war that was substantially different from the national newsreels or official films. The article offers an analysis of surviving short 'topicals' produced and exhibited in Scotland, which combine images of local military marches with kilted soldiers and enthusiastic onlookers and were designed to lure the assembled crowds back into the cinema to see themselves onscreen. Synthesising textual analysis with a historical account of the films' production context, the article examines the films' reliance on the romanticised militarism of the Highland soldier and the novelty appeal of mobilisation and armament, sidelining the growing industrial unrest and anti-war activities that led to the birth of the term 'Red Clydeside'. The article then explores how, following the British state's embracing of film propaganda post-1916, local cinema companies such as Green's Film Service produced films in direct support of the war effort, for example *Patriotic Porkers* (1918, for the Ministry of Food). Through their production and exhibition practice exhibitors mediated the international conflict to present it to local audiences as an appealing spectacle, but also mobilised cinema's position in Scottish communities to advance ideological and practical aspects of the war effort, including recruitment, refugee support, and fundraising.

Keywords: Local topicals, local films, First World War, propaganda, militarism, Scotland, recruitment, attractions, historiography, archives, early cinema

The relationship between the First World War and early cinema in Britain is both highly complex and far from predictable. In 1914 the visual styles, narrative conventions, exhibition practices, and social roles of moving pictures were still in flux and wartime upheaval inevitably defined the context in which the cinema's process of institutionalisation crystallised.[1] The already entrenched popularity of cinema with the British public made it a potentially vital force in the war effort. This article examines a number of local topical films produced in Scotland during the war, arguing that their shifting modes of address are indicative of a strategic alignment which took place between the early cinema trade and the state. Rather than being engineered as propaganda or state intervention, this alignment emerged organically as both the cinema trade and the British state sought to legitimate their projects of market expansion. Moreover, the article draws attention to an often overlooked group of films, suggesting that their local and ephemeral logic affords today's viewer an experience of historical contingency as a counterpoint to hegemonic discourses.

The relationships between the British government and the film industry around the production and exhibition of newsreels and propaganda have been discussed extensively by cinema historians.[2] However, the direct intervention and commissioning of films by government departments was only one vector in a broader confluence of interests: as the cinema industry sought to expand its audience and consolidate its social position, the state sought to adapt to and exercise control over the new configurations of the public sphere. This multiplicity of aims, refracted through the unstable textual and institutional forms of a nascent medium, has left its trace in the extant films from this era. Local topical films, as a genre rooted in pre-institutional cinema by their production logic and aesthetic choices, offer a particularly productive site of analysis and act as a counterpoint to the better-known work of newsreel and official filmmakers.

The First World War remains a powerful and contested part of modern history. The unprecedented scale and lethal nature of the conflict and its widespread, long-lasting consequences on civilian life mean that the significance of the events of 1914-1918 far exceeds the realm of military or political history. The war's cinematographic representations, both contemporary and retrospective, join a rich spectrum of art, literary works, and public memory practices which are deployed in ongoing disputes over the war's meaning and its place in national imaginaries. The war is then subject to what Jerome de Groot, drawing on Bakhtin, has called 'historioglossia', 'a multiplicity of hybrid discourses accruing around a single instance'.[3] In this struggle over interpretation (rather than factual record) the moving

image is even harder to pin down, brimming as it is with unexpected and unplanned contingencies.[4]

The films under scrutiny here are part of the relatively small corpus of Scottish early film production which remains critically underexplored. Trevor Griffiths' work on the social history of the cinema in Scotland documents the context in which these films were produced, distributed, and exhibited.[5] Building on this and related work, this article integrates a socio-historical and textual analysis perspective on a small number of short non-fiction films made by local production companies which were, in the main, not distributed widely and are now preserved in the Scottish Screen Archive in Glasgow.[6] As Stephen Bottomore has written, local films 'offer a certain challenge to the conventional economic models of the film industry' by addressing a circumscribed audience rather than a mass public.[7] This article argues that local films also challenge historical narratives due to the disruptive effect of their pre-institutional aesthetic qualities.

Being aligned with what Tom Gunning coined the 'cinema of attractions' as a mode of address that privileges overt display and acknowledges the spectator's presence outside the frame, the experience of watching these films one century after their production proves powerful.[8] The technical and aesthetic qualities which prefigure a classical or immersive form of spectatorship are absent and the films establish a potentially self-reflexive reception mode, including as they often do the on-screen presence of the cinematic apparatus and fourth wall-breaking looks at the camera. While considering the value of these films for today's viewer as an alternative medium for historical consciousness, this experience, tinged as it is by hindsight, is incommensurable with that of their original audience. For wartime viewers these films would have had a very different appeal and would certainly not have seemed strange or experimental as their style, subject matter, and exhibition context connected them to earlier cultural forms.[9] This double bind to continuity and innovation was one of the reasons why the cinema had much to offer as a vehicle for the state's ideological aims during wartime, and vice-versa.

This article examines three vectors in the relationship between cinema and the war as observed through a small corpus of Scottish short films grouped under three distinct but overlapping headings: 'Recognition', 'Spectacle', and 'Alignment'. Analysing how different elements of an aesthetic of attractions operate within each film, the first two sections argue that recognition and visual spectacle were instrumental in connecting the state's wartime ideological programme with the film trade's commercial interests. In the third section we explore a more deliberate and overt con-

fluence of cinema and the state through a case study of a local production company and one example of locally-made propaganda for the Ministry of Food.

Although cinema underwent a fundamental transformation during the war years this article does not trace a linear process where tensions are resolved. As Gunning points out, attractions continued to be integral to mainstream narrative even after their original context (the variety programme of early exhibition) was completely marginalised with the rise of feature-length narrative films as the emblematic products of a U.S.-dominated industry.[10] Furthermore, as Ine van Dooren and Peter Kramer argue in their study of direct address in wartime films, it is possible that 'factual film-making continued to operate within the older tradition' of attractions while fiction film moved toward narrative integration.[11] It is the potential of attractions to destabilise and subvert established historical narratives that makes these often-overlooked factual films worthy of contemporary attention.

1   Recognition

The attraction of recognition, of 'seeing yourself as others see you', is a well-documented part of early cinematic practice and a key component of the local film. Indeed, according to Bottomore's definition, a film can be defined as local 'if there is considerable overlap between the people appearing in the film and those who watch it or are intended to watch it'.[12] This overlap was engineered by the travelling exhibitors and cinema managers that commissioned local topicals, and it shaped the technical and aesthetic strategies used by camera operators. To maximise the potential for recognition the filmmakers tried to include as many people as possible in the frame, but kept the camera at approximately eye level and sufficiently close to the crowd so that individual faces were visible. These resulting 'crowd films' demonstrate cinema's unprecedented ability to mediate mass urban experience in all its complexity. As Gunning has written,

> [t]he ability of the cinema to capture contingent happenings in all their details, seeming to sacrifice principles of selection and hierarchy found in traditional images, gave its images a democracy of composition that matched the subject.[13]

This democratic formal quality is much in evidence in the first film we consider, which is identified in the archive's catalogue as *Arrival at White-*

hart Hotel, Campbeltown, due to the first intertitle shown in the surviving fragment.[14] Set in the eponymous seaside town and commissioned by the local Picture House owner, only about seven minutes survive of this film. The main body of the film was shot on 18 and 19 July 1914, two weeks before war broke out, and depicts the arrival of Territorial soldiers by steamboat and their march through the town.[15] Three Territorial battalions of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (numbering 76 officers and 2,613 men, primarily from Scotland's industrialised central belt), arrived in Campbeltown for their annual camp at the nearby Clochkiel training ground. At the peak of a busy holiday season with agreeable weather the Territorials would spend two paid weeks sleeping under canvas, playing sports, swimming in the sea, and descending on the town's distilleries and cinema in the evening – a far cry from manual labour, inner-city streets, and tenement flats. Street-level framing captures the Territorials intermingling with a diverse crowd of local people and holidaymakers who had gathered at the pier, having been alerted of the event by the local newspaper.[16]

The rhetorical devices deployed in this film are those of the local topical, and in particular those of the crowd film. As van Doreen and Kramer point out for other wartime topicals, for many people 'the camera, rather than the soldiers' parade, was the main attraction, the real locus of power'.[17] Playful, mocking, shy, curious, indifferent, many of the spectators are engaging in a self-aware relationship with the apparatus that acknowledges and tries to take agency over the act of representation. The soldiers are not the centre of attention for the camera; rather, the spectacle of their arrival provides an opportunity to film large numbers of people, promising them the pleasure of seeing themselves onscreen. This playful mood extends to the soldiers; while they may well have been aware of the situation on the Continent, war had not been declared.[18] By May 1915 most were at the Western Front; their battalions suffered horrendous losses, including at Arras, Ypres, and the Somme. While the film's timing is poignant its interest resides precisely in the fact that it was *not* made with a memorialising intention.

This lack of historiographical intent can be brought into relief by comparing this film to another topical shot by the same operators – Gaumont's Glasgow staff – only two weeks later. *Response of Glasgow Tramway Men to the Country's Call to Arms* (1914) is a three-minute newsreel segment again showing a large group of young men in loose formation. In this case they are Glasgow's tramway workers, who have enlisted *en masse* with encouragement (or pressure) from their employer, marching in their work uniforms in front of the city hall. As fitting for the early days of the conflict,

when it could still be pictured as a short, adventurous travel opportunity, the new recruits look relaxed – if not quite as optimistic as the Territorials in Campbeltown. The camera is positioned on the pavement outside the city hall, its view unobstructed by the crowd that lines the streets in the background, suggesting the operators had official permission. Compared to the Campbeltown film, which gives as much prominence to spectators as to the soldiers themselves, in the Glasgow film the non-uniformed onlookers are only seen in the background, while the framing gives prominence to the orderly presentation of the recruits as a group. The correspondent for the trade journal *Bioscope* picks up on this more serious textual mood, and his comments suggest a different register of historical consciousness operating here: '[i]t is probable that the [Glasgow] Corporation will acquire the film and give it a place in the Kelvingrove Museum, as illustrating an unique incident in the City's history.'[19] Although they are both local topicals shot within two weeks of each other, this address to posterity marks a crucial divergence between these two films.

Almost four years later a film from Coatbridge provides an example of the local topical modus operandi in the new historical context of protracted war. Lacking the cheerful appeal of the holiday crowd, *Scottish Moving Picture News: Route March 1st Battalion Lanarkshire Volunteer Regiment* (1918) shows men who had been ruled unfit for service on a mandatory march from Airdrie to Coatbridge, two industrial towns in Scotland's central belt, on 3 March 1918.[20] Apart from the uniformed men the crowd, in this case, almost exclusively comprises children. However, the filming had been advertised extensively in the local paper, putting great emphasis on the opportunity to see oneself on the screen. The production's promotional nature is emphasised by a shot of the Coatbridge Cinema's facade, its staff, and motto: 'Where everybody goes'. Shot by local newsreel staff but commissioned by the cinema's manager, the film's five minute running time contains images of the cinema intercut between two sections of footage of the route march followed by medium-shot portraits of the officers. The cinema is positioned in the context of the war effort, perhaps, like the Volunteers, an important element in the defence of the home front. However, here again the contingent exceeds attempts at control. A young boy is perched upon a lamppost watching the band; another boy, seemingly in the way of the apparatus, is pulled aside brusquely by a production worker. While the grown-up volunteers stare straight ahead as they walk past carrying their Enfield rifles, the youths, displaying themselves for their own projected amusement, playfully engage with the apparatus.
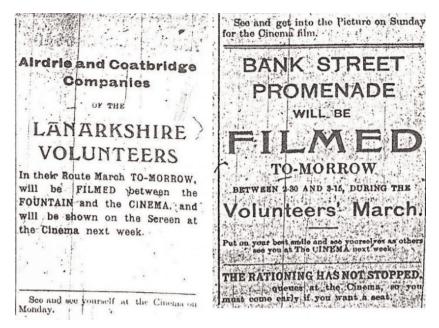
Fig. 1: Advertising the filming of the volunteer route march, Coatbridge Leader, 2 March 1918.

In this local treatment of military subjects there is little scope for official interpellation. The attraction of recognition, depending as it is in an acknowledgement of the apparatus and of the audience, breaks down attempts to direct attention at the ostensibly patriotic subject matter. As Michael Hammond has written in relation to the individual regiment scenes in *The Battle of the Somme* (1916), where soldiers often look and wave at the camera, official attempts to produce a homogeneous audience as a subject for propaganda are undone by the adherence of most of the film to pre-institutional tropes, including those of recognition: '[t]he direct address of the soldiers resting in the sunken road may speak to us today as a testament of doomed youth, but for the contemporary audience these shots provided the chance of finding the face of someone they knew'.[21] The wartime spectators' response was as likely to be one based on private experience as on public patriotism. Local exhibitors, taking their cue from older traditions of showmanship that thrived on audience interaction, were quick to adapt their commercial tactics to the war situation and to maximise the opportunities it afforded for filming crowds. In doing so they produced more or less ephemeral engagements with history, in which a number of ordinary people managed to claim their place in its visual trace. The war was also a novel experience which offered opportunities to display the extraordinary.

2   Spectacle

Scottish Troops for the Front (1914) and *Scottish Moving Picture News 32* (1918) are two wartime films which base their appeal on visually-spectacular content. Paul Virilio notes that the First World War produced a supply of images which functioned as the 'equivalent of an ammunition supply'.[22] The films under scrutiny here contain images which boosted the supply of volunteers for the front and the supply of finance for the war effort. Notably, the images are not of war itself; indeed signifiers of war or its consequences proved problematic, as controversies surrounding *The Battle of the Somme* and the *Roll of Honour* films illustrate.[23] One prominent and recurring attraction in both films is the figure of the kilted Highland soldier, or 'kiltie'.[24] Edward Spiers notes that in the 19th century the Scottish Highlander provided 'excellent material for battle-painters and the popular art market'. He cites the aristocratic artist Lady Butler: '"these splendid troops," she wrote, were "so essentially pictorial"'.[25]

The Highlanders' pictoriality and their usefulness in contributing to a sense of historical continuity had ensured their presence in recruitment campaigns both in the run-up to and during the war. The image of the Highland kiltie provided exotic appeal, in Scotland and beyond, and acted as a stereotypical signifier of a particularly Scottish contribution to the war effort. That companies of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders were comprised of recruits from the industrial city of Glasgow in the country's central belt points to the widespread success of the kiltie as a recruitment aide.[26] A feature of numerous Scottish military uniforms, the kilt appeared regularly in films of the period such as *Arrival at Whitehart Hotel, Campbeltown*.[27] Gunning notes that early cinema's appeal resided in its ability to bring together an international perspective and local representation: '[t]he lure of virtual world tours and glimpses of distant, exotic places marked the global aspect of early cinema, while the gasp of recognition and the naming of familiar faces or places characterised its local identity.'[28] The attractions on offer in these films are perhaps not as exotic as those to which Gunning refers; nevertheless, the films do offer glimpses of other worlds: in *Scottish Troops for the Front* the playfulness of recreational military activity in the Scottish borders, and in *Scottish Moving Picture News 32* the awe-inspiring images of the technological innovations of industrial capitalism.

Scottish Troops for the Front is a local film from Hawick which was first shown at Edinburgh's Palace Cinema on 4 August 1914.[29] As found in the archive, the film runs for 14 minutes and 20 seconds and contains five separate stories connecting military activity with sporting or leisurely pur-

Fig. 2: 1914 recruitment poster featuring the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum.

suits. We first see footage of Territorials from the 5th Royal Scots (some wearing kilts) as they arrive at their camp, prepare food, play games, and so on. Although shot before the outbreak of war intertitles (possibly included after the film's initial screenings) suggest that the men are training for the front. This is followed by footage of Sergeant J.L. Dewar (4th Royal Scots), Winner of the King's Prize (shooting), and a sizeable military parade consisting of territorials, some playing musical instruments, including another stereotypical signifier of Scottishness – the Highland bagpipes – entering Edinburgh's crowd-lined streets.

   In contrast to the films discussed in the first section the camera's pri-

mary focus here is not on the crowd but on the military parade. Processions and parades were, of course, common subjects for early topicals; indeed, Hammond notes that films depicting soldiers marching to and returning from the front had been popular in the Boer War.[30] The third section includes footage of Hawick Boy Scouts traversing a river on a rope bridge, further linking leisurely and military activity. This is developed in the fourth section, which contains footage of Yeomanry and Territorials. Here, in one striking diagonal shot of men on horseback, framing places the horse itself as the main point of interest. The final sequence returns to the opening section's setting and military life's supposed playfulness is reinforced: two men in Highland dress dance a jig in front of a boisterous crowd; another two engage in a boxing match, and the film concludes with a group of men smiling direct to camera and firing mounted machine guns amidst pretty rolling hills. Preparing for war, it seems, is very good fun. *Scottish Troops for the Front* combines elements of the sports day film and the parade film, which privilege visual spectacle as their main appeal. The attractions on offer here – parades, sports, horses, guns, kilts, and dancing – are thrown together in a spectacle of movement designed to entice the audience into the cinema. The film would not have been made mainly to boost recruitment; nevertheless, in incidentally constructing an appealing representation of military activity it is likely that it worked to promote it in 1914, when the popular consensus appeared to be that the war would be concluded within months.

Shot in the early months of 1918, *Scottish Moving Picture News 32* focuses on a campaign which toured military tanks around Scottish cities to sell war bonds.[31] Three versions of the film survive in the Archive: a Glasgow and an Edinburgh newsreel edition, and a propaganda film version, which would have been titled differently and circulated more widely. Although different in both duration and content all three films share common footage: a Highland brass band leads a military march; people queue to buy war bonds; dignitaries address crowds; a bi-plane flies overhead (which the camera operator struggles to keep in the frame); and extensive footage of the film's main attraction, Julian, the tank. A number of intertitles exclaim the rationale for and success of the campaign.[32]

Virilio argues that '[w]ar can never break free from the magical spectacle because its very purpose is to produce that spectacle: to fell the enemy is not so much to capture as to "captivate" him, to instil the fear of death before he actually dies.'[33] The film provides one striking and fear-inducing shot. The tank is introduced in an intertitle: 'The mechanical patriot does doughty deeds under the statue of Wallace'. This is followed by a cut to a

statue of William Wallace, the image of the Highlander *par excellence*, before the camera tilts down and pans left across heaving crowds controlled by policemen and Highland soldiers. We then see a shot of the tank from below as it heads direct to camera – an unnerving moment in which the machine appears perilously close to the audience and is reminiscent of the advancing train in *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat / Train Pulling into a Station* (Lumière Brothers, 1895). Filmed in close-up and in close proximity, it is a rare cinematic glimpse of the awesome power of mechanical, industrial warfare and is somewhat at odds with the majority of the footage – both in this film and in the films as a whole – where the threat of violence often seems remote. The tank is not only an effective killing machine but also, at the time, a technical novelty that would have appealed to local crowds both in the street and in the cinema.

Indicative of the exploratory cinematic forms emerging during this transitional era, *Scottish Moving Picture News 32* features more complex editing techniques. For instance, there is a sequence of four separate shots following an intertitle which reads 'Curiosity' and appears only in the Glasgow newsreel. First, a child steals into Julian for a closer inspection, followed by a medium and wide-shot of a military band, then a pan across an enthusiastic crowd who are presumably watching the band. The spatial connection between the three locations is unclear. An intertitle follows in which Aberdeen's Lord Provost Taggart is quoted: 'We want your money not to continue, but to end the War', the text displaying the careful spinning of wartime rhetoric and, given that this is four years into war, acknowledging a war-weariness in the public mood. The intertitle is followed by a sequence of five shots. In the first a group of men clamber aboard Julian, followed by a cut to a crowd scene similar to the one in the last sequence. It is again unclear whether the crowd is watching the tank or watching the band. The uncertainty of its gaze is reinforced later when a young boy is shown in close-up, smiling at the camera as he plays a tuba. There follows a cut to a medium-shot of the young girl as she climbs out of the tank and stares directly into camera, and then a cut back to the boy in the same framing. For today's viewer it is a troubling sequence, breaking as it does the spatial conventions of classical cinema. However, as indicated previously, these conventions were not fully-crystallised at the time and for wartime viewers this discontinuity would not have seemed unusual.

Scottish Moving Picture News 32 is an example of cinema's significant role in promoting and organising official fundraising efforts, such as the sale of War Bonds and benevolent initiatives for wounded soldiers and

soldiers' children, amongst others. This is expressed most directly in the longest version of the Tank Bank footage, which urges viewers in its closing intertitle to 'SAVE all they can and LEND all they can to their Native Land'. Taken together the films discussed in this section fuse visual signifiers of the Highland's romanticised past, the country's industrialised present, and those of 20th century warfare to construct an image of and address a nation in its entirety, readying itself for and engaging in battle. In providing these films the trade also sought to deepen the relationships between local filmmakers and the British state, a process outlined in the final section.

3   Alignment

In her study on the American film industry Leslie Midkiff Debauche describes the exhibition trade's wartime approach as an instance of 'practical patriotism', one in which the trade strove, as she puts it, 'to make their theatres an integral part of their communities'.[34] In Britain the trade faced considerable wartime hardships including import and fuel restrictions, increased taxation, and labour shortages.[35] This gave renewed energy to the trade's efforts to gain civic acceptance, as official recognition would bring practical rewards. From the trade's perspective, the cementing of cinema's civic role had two advantages: assuaging official intervention and embedding cinema-going in the social landscape and routines of local community and family life.[36] This coincided with a shift in official attitudes to cinema, as the state began to slowly move away from mistrust and censorship; indeed, by the war's end, the government had recognised cinema's practical and ideological potential and was in constant dialogue with the trade.[37] The trade's 'practical patriotism' connected the operations of commercial mass entertainment to the rhetoric of public interest and exemplified a broader alignment that was taking place between cinema as an emerging social practice and hegemonic ideologies.[38] This was part and parcel of the process of institutionalisation, which defined the medium increasingly in terms of commercial exhibition and narrative integration and marginalised other presentation venues and textual forms.

This section focuses on the activities of one Scottish company, George Green Ltd., whose work exemplifies how the trade's various branches reacted to and co-operated with the war effort.[39] The Greens had arrived from Lancashire at the end of the 19th century as travelling show business people; since 1896 they had been showing films in fairgrounds, at their

carnival grounds in Glasgow's East End, and in a growing circuit of working-class venues. Exactly one month before war started George Green advertised the sale of his fairground equipment to concentrate on his ten permanent cinemas, six of which were in Glasgow.[40] This decision followed the death of his son John Cyril Green and marked the end of their very prosperous trajectory in travelling fairground entertainment. George himself died the following year, but the business continued to grow in the hands of his widow, two sons (Bert and Fred), and four daughters.[41] Turning their full attention to the cinema trade, by the end of the war George Green Ltd. was a vertically-integrated company with a cinema circuit, a profitable distribution trade (Green's Film Service), and a newsreel in regular production (the *Scottish Moving Picture News*).[42]

Although well-respected and integrated within the Glasgow cinema trade business sphere, the Greens occupied a relatively marginal social position due to their travelling fairground origins and their Catholic background. George Green had been very active in the Showmen's Guild and the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, but this affiliation did not necessarily extend to shared sociability, especially when trade members tended to congregate around either Freemasonry and/or alcohol (George was a teetotaler).[43] Masonic lodges and other social functions gave other industry members informal chances to lobby local magistrates; the Greens instead took their newsreel cameras to the weddings of both children of the Glasgow Town Clerk.[44] The war not only presented an opportunity for the Greens to counteract their perceived marginality but also to develop their production enterprise, capitalising on their facilities and experience with topical filmmaking.

The *Bioscope* credits Green Ltd. with making the first local war-related film. Although it has not survived it reportedly showed naval reservists boarding a train for Portsmouth at Glasgow Central station on the Sunday before the declaration of war.[45] In the early stages of the war venues around the country were commandeered by the military authorities to house Territorials or be equipped as hospitals by the Red Cross.[46] The appropriation of buildings was the most basic form of co-operation: cinemas could be adapted easily as temporary accommodation and often served as community meeting places used for recruitment drives and fundraisers.

The introduction of the Entertainments Tax in 1916 ensured that the trade made a direct financial contribution to the war effort. Exhibitors had used their associations for charitable purposes before and George Green was well known for his contributions to Catholic charities, but the

company visibly redoubled their efforts during wartime. While the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association Glasgow Branch offered to donate the proceeds of an evening's performance to the National Relief Fund, Green offered the proceeds from two shows at each of his venues, which translated into a first contribution of £143.[47] The Greens also offered two free caravans and free cinema tickets to Belgian refugees and allowed one of their venues to be used in the evenings as a 'Union Jack Club', providing amusement to the soldiers billeted in the West Coast town of Ayr.[48] The use of the cinema space for practical military needs, refugee relief, and fundraising was common to many British exhibitors during the war. However, the Greens' alignment stood out for their participation in production, becoming the only Scottish company to issue a regular newsreel and produce an official Ministry of Food propaganda film (*Patriotic Porkers* [1918]).

During the war years the transition from a variety-based form of show and toward narrative features as the dominant textual and industrial mode was completed. Green's output exemplifies this process, with *Patriotic Porkers* illustrative of a move toward a more classical filmmaking form than that displayed in the films discussed above. Shooting pre-arranged action rather than actualities allows the filmmakers to utilise different set-ups for the same shot, to shoot the same sequence from various angles or distances and employ some limited camera movements. Combined with emerging editing techniques this resulted in a considerably more polished-looking final product.

David Monger suggests that British war propaganda under the National War Aims Committee deployed different rhetorical 'sub-patriotisms', one of which was a civic patriotism dependent on the idea of a 'concrescent community'. This approach appealed to a sense of shared experience, elevated the role of home-front efforts, and highlighted local civilian contributions in connection to the wider struggle.[49] This is apparent from the start of *Patriotic Porkers*, which is 9 minutes 50 seconds in length and comprises 25 intertitles and 50 separate shots. After an opening title outlining that the film is presented by The Ministry of Food, an intertitle makes explicit the film's purpose: 'Save your Potato Peelings, Cabbage Leaves, Household Refuse &c., to feed Pigs'. A series of shots of pigs, including a close-up of a piglet being held in a man's hand, is followed by shots of men in municipal carts collecting household waste. In contrast to the single takes dominant in the above films, *Patriotic Porkers* contains numerous sequences which employ continuity editing. An example of this occurs following an intertitle which reads 'House-to-House Collection'. An establishing shot showing a refuse collection cart and two workers is

followed by two sequences in which one of the men collects household waste, both comprised of three separate shots. The first is a medium-shot of a man and woman as she pours the contents of a bowl into a bucket. This is followed by a close-up of their hands and the bowl as the contents continue to be emptied. The film then returns to the same set-up as the previous medium-shot, as the woman shakes the last of the contents into the bucket. A similar sequence of shots follows depicting another instance of the same process. However, the editing in the second sequence appears to be more poorly executed and has the distancing effect of a jump cut.

Fig. 3: Still from Patriotic Porkers (Green's Film Service, 1918). Courtesy of Scottish Screen Archive/National Library of Scotland.

Another example of *découpage* occurs immediately after, when we are presented with a long shot of the same man carrying a bucket as he walks down a garden path (presumably that of the last woman that we have seen) toward the camera, which is positioned at eye-level. He exits the garden through an open gate and heads left. In the next shot the camera is placed slightly to the left of the position in the previous set-up and follows the man as he again walks through the gate (thereby creating a sense of temporal discontinuity) and heads left to deposit the contents of his bucket in a cart. Further instances which disrupt what would become the classical viewing experience emerge as the man walks to the cart and passes his male colleague who is looking directly at the camera. After

depositing the bucket's contents the first man glances furtively at the apparatus, the second man empties his bucket, and an intertitle appears: 'The Household Waste is on its way to become Pork'. This methodical account of a simple linear process, expressed visually using everyday objects, is a good example of filmmakers exercising an early form of continuity editing.

In its didactic approach *Patriotic Porkers* displays the overt propagandising qualities demanded by the British state as it sought to raise awareness of the contribution that civilians could make to the war effort – in this instance, the gathering of household waste to provide swill for a mass pig-breeding programme aimed at providing additional food for frontline soldiers. This is apparent in the straightforward appeal toward the film's conclusion: 'HOUSEHOLD WASTE. Save it and breed Pigs; Collect it and feed Pigs; Use it to beat Pigs – The ones in Germany', which is held onscreen for nine seconds. The final intertitle, 'Household Waste feeds more Pigs – more Pigs mean cheaper pork and ham', appeals directly to the audience's pockets. It is a shrewd conclusion, perhaps flowing from the Greens' familiarity with their primarily working-class audience, gleaned from decades of contact at close quarters in fairgrounds and cinemas.

The film's informative tone also signifies a shift from a purely or predominantly 'local' representation toward a more cohesive image, one which was closer to the War Office position and addressed a less specific audience. While *Patriotic Porkers* seems to have been shot in Scotland, at least judging by the characteristic tenements on display and the brief appearance of some kilt-wearing soldiers, the desire for wider audience reach ensures that it does not take a local angle. The actors, while seemingly non-professional, are not characterised as individuals but as types – in particular the housewives, who stand in for the implicit viewer. Watching this film 100 years after its production and through an academic lens it would be easy to concentrate on the film's didactic qualities; it is also important to recognise that the film is likely to have drawn laughter from its audience. The aforementioned close-up of the piglet, shots of a large boar vaulting a fence in an effort to escape its sty, even the furtive glances to the camera would all have lightened the tone. It is an effective duality that testifies to the filmmakers' familiarity with popular entertainment while showing their ambitions for expansion. Although the film had its first trade show in Glasgow on 1 July 1918 it was also screened as part of the cinemotor programme (traveling vans organised by the National War Aims Committee).[50] This gave Green's productions national exposure and furthered an intention indicated by the change in their newsreel's title from 'Scottish' to 'British' *Moving Picture News* in early 1919.

4   Conclusion

Within days of the start of hostilities in 1914 and long before its duration and casualty numbers turned it into an era-defining catastrophe, the European conflict was already being called the 'Great War'. To support this enormous mobilisation the state needed to find ways to galvanise the home front. At this junction, two decades into its public existence, cinema was being reconfigured as a mass medium through a textual and institutional redefinition of its mode of address, away from the traditions of live showmanship and display that had constituted its early environment. Besides this effort to reach a mass audience the cinema industry, as exemplified by the Greens, was engaged in a project of capitalist market expansion precisely at a moment when Britain was waging a war with its imperialist competitors to defend and increase its own market share. War brought their efforts together.

This article has examined how the textual strategies associated with a cinema of attractions were used to draw an audience for local topical films, and how they were incorporated into more complex narrative structures for broader distribution. Throughout the war cinematic attractions often worked in synergy with propaganda rhetoric, deliberately or not. The visual appeal of Highland uniforms, Territorial camps, and mechanical novelties such as tanks and aeroplanes was easily recuperated to aid recruitment and fundraising. The localised mode of address and the overt engagement with the apparatus seen in local crowd films fitted less comfortably with a generalising patriotic discourse. While commercially motivated, the self-reflexive space opened by local filmmakers creates startling moments, allowing today's viewer to experience fragments of historical contingency. Under the looming weight of the Great War narrative these instants of agency and self-representation break through, and for a moment it is possible to imagine another cinema, another century, a different world.

Notes

1. Although the chronologies of cinema history are multiple and contentious, the war years have a transformational character in most of them. While André Gaudreault has argued that 'the cinema, as we describe it, did not exist before 1910' (because its cultural paradigm was still that of the media it derived from), Keil and Stamp cover the period from 1908 to 1917 under the title of *American Cinema's Transitional Era*, and Thomas Elsaesser argues that by 1917 'classical continuity cinema was fully in place'. Gaudreault 2000, p. 12; Keil & Stamp 2004; Elsaesser 1990, p. 154.

2. See for instance Reeves 1986 and Badsey 1983, following the foundational work carried out by Rachael Low (1950).
3. De Groot 2009, p. 13.
4. The absences in the film record also point to the political importance of a form of representation that was denied to several important events during wartime. For instance, within one week of the outbreak of the conflict a 5,000-strong anti-war demonstration took place in Glasgow, yet we can find no trace of the cinematic recording of this or any other popular anti-war resistance in Scotland in the archive.
5. Griffiths 2012.
6. A number of the films discussed have been digitised and are available to stream at the Scottish Screen Archive's website, which can be accessed at http://ssa.nls.uk/. Although marginalised from most historical accounts, local topical films constitute a significant part of the Scottish Screen Archive's collection and the bulk of the surviving footage from the silent period in Scotland. Janet McBain, the first curator of the Scottish Screen Archive (established 1976), has devoted significant efforts to the conservation and valorisation of these films. See McBain 1996 and 2004.
7. Bottomore 2004, p. 37.
8. Gunning 1990.
9. For recent approaches foregrounding intermediality and the continuities between cinema and other cultural series see Gaudreault 2011 and Kember 2009.
10. Gunning 1990, p. 57.
11. van Dooren & Krämer 1995, p. 99.
12. Bottomore 2004, p. 33.
13. Gunning 2004, p. 50.
14. The film has been digitised and is available to stream at: http://ssa.nls.uk/film/0795 (accessed on 13 July 2014).
15. 'Territorial camp at Clochkiel', *Argyllshire Herald*, 18 July 1914; 'Territorial Camp', *Argyllshire Herald*, 25 July 1914. The Territorial Army comprised part-time, civil volunteers.
16. Ibid.
17. van Dooren & Krämer 1995, p. 103.
18. Royle 2011, pp. 43-44.
19. 'Scottish News and Notes'.
20. The film has been digitised and is available to stream at: http://ssa.nls.uk/film/0376 (accessed on 13 July 2014).
21. Hammond 2011, p. 30.
22. Virilio 1989, p. 1.
23. For more information on Roll of Honour films see Hammond 2006, pp. 70-97. Hammond notes that the films were discontinued in the third year of the war.
24. There is considerable critical literature focusing on the use of the tartan as part of a romantic fantasy of Highland history. *Scotch Reels* (McArthur 1982) is the first fully-fledged critique of its use in cinema and television.
25. Spiers 2006, p. 2.
26. For more on the Highland regiments and the war see Cameron & Robertson 1999, pp. 81-102.
27. South of the border the terms 'England' and 'Britain' were often conflated, much to the chagrin of some officials north of the border. See for instance the letter penned by Lord Provost of Glasgow, Sir D. M. Stevenson to the *Weekly Dispatch*, reported in the *Glasgow Programme* (local trade journal), 31 August 1914.
28. Gunning 2004, p. 50.

29. 'The Palace', *Scotsman*, 4 August 1914.
30. Hammond 2006, p. 71.
31. The archive contains both a Glasgow and an Edinburgh edition of the film as a news-reel. A propaganda film version which would have been circulated more widely is available to view at: http://ssa.nls.uk/film/1238B (accessed on 15 July 2014).
32. For instance, it is noted that Tank Week in Dundee raised £4,4000,000. This is consistent with *The Scotsman* (9 February 1918), 'Dundee Tank Bank', p. 6, which reports that £3,679,582 was raised in five days in Dundee. During the opening ceremony the chairman of the proceedings, Mr J. C. Buist, suggested that the campaign was successful as 'the Tank appealed to two sentiments which were very deeply rooted in every Scottish heart. These sentiments were love of country and a very strong liking for a sound investment.'
33. Virilio 1989, p. 5.
34. Midkiff Debauche 1997, p. 75.
35. On the effects of war conditions on the Scottish cinema trade see Griffiths 2012, pp. 98-105.
36. Hammond & Williams 2011, pp. 3-4.
37. Reeves 1999, pp. 29-30.
38. Attracting the middle classes without alienating the traditional constituency of moving picture shows demanded, as Jon Burrows explains, 'a more hybridised address' as part of a renegotiation of cultural hierarchies through which cinema consolidated its mass appeal. Burrows 2003, pp. 19, 183.
39. For a fuller account of this company's history see McBain 2007.
40. Advert in *The World's Fair*, 4 July 1914.
41. Bert and Fred Green were well-known figures in the years to come. The *Lancashire Evening Post* pointed out that '[o]n her husband's death … Mrs. Green became head of the firm', and that she was 'actively managing the affairs of the company' up to her death in 1932 (4 August 1932: http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000711/19320804/164/0006 [accessed on 10 September 2014]).
42. On Green's newsreel production activities see Griffiths 2012, pp. 284-285.
43. The Anima lodge 1223, with a cinema screen surrounded by thistles as its badge, was chartered in August 1920 and had the explicit intention of catering to the unusual working hours of cinema professionals who previously had been members of other lodges. James McLaren, 'Lodge Anima 1223 History', http://www.lodgeanima1223.com/history.html (accessed on 13 July 2014).
44. *Scottish Moving Picture News: Wedding of John Glaister and Isobel Lindsay* (May 1918), http://ssa.nls.uk/film/2833, and *British Moving Picture News: Wedding of Alys Couper and Douglas Lindsay* (June 1920), http://ssa.nls.uk/film/1659.
45. *Bioscope*, 6 August 1914, p. 532.
46. The *Bioscope* mentions cinemas in Stirling, Dunfermline, Arbroath, and Wick, and suggests these venues will reopen soon after Territorials are mobilised (20 August 1914, p. 719).
47. *Bioscope*, 27 August, 10 September 1914.
48. *Bioscope*, 22 October 1914, 'Opening of Ayr Union Jack Club', *Scotsman*, 24 November 1914, p. 7.
49. Monger 2012, p. 189.
50. Monger 2012, p. 55.

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