



## MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER

### *The Battle of the Somme*

REF N° 2004-16

#### PART A – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

##### 1 SUMMARY

The 1916 film *The Battle of the Somme* is uniquely significant both as the compelling documentary record of one of the key battles of the First World War (and indeed one which has come to typify many aspects of this landmark in 20<sup>th</sup> Century history) and as the first feature-length documentary film record of combat produced anywhere in the world. In the latter role, the film played a major part in establishing the methodology of documentary and propaganda film, and initiated debate on a number of issues relating to the ethical treatment of “factual” film which continue to be relevant to this day. Seen by many millions of British civilians within the first month of distribution, *The Battle of the Somme* was recognized at the time as a phenomenon that allowed the civilian home-front audience to share the experiences of the front-line soldier, thus helping both to create and to reflect the concept of Total War. Seen later by mass audiences in allied and neutral countries, including Russia and the United States, it coloured the way in which the war and British participation in it were perceived around the world at the time and subsequently, and it is the source a number of iconic images of combat on the Western Front in the First World War which remain in almost daily use ninety years later, of which two examples are reproduced below.



Finally, it has importance as one of the foundation stones of the film collection of the Imperial War Museum, an institution that may claim to be among the oldest film archives in the world.

##### 2 DETAILS OF THE NOMINATOR

###### 2.1 Name (person or organisation)

Roger Smither  
Keeper of the Film and Photograph Archives  
Imperial War Museum

###### 2.2 Relationship to the documentary heritage nominated

Head of the archive responsible for the preservation of the nominated item

###### 2.3 Contact person (s)

Roger Smither  
Keeper of the Film and Photograph Archives, Imperial War Museum

###### Alternative contacts are:

Paul Sargent  
Deputy Keeper of the Film and Video Archive  
David Walsh  
Head of Preservation, Film and Video Archive

- 2.4 Contact details (include address, phone, fax, email)  
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Imperial War Museum  
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### 3 **IDENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE**

- 3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

*The Battle of the Somme* identified in the Imperial War Museum's records under catalogue number **IWM 191**: five reels of 35mm film, total length 5005 ft (1525 metres), equivalent to a running time of approximately 70 mins when screened at a correct projection speed for silent film.

- 3.2 Description

Physical description:

A summary description of the five reels of the archive master copy follows. A printout extract from the Museum's Full Technical Records database is attached as Appendix 1.

CAN LABEL	LENGTH	COL	SND	STATUS
IWM 191/01 F 1 A 35	1165	B/W	MUT	AM
IWM 191/02 F 1 A 35	885	B/W	MUT	AM
IWM 191/03 F 1 A 35	945	B/W	MUT	AM
IWM 191/04 F 1 A 35	905	B/W	MUT	AM
IWM 191/05 F 1 A 35	1105	B/W	MUT	AM
Total	5005			

Key to fields:

CAN LABEL: film number/reel number (reels 1 to 5 of film IWM 191)  
copy type copy number ("F 1"=first Fine Grain copy)  
base ("A"=Acetate)  
gauge ("35"=35mm)

LENGTH: in feet

COL: Colour – "B/W"=Black and White

SND: Sound – "MUT"=Mute

STATUS: Archive status – "AM"=Archive Master

Provenance:

Responsibility for the original nitrate negative was handed to the Imperial War Museum in 1920, and a nitrate protection master was made in 1921. A new safety film protection master was made in 1931, and this copy is now the film's archive master copy, the original negative and all but one reel of the 1921 master having been destroyed following the onset of irretrievable nitrate decomposition in the early 1970s.

Physical condition and storage:

As was common at a time when the only method of making additional copies of a popular film was to strike them from the original negative, the negative of *Battle of the Somme* was already seriously worn at the time it was handed over to the Museum in 1920, with much evidence of scratches and abrasions, and some sections replaced by duplicate sections which – again reflecting the limitations of film technology at the time – were of lesser quality than the original. The steps taken by the making of the two “protection masters”, on nitrate in 1921 and on safety film in 1931, were intended to preclude the risk of further damage (and may well represent the first time that any institution had acted on the archival principle of making additional copies for the sole purpose of protecting a film for posterity).

The early safety stock used in the 1931 master seems to be reasonably stable, although the picture quality is somewhat variable, primarily due to the irreparable wear in the original negative already noted. The “1931 master” in fact now consists of an assembly of picture footage on 1931 filmstock, with intertitles spliced-in subsequently – some printed in 1962 and others in 1982 from various sources – as the Museum’s copying policy in the 1920s and 1930s concentrated on picture elements only, omitting intertitles to save costs.

The master is stored in the Imperial War Museum’s master film store at the ISO-recommended conditions of 5°C and 40%RH.

## **4 JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION/ ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA**

### **4.1 Authenticity**

Authenticity is established by the provenance of the record (see first part of answer to Question 3.2 above), and by the ability exactly to match the Imperial War Museum’s holding against descriptions of the film found in contemporary press coverage and screening programmes, such as the programme for a special screening at Windsor Castle in the presence of the then King, George V, on 2 September 1916 (of which copies are also held at the Museum), etc.

Note that, because the film remained in popular demand from its first release in August 1916 until the end of the War in 1918, the physical materials preserved by the Museum reflect some alterations made to the film after its first release to keep it “topical” – most conspicuously, the addition to the end of the film at some point after 8 April 1917 of a map showing the extent of the territory given up by the German Army during its withdrawal on that date to the ‘Hindenburg Line’. Such changes may, however, be readily identified and the film could easily be restored to its original appearance should the need ever arise.

### **4.2 World significance, uniqueness and irreplaceability**

There are several factors which establish the record’s significance and uniqueness, many of which are elaborated in the correspondence with experts from which extracts have been included in Appendix 4 (and from which the remarks quoted in italics in the following paragraphs have been copied).

#### Documentary film as a genre:

The potential value of film as a medium for documentary record was recognized very early in the history of cinema, in a number of far-sighted works such as *Une nouvelle source de l’histoire* by Boleslaw Matuszewski published in Paris on 25 March 1898. Despite this early recognition, and continuing awareness of the value of documentary film (for example, there is a specific ‘Best Documentary’ category in the Academy Awards™), the *Memory of the World* Register does not yet include any documentary films. The following paragraphs argue that *The Battle of the Somme* has a strong case to become the first such record to join the Register, because it is in many ways “the first” in its genre.

#### *The Battle of the Somme* as a factual record of the event:

Taken by two “official cinematographers” just half a year after the British War Office relaxed its initial total ban on filming at the front, the film *The Battle of the Somme* offers a documentary record of the opening of the British Army’s 1916 summer offensive on the Western Front during the First World War. If it were no more than this, it would already have great significance. In the words of Professor Peter Simkins: “*From a British, and Commonwealth, viewpoint, the 1916 Somme offensive was the first major battle fought by the British Empire’s first-ever mass citizen army. In numerical terms, the casualties suffered by the British and Dominion forces on the Somme were the highest incurred in any single battle, and British losses on the first day alone (1 July 1916) were the worst ever suffered by the British Army in a single day in its entire history\**. *The British Army on the Western Front in July 1916 was also still a volunteer army and, moreover, it was notable for the strong local links which most of its formations had with towns, cities and rural areas at home. Scarcely a family ... was therefore left untouched by the battle which, as a result, occupies a unique place in our collective folk memory as well as leaving a permanent scar on our collective psyche.*”

\*What has been called “the bloodiest twenty-four hours in the entire history of the British Army” is normally reckoned to have cost 57,470 casualties, including 19,240 dead and 35,493 wounded. Understandably, as an official film with acknowledged propaganda intent, the film does not dwell on the scale of the disaster. Nonetheless, the reality of death in battle is one of the inescapable lessons which it offered and offers its audience.

*The Battle of the Somme as a phenomenon of popular awareness:*  
*Battle of the Somme* was privately previewed to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George on 2 August 1916, barely a month after the events it portrayed. It was then shown to an invited audience on 10 August, and placed on general release in London ten days later when it proved phenomenally popular. It has been calculated that it achieved as many as 20 million attendances in the first six weeks after its release. The film was perceived at the time as a means by which the civilian home-front audience could share the experiences of the front-line soldier. Because of this perception, the film brought to the cinemas many members of the society who had previously ignored film as a lower-class entertainment. A reasonably typical reaction was voiced by Frances Stevenson, secretary (and mistress) to Lloyd George, who was present at the 2 August screening and recalled her brother Paul’s own death in combat: “I am glad I have seen the sort of thing our men have to go through, even to the sortie from the trench, and the falling in the barbed wire. There were pictures too of the battlefield after the fight, & of our gallant men lying all crumpled up & helpless. There were pictures of men mortally wounded being carried out of the communication trenches, with the look of agony on their faces. It reminded me of what Paul’s last hours were: I have often tried to imagine to myself what he went through, but now I *know*: and I shall never forget. It was like going through a tragedy. I felt something of what the Greeks must have felt when they went in their crowds to witness those grand old plays – to be purged in their minds through pity and terror.” (Quoted in *Lloyd George: a Diary by Frances Stevenson* (ed. A J P Taylor, London, 1971))

*The Battle of the Somme reaching audiences across borders and time:*  
The film was shown widely around the world, to encourage support for the allied cause: it was one of the films taken by Captain Alfred Bromhead on his 1916/17 missions to rally support for the war among the troops and civilians of Britain’s Russian ally, and it was one of the films used to promote the allied cause in the still-neutral USA. It helped shape the world’s perception of the First World War, and continues to do so to this day. The film remains the source of a number of iconic images of combat on the Western Front in the First World War which, almost ninety years later, are still widely used in books and newspapers and on television whenever the experience of trench warfare and the heroism and suffering of the ordinary soldier need to be evoked. Still images from the film appear in innumerable books and articles published in many languages. Television series such as *The Great War* (BBC, 1964), *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century* (KCET for PBS, 1996), or *The First World War* (Wark Clements for Channel 4, 2003) and countless other series and individual programmes produced around the world have all made scenes from *The Battle of*

*the Somme* familiar to the global audience. In the words of Professor Jeffrey Richards: “It captured the experience of World War One on celluloid and has shaped the popular reaction to and memory of that war ever since.”

*The Battle of the Somme* as a model for documentary/propaganda film:  
In addition to the importance of the film as a documentary record *per se*, the film *The Battle of the Somme* has additional importance as the first feature-length documentary film of a battle ever produced. It played a major part in establishing the methodology of documentary (and propaganda) film, creating a style which remains familiar in many subsequent productions from many countries. It also initiated debate on a number of issues relating to the ethical treatment of “factual” film that continue to be relevant to this day. For example, the film provoked immediate controversy in the correspondence columns of British newspapers about the intrusion of the camera into scenes of private tragedy, while the use of “faked” or reconstructed footage in the film was examined and debated in the 1920s.

*The Battle of the Somme* as an agent towards the establishment of film archives:  
Finally, and linking back to the original impulse that inspired the writer of *Une nouvelle source de l'histoire* and similar visionaries, *The Battle of the Somme* has importance as one of the foundation stones for the concept of film archiving itself. *The Times* of London, writing about the film on 11 August 1916, said: “If anything were needed to justify the existence of the cinematograph, it is to be found in the wonderful series of films of the opening of the British attack on the Somme on July 1 which were shown privately at the Scala Theatre yesterday and which will soon be exhibited in every part of the country. In years to come, when historians want to know the conditions under which the great offensive was launched, they will only have to send for these films and a complete idea of the situation will be revealed before their eyes – for we take it as a matter of course that a number of copies of them will be carefully preserved in the national archives.” The inclusion of film in the collections of the Imperial War Museum when that institution was formally established in 1920 may be interpreted as a realisation of the ambition voiced by *The Times*, and the measures taken by the Museum in 1921 to ensure the survival of this film and others may be seen as some of the first truly film archival actions taken by any institution.

#### **Irreplaceability:**

The “irreplaceability” of film is more difficult to establish than that of other forms of record, given that film is by definition a medium of mass communication: there are several other copies of *Battle of the Somme* in the world, including those released by the Imperial War Museum itself to broaden access to the title. However, the archive masters preserved in the vaults of the IWM Film and Video Archive are the copies with the most direct linkage to the original negative, and are to this extent truly irreplaceable.

### **4.3 Criteria of (a) time (b) place (c) people (d) subject and theme (e) form and style**

Several of these issues have already been addressed indirectly or generally in the extended answer to Question 4.2 above. The answers below offer brief comments in response to the specific themes covered in Section 4.2.5 of the ‘General Guidelines’.

- (a) **Time:** the film *The Battle of the Somme* is unquestionably “of its time” both as documentary evidence of a major military engagement and as the vehicle by which the civilian populations (initially of Britain; subsequently of all countries) were made aware, or felt they were being made aware, of the realities of combat on the Western Front. As previously noted, it is also “first of its kind” in a number of ways – as feature-length documentary, as official propaganda film, as impulse in the creation of film archiving, etc.
- (b) **Place:** *The Battle of the Somme* records the French landscape over which the campaign of the summer of 1916 was fought, and the damage inflicted on it by the fighting. However, its

greater importance might be held to be as a record of the symbolic place that “the Somme” has come to hold in the consciousness of several generations.

- (c) **People:** the nature of the British Army at the time of the opening of the Somme Offensive on 1 July 1916 has been characterized by Professor Peter Simkins in a letter already quoted in answer to Question 4.2 – “The British Army on the Western Front in July 1916 was also still a volunteer army and, moreover, it was notable for the strong local links which most of its formations had with towns, cities and rural areas at home.” In other words, the soldiers seen in the film were not members of an exclusive professional army but representatives of the entire range of the population that had been civilians less than two years before. One of the more touching aspects of the film itself is the way that soldiers on many occasions react to the presence of the camera – waving or “putting on a show” – knowing that their friends and families at home may see them: even German prisoners of war are encouraged to make sure they are “in picture”. On the other side of the screen, as it were, the film was perceived as an important way by which the civilians at home could identify with the experiences of the soldiers at the front. The film also has been and remains a means by which people beyond the boundaries of the country where it was made, and of later generations than that for which it was first projected, have understood the realities of the First World War. Therefore, the resonance of the film, both at the time and since, pervaded and pervades many kinds and conditions of humanity.
- (d) **Subject and theme:** warfare is regrettably a theme that runs through much of human history. *The Battle of the Somme* records an important moment in one of the two great conflicts of the Twentieth Century, as well as providing several iconic images that are still in regular use to encapsulate the meaning of war in general.
- (e) **Form and Style:** not only did *The Battle of the Somme* record a very significant battle, it also helped to establish the methodology by which future wars would be depicted through the medium of moving pictures. The pattern set in 1916 by *Battle of the Somme* is recognisable in films produced by all sides in the Second World War and beyond. The film also initiated debate on a number of issues that continue to be relevant to this day. In addition to ethical issues of intrusion and authenticity previously noted, the film provoked debate about whether such material belonged at all in a medium normally devoted to entertainment: one owner was moved to display a sign outside his theatre reading “We are not showing The Battle of the Somme. This is a place of amusement, not a chamber of horrors.” This may be compared with a letter by Arthur Conan Doyle (published in *The Times* on 4 September 1916), which asked “How can we learn to understand and sympathize with the glorious achievements and sacrifices of our soldiers so well as when we actually see them in action before our eyes? The film is a monument to their devotion. The theatre is filled constantly with the relatives of the men portrayed, and I do not think they feel there is any desecration in the performance.”

#### 4.4 Issues of rarity, integrity, threat and management

Consideration of the issues of rarity and integrity has been included in the answers given to Questions 4.1 and 4.2 above. The level of institutional or environmental threat is considered low; the level of inherent threat (potential instability of carrier) is considered medium (see 8.1 below).

Details of the Museum’s management plan are provided in 6.1 below.

## 5 LEGAL INFORMATION

- 5.1. Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)  
The Trustees of  
The Imperial War Museum  
Lambeth Road  
London SE1 6HZ  
UK

Accounting Officer: Robert Crawford CBE, Director-General

**Telephone:** +44 (0) 20 7416 5000 (switchboard)

**Fax:** +44 (0) 20 7416 5374

5.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details, if different to owner)

Roger Smither

Keeper of the Film and Photograph Archives

Imperial War Museum

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London SE1 6HZ

UK

**Telephone:** +44 (0) 20 7416 5290

**Fax:** +44 (0) 20 7416 5299

**Email:** [Rsmither@iwm.org.uk](mailto:Rsmither@iwm.org.uk)

5.3 Legal status:

(a) Category of ownership

The nominated materials are owned outright by the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum, whose status is explained in (d) below.

(b) Accessibility

For general information about access to materials in the Film and Video Archive, see the Archive's pages on the Imperial War Museum website, at <http://collections.iwm.org.uk/server/show/nav.00g004>.

- A good quality 35mm viewing print of *The Battle of the Somme* is regularly screened in the Cinema of the Imperial War Museum's London building.
- Members of the public have the right to request personal screenings at the Archive's premises by prior appointment at any reasonable time.
- 35mm (or 16mm) film prints are loaned when requested for screening in film festivals, retrospectives, etc around the world.
- The Museum operates a 'Film Loan Scheme' which makes 16mm prints (and since the 1980s, video copies) of selected films from the Film and Video Archive available to educational institutions at minimal cost. *The Battle of the Somme* has been included in the Loan Scheme catalogue since the scheme was established more than 30 years ago.

In addition to the above:

- The title is being made available on-line to subscribing educational users in the UK through two third-party websites – Screenonline, created by the BFI (British Film Institute – <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/>) and Education Media Online, created by the BUFVC (British Universities Film and Video Council – <http://www.emol.ac.uk/>). The IWM's own website currently lacks the capability to stream films, but the possibility for showing *Battle of the Somme* on the IWM website will be considered when it becomes feasible.
- *The Battle of the Somme* became in 1987 the first title from the IWM Film and Video Archive to be offered for retail video sale, and has remained in distribution ever since. Plans are currently in place to add DVD release to the existing VHS video platform. The video is currently released through DD Video as part of a two-video pack with the title *The Battles of the Somme and Ancre*, in which it is paired with the film of the closing stages of the Somme campaign, *The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks*, released January 1917. (<http://www.ddvideo.co.uk/>).

(c) Copyright status

*Battle of the Somme* was produced under the terms of British Crown Copyright, which the Imperial War Museum is able to administer under a licence issued by the Stationery Office, the copyright controller for British official publications.



(d) Responsible administration

As a National Museum, the Imperial War Museum is a 'statutory British public body' accountable to Parliament, whose collections are held in trust for the nation. Collections are administered in accordance with recognized professional archival standards, for example, as determined by the Government's Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, the Public Records Acts, and FIAF.

The Museum's history and status is explained on its website in the "About Us" pages (<http://www.iwm.org.uk/server/show/nav.00100m003>), as follows: "The Imperial War Museum is a multi-branch national museum founded in 1917 to record the story of the Great War and the contributions made to it by the peoples of the Empire. The Museum and its governing body, the Board of Trustees, were formally established by Act of Parliament in 1920... In 1939 the Trustees' remit was extended to include the Second World War and in 1953 the terms of reference were further expanded to include all military operations in which British or Commonwealth forces have been involved since August 1914".

The Imperial War Museum Film and Video Archive – the origins of which can, as has already been shown (Question 4.2), be traced back to the Museum's foundation – has been a full Member of FIAF, the International Federation of Film Archives, since 1980 and as such has formally subscribed to the FIAF Code of Ethics.

The Museum will be pleased to provide any further evidence of "responsible administration" required for the *Memory of the World* nomination process.

(e) Other factors

Research and Study:

The Imperial War Museum has, from the first days of its responsibility for *The Battle of the Somme*, taken steps to facilitate work to determine the accuracy, provenance and significance of the film. In the early 1920s, it screened the film to a panel of military experts who were asked to advise on its authenticity and historical value; at the same time, the Museum compiled a detailed shot list itemizing what was known about the date, location, and content of each scene in the film, and the cameraman responsible. Since then, Museum staff have repeatedly re-examined the film to supplement this research, and the Museum has also enabled and encouraged research by outside students and historians. A bibliography of some of the resulting internal documents and publications is attached to this submission as Appendix 2.

Importance of recognition by *Memory of the World*:

The Imperial War Museum is acutely aware of the honour that nomination of *The Battle of the Somme* for inclusion in the *Memory of the World* Register would represent – particularly if such nomination is the first made of a British record, and the first made for any documentary film. If the Museum is successful in its application, it will work hard to live up to this honour. The fact of nomination would be proclaimed, together with a display of any associated certification and use of the MOTW logo if allowed, in a prominent location in a Museum building, and will be the subject of a specific press release. If possible, a gala screening with live musical accompaniment of the film would be arranged as setting for the presentation of the certificate, with attendant publicity. The fact of nomination will be reflected, again with use of the logo if allowed, on future access copies of the film – if timing permits, including the proposed forthcoming DVD release – and will be mentioned in all future references to the Museum's archival responsibility for this title.

## **6 MANAGEMENT PLAN**

6.1 *The Battle of the Somme* is covered by the preservation policies of the Film and Video Archive (copy attached as Appendix 3), whose main aims are:

- To maintain the originals in the best possible conditions to maximize their life expectancy.
- To carry out continual condition checking programmes on the material.



- To make duplicate masters of originals where the originals are at risk through decomposition, obsolescence or excessive use.
- To make access copies of the material (surrogates).

In support of these aims, the Film and Video Archive of the Imperial War Museum has a dedicated film and video preservation unit, responsible for maintaining good storage practices, for monitoring the condition of the film and video in the archive and for producing duplicate masters and access copies both on film and video as appropriate. The unit operates with a staff of 10 and an annual budget of almost £200,000 (excluding salaries and building maintenance and environmental costs). In addition to stores operating at ISO standards, the facilities include film inspection and viewing areas, film printing equipment, and telecine and video facilities. *The Battle of the Somme* exists, in addition to the 1931 master, as a duplicate negative master, and numerous access copies on film, video and file formats. These ensure that both the future preservation of the film is assured and its access demands satisfied.

## 7 CONSULTATION

7.1 (a) / (b) The Imperial War Museum, which the writer of this nomination represents, is itself the owner/custodian of the heritage item for which nomination is sought.

(c) The Museum has found – by reference to the *Memory of the World* website and by direct enquiry at the UNESCO offices in Paris – that there is neither a British national nor a European regional *Memory of the World* Committee with which to consult about this nomination.

In the absence of such formal channels for consultation, the Museum has invited comments on the nomination from a number of academic experts. Extracts from their replies are included in the fourth appendix submitted with this form; the original replies will be copied by, or made available for reading at, the Imperial War Museum if desired.

## PART B – SUBSIDIARY INFORMATION

### 8 ASSESSMENT OF RISK

8.1 The level of risk due to political situation, environment, preservation budget, or access is low. The risk to the primary master copy due to the instability of the material (1930s cellulose acetate safety film) is medium, although the material is currently stable.

### 9 ASSESSMENT OF PRESERVATION

9.1 The material is part of a collection of official films taken into the care of the Imperial War Museum in 1920. As a particularly important and popular film, the original negative of *The Battle of the Somme* was well worn at the time of receipt by the Imperial War Museum. The current primary master, a positive copy made (for the most part) in 1931 from the original negative, has been subjected to very little use beyond the generation of a small number of duplicate negatives and is therefore in moderately good condition. Its main defects result from the splicing in of the intertitles (which were not copied in 1931 partly for reasons of cost) in the 1960s and 1980s, some of which are of poor quality, and from the occasional scene copied from inferior quality dupe negative material.

The present policy is to preserve this master in its present form along with a secondary duplicate negative master made from it in 1982. Any further restoration work to improve the quality of, for instance, the intertitles will be carried out on duplicate copies.

## PART C - LODGEMENT

This nomination is lodged by:

(Please print name)

ROGER B N SMITHER

(Signature)

.....

(Date)

21 March 2011

## APPENDIX 1

Printout extract from the Imperial War Museum's Full Technical Records database describing the Archive Master copy of *The Battle of the Somme*.

### Key to terminology/abbreviations when not self-explanatory:

Can Number: film number/reel number (reels 1 to 5 of film IWM 191)  
 copy type copy number ("F 1" = first Fine Grain copy)  
 base ("A" = Acetate)  
 gauge (35mm)  
 Copy Status: AM = Archive Master  
 Access: Access to this copy: NPA = "No Public Access" because of AM status  
 Colour: b/w = black and white  
 Test Results: percentage of measured shrinkage  
 extent of damage to surface and sprocket holes (0 = no damage)  
 reaction on A-D (Acid Detection) strips testing for "Vinegar Syndrome"

Can Number: IWM 191/01 F 1 A 35

Copy Status:	AM	Access:	NPA
Colour:	b/w		
Sound:	mute		
Length (ft):	1165	Runspeed:16	Runtime(mins): 19
Frame:	full		
Manufacturer:	Kodak	Kodak	Kodak
Manufr. Date:	1931	1962	1982
Acq. Method:	preservation	Acq. Date:	/1931
Parent Copy:	N1-N-35		
Title:	Battle of the Somme		
Home Location:	Duxford		
Notes	Picture mostly on 1931 soft positive; most titles reprinted 1982 (PP 42/3) to correct positioning; other titles on 1962 stock.		
Test results:	9/1972	0.55%	0 0 A-D:0.0
	7/1967	0.42%	0 0 A-D:0.0

Can Number: IWM 191/02 F 1 A 35

Copy Status:	AM	Access:	NPA
Colour:	b/w		
Sound:	mute		
Length (ft):	885	Runspeed:16	Runtime(mins): 15
Frame:	full		
Manufacturer:	Kodak	Kodak	Kodak
Manufr. Date:	1931	1962	1982
Acq. Method:	preservation	Acq. Date:	/1931
Parent Copy:	N1-N-35		
Title:	Battle of the Somme		
Home Location:	Duxford		
Notes	Picture mostly on 1931 soft positive; most titles on 1962 stock; one title reprinted 1982 (PP 42/3) to correct positioning.		
Test results:	9/1972	0.50%	0 0 A-D:0.0
	7/1967	0.47%	0 0 A-D:0.0

Can Number: IWM 191/03 F 1 A 35

Copy Status:	AM	Access: NPA		
Colour:	b/w			
Sound:	mute			
Length (ft):	945	Runspeed:16	Runtime(mins): 16	
Frame:	full			
Manufacturer:	Kodak	Kodak	Kodak	
Manufr. Date:	1931	1962	1982	
Acq. Method:	preservation	Acq. Date:		/1931
Parent Copy:	N1-N-35			
Title:	Battle of the Somme			
Home Location:	Duxford			
Notes	Picture mostly on 1931 soft positive; most titles on 1962 stock; two titles reprinted 1982 (PP 42/3) to correct positioning.			
Test results:	9/1972	0.55%	0 0	A-D:0.0
	7/1967	0.42%	0 0	A-D:0.0

Can Number: IWM 191/04 F 1 A 35

Copy Status:	AM	Access: NPA		
Colour:	b/w			
Sound:	mute			
Length (ft):	905	Runspeed:16	Runtime(mins): 15	
Frame:	full			
Manufacturer:	Kodak	Kodak		
Manufr. Date:	1931	1962		
Acq. Method:	preservation	Acq. Date:		/1931
Parent Copy:	N1-N-35			
Title:	Battle of the Somme			
Home Location:	Duxford			
Notes	Picture mostly on 1931 soft positive; titles on 1962 stock.			
Test results:	9/1972	0.55%	0 0	A-D:0.0
	7/1967	0.43%	0 0	A-D:0.0

Can Number: IWM 191/05 F 1 A 35

Copy Status:	AM	Access: NPA		
Colour:	b/w			
Sound:	mute			
Length (ft):	1105	Runspeed:16	Runtime(mins): 18	
Frame:	full			
Manufacturer:	Kodak	Kodak	Kodak	
Manufr. Date:	1931	1962	1982	
Acq. Method:	preservation	Acq. Date:		/1931
Parent Copy:	N1-N-35			
Title:	Battle of the Somme			
Home Location:	Duxford			
Notes	Picture mostly on 1931 soft positive; some titles reprinted 1982 (PP 42/3) to correct positioning; other titles on 1962 stock.			
Test results:	9/1972	0.50%	0 0	A-D:0.0
	7/1967	0.37%	0 0	A-D:0.0

## APPENDIX 2

Partial bibliography of research work on the film *The Battle of the Somme* carried out at or assisted by the Imperial War Museum.

### Imperial War Museum Documents

- [Viewing Report] 'Particulars of "Battle of Somme" film screened on 4 May 1922 before Imperial War Museum Trustees and comments thereon by technical officers of the Navy and Army'
- [Shot list] 'Battle of Somme 1st July - 18th November 1916' [sic]

### Publications

- S D Badsey\* 'Battle of the Somme: British war-propaganda', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol 3 No 2, 1983.
- Kevin Brownlow *The War, the West and the Wilderness* (published by Secker & Warburg, London, 1979).
- Toby Haggith\* "'Reconstructing the musical arrangement for *The Battle of the Somme* (1916)', *Film History*, Vol 14, No 1, 2002.
- Nicholas Hiley *Making War: The British News Media and Government Control* (unpublished PhD thesis, Open University, 1984).
- Nicholas Hiley 'Introduction' in facsimile reprint of Geoffrey H Malins, *How I Filmed the War* (originally published by Herbert Jenkins, London, 1920; republished by the Imperial War Museum's Department of Printed Books, 1993).
- Nicholas Reeves *Official British Film Propaganda during the First World War* (published by Croom Helm, London, 1986).
- Nicholas Reeves 'Through the Eye of the Camera: Contemporary Cinema Audiences and their 'Experience' of War in the film, *Battle of the Somme*' in Hugh Cecil and Peter H Liddle, eds., *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced* (published by Pen & Sword, London, 1996).
- Nicholas Reeves 'Cinema, Spectatorship and Propaganda: *Battle of the Somme* (1916) and its contemporary audience', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol 17 No 1, 1997.
- Nicholas Reeves *The Power of Film Propaganda: Myth or Reality?* (published by Cassell, London, 1999).
- Roger Smither\* "'A Wonderful Idea of the Fighting": the question of fakes in *The Battle of the Somme*' in *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* Vol 13 No 2, 1993. (Revised version of an article published in the *Imperial War Museum Review*, No 3, 1988.)  
(A French translation by Guy-Claude Rochemont of the *HJFRT* article was published as "'Un Merveilleux Aperçu de la Bataille": la question du faux dans *The Battle of the Somme/La Bataille de la Somme*' in *Archives* Nos 64/65, November/December 1995.)
- Roger Smither\* (ed.) *The Battles of the Somme and Ancre* [Viewing Guide]. (Compiled by Chris McCarthy\*, Philip Dutton\*, Stephen Badsey\* and Roger Smither\*; published by the Imperial War Museum and DD Video in 1993.)  
(This publication incorporates text first published in 1987 as *The Battle of the Somme* by the Imperial War Museum, London.)

\*Individuals named with an asterisk are staff members of the Imperial War Museum, or were at the time the article/book was written.

## APPENDIX 3

### MANAGEMENT PLAN: FILM AND VIDEO PRESERVATION AT THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

#### 1. SUMMARY

- The IWMFVA will ensure that items in its collection are correctly identified and recorded.
- The IWMFVA will maintain its originals in the best possible conditions to maximise their life-expectancy.
- The IWMFVA will carry out continual condition checking programmes on its material.
- The IWMFVA will make duplicate masters of originals where the originals are at risk through decomposition, obsolescence or excessive use.
- The IWMFVA will make access copies of film material (surrogates) on film stock wherever technology allows adequate film copies to be made; access copies on electronic formats will only be made where demand outweighs their short life-expectancy.

#### 2. PRINCIPLES

##### 2.1. General

The Imperial War Museum Film and Video Archive's preservation policy is bound by the Museum's own collections management requirements and by those of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAPF), of which it is a member.

- Within the general priorities determined by the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum, the Film and Video Archive aims to protect the moving images for which it is responsible with due regard to the intentions of those who originally produced them, the reasonable expectations of those who currently wish to use them, and the right of posterity to inherit them in the best possible condition. In this as in other areas of its operation, the IWMFVA is also formally committed to observance of the *Code of Ethics* of FIAPF.

##### 2.2. Preservation: Identification/Maintenance / Duplication / Access

2.2.1 *Identification* The IWMFVA will continually update its records identifying the form and function of items, and ensure that all new acquisitions are correctly identified, assessed and recorded before accessioning.

- To ensure that the correct measures are taken to safeguard items, they must be correctly identified in order to determine:
  - their type
  - their condition
  - their status as originals or surrogates
- So that the IWMFVA's responsibilities can be properly established, the *content* of items must also be assessed to determine:
  - the importance of the subject matter
  - the ownership of the rights
  - whether copies exist elsewhere in the collection or in other archives around the world

2.2.2 *Maintenance* The IWMFVA's primary preservation goal is the maintenance of originals in the best condition for the longest time possible.

- Apart from *some* digital media, it is not possible to transfer an image or signal from one carrier to another without some loss of quality or completeness, or some change of character. Therefore preserving the original for as long as possible is a fundamental obligation.

2.2.3 *Monitoring* The IWMFVA will monitor and record the condition of its collection items.

- All forms of moving image media are subject to damage and deterioration. The degree of risk is dependent on:
  - the type of medium
  - its condition
  - the storage environment
 all of which will determine the type of monitoring carried out.

2.2.4 *Duplication of masters* The IWMFVA produces duplicate masters to protect the originals from damage and deterioration.

- Production of duplicate masters is appropriate whenever originals are at risk through:
  - decomposition
  - excessive use
  - obsolescence

It is accepted that duplicate masters frequently represent a compromise in quality or life expectancy, and the creation of duplicate masters does not remove the obligation to care for the originals.

2.2.5 *Access* The IWMFVA will produce access copies of items in its collection.

- Access copies are needed because:
  - all usage puts masters at risk
  - masters are frequently in a form which cannot be viewed (eg negatives)
  - users require access in a convenient form.
- If the originals are film rather than an electronic format, access copies will be made *on a film format* wherever technology allows adequate copies to be made, since only film offers any degree of future-proofing. Additional electronic access copies may also be made where demand dictates.
- Access copies on electronic formats instead of film will only be made where:
  - the format of the master film does not lend itself to the production of good quality copies, or
  - the original is in an electronic format
  - there is an anticipated demand for the item within the lifetime of the copy

2.2.6 *Other Factors* Preservation activities may be influenced by the following additional factors

- Health and safety issues when dealing with nitrate and decomposing acetate film.
- The effect of acquisition/accession activity in the archive.
- The demands of users of the collections.
- The occasional commitment to restore, rather simply to preserve a film.

### 3. **POLICY**

#### 3.1 **Identification**

It is impossible to provide appropriate storage and monitoring for items which have not been adequately identified.

For example, it is essential to distinguish between acetate and polyester film stock, and between Eastmancolor and Technicolor prints, as different storage conditions and different monitoring regimes are required for each.

Equally, it is vital to assess all the material held on a title before committing to any preservation action since it may be found that adequate masters and access copies already exist or, conversely, copies which were thought to be access copies are in fact masters; failure to appreciate the former could result in unnecessary expenditure in producing access copies, the latter in damage to the masters.

An important part of this work is the reassessment of material which the IWMFVA no longer feels any archival responsibility towards: such items may be deaccessioned or marked as reference copies.

Work on identification, assessment and recording items will take place as part of the following programmes:

- Accessioning new acquisitions.
- Preparation for duplication and creation of access copies.
- Preparation for freezer storage.
- As an *ad hoc* activity whenever items are out of store for other reasons.

Correct identification at the accessioning stage is a key requirement and is where most resources should be directed. However it is accepted that there are areas of the collection acquired in past years (particularly in the 1960s) where records are inadequate, hence the need for such work on parts of the accessioned collection.

### 3.2. Maintenance

The IWMFVA's policy is to house the collection's master material in environmental conditions that conform to the best current practice, and non-masters in the best conditions that can be practically achieved.

ISO standards for storage specify:

<i>Material</i>	<i>Temperature</i>	<i>Humidity</i>
<b>Nitrate</b>	2°C	20-30%RH
<b>Acetate (b/w)*</b>	5°C	20-40%RH
<b>Polyester (b/w)</b>	<21°C	20-50%RH
<b>Colour*</b>	-10°C	20-50%RH
<b>Video*</b>	11°C	<50%RH

\*a range of temperatures with associated humidity ranges is in fact specified.

The IWMFVA accepts less rigorous standards for non-master material (stored at 10°C and 45%RH), for reasons of economy and practicality: low temperature storage is incompatible with rapid access, because of the need to condition material when it moves between environments.

- The IWMFVA does not achieve the required conditions for nitrate film, as the nitrate store is currently set at 8°C and 45%RH.
  - In these conditions, nitrate will continue to deteriorate at an appreciable rate.
- The IWMFVA has a large number of black and white and colour masters in the access copy stores at 10°C and 45%RH, and colour masters stored at 5°C and 40%RH.
  - A programme of conditioning and freezing chromogenic colour masters is in operation, whilst the relocation of b/w masters will require a process of identification, relocation and subsequent rationalisation of the access copy stores. This latter project has yet to start.

Performance is measured in terms of the proportions of the collection housed or not housed in recommended conditions.

### 3.3. Monitoring



The IWMFVA's policy is to monitor the condition of items in the collection so that appropriate measures can be taken when indicated. Such measure might be:

- a change to more rigorous storage conditions
- the production of duplicate masters
- the replacement of access copies
- the destruction of the item.

Performance is measured in terms of whether or not an appropriate number of items in each category are tested each year, and the number of items found deteriorated beyond the acceptable "early warning" level in such tests.

The testing regimes and goals are:

3.3.1 *Nitrate film* – subject to either a chemical test or visual examination at least once every 8 years (more frequently if earlier tests suggest such a need). It is recognised that measuring the acid level in nitrate film is a much more reliable indicator of condition than the standard "Alizarin Red" test. There is unfortunately at present no simple methodology for routine acid level testing of nitrate, although the IWMFVA will be investigating this possibility.

**Note** that all nitrate film is monitored, regardless of copy type, in recognition of the safety implications of this material. The results are recorded on the technical records database.

3.3.2 *Acetate film* – subject to an acid level test whose frequency is determined by the expected state of the film and by the results of the testing. Acetate film which was not produced as part of the IWMFVA's printing programme (and hence likely to have an uncertain production and storage history) is given priority. The results are recorded on the technical records database.

3.3.3 *Polyester film and videotape* – currently not routinely tested. Videotape monitoring based on analysis of the signal is possible, and will be introduced as soon as resources and staff time permit.

3.3.4 *General condition monitoring* – the general condition of film and video is monitored and recorded on an *ad hoc* basis when items are out of store for access or preservation reasons.

#### **3.4. Duplication of masters**

3.4.1 The IWMFVA's policy is to ensure that all items in the collection are represented by a master which has a long life-expectancy and is adequate for the production of future copies of that item. At the very minimum this means holding one "best" copy (normally the original or the copy nearest the original) as master. In practice, it is necessary to hold additional copies where:

- the original or nearest-original is at risk from deterioration or obsolescence
- where the master is a composite of various elements (eg colour separations, soundtracks etc)
- where demands for access copies would subject the master to an unacceptable level of use.

3.4.2 For original material on nitrate or deteriorating acetate, it is of course essential to generate at least one new safety film master while retaining the original primary master for as long as practicable. The IWMFVA will therefore produce one or, where technology (see *Annex 2 Film Copying Routes*) or anticipated demand dictates, two safety film master copies on such items.

3.4.3 For stable acetate film where we, by definition, already hold a viable master, the IWMFVA will only generate secondary masters for films of particularly high value or where necessary for the production of access copies.

- 3.4.4 Due to their ephemeral nature, there is at present no viable archival format for videotape and electronic media. This means vulnerable recordings must be protected by making backup copies, even though those copies in turn will have a limited life expectancy. For such material, the IWMFVA will produce a digital video copy of the original in the most viable format of the day in a programme prioritised according to the expected lifetime of the original tapes.
- 3.4.5 Performance is measured in terms of the number of collection items lacking master protection, and progress towards the elimination of that backlog.

**Note:** it is recognised that digital technology now offers the least defective method of copying certain types of film. However, digital copying can only be considered as a means to producing a high quality film copy and not as an end in itself, as there is no archivally sound way of storing the very large digital files involved.

### **3.5. Access**

- 3.5.1 The IWMFVA's collection is not fulfilling its purpose if it is not available to users. Currently almost 50% of the collection is not accessible and it is one of the IWMFVA's primary aims to make these items available without putting the masters at risk.
- 3.5.2 FIAF ethics require that films should be available as films when "the cinema-going experience" is part of the way in which they should be presented, but it is accepted that electronic access copies may be appropriate where access is primarily via modern media.
- 3.5.3 Despite the seductive benefits of video access, the administration of a large-scale library of video access copies presents overwhelming difficulties. With the very limited life expectancy of both the copies and the playback system, a video access policy must include the costs and resources needed for the migration of the entire collection to a new format at least every 20 years. The production of video access copies is really only practical for frequently accessed films, for self-contained sets of films whose popularity is clearly anticipated (there is little sense in the creation of video access copies which might be obsolete before the items are first requested by a user), where the cost and complexity of producing film access copies is prohibitive, or where the user pays.
- 3.5.4 The complexity of film copying means that producing film access copies on demand is rarely a practical option (although on-demand copying of those video formats still in general use may be feasible). Therefore, the IWMFVA will continue to produce access copies on film formats wherever video access is inappropriate. (*See Annex 3 for a description of access copy production routes*).
- 3.5.5 The IWMFVA recognises that a policy of total elimination of the backlog of inaccessible films is unachievable due to the scale of the problem and that part of the process must be to identify those areas of the collection where immediate access will not be made available.
- 3.5.6 Performance is measured in terms of the number of collection items not currently available, and progress towards the elimination of that backlog.

## **4. Specific Projects**

The IWMFVA runs six projects concurrently which are designed to address the issues set out above. These projects are outlined in a separate document. By adopting a policy of limiting copying on film to cases where it is essential for conservation best-practice or for access, the IWMFVA has devised a programme which carefully targets resources in the most cost-effective manner while still achieving the ethical and practical requirements of preserving the collection and of maximising its accessibility.

With adequate resourcing, this plan will safeguard the collection for the foreseeable future and massively broaden its usage.

#### **4.1 The Projects**

- 4.1.1 Nitrate (Project: Nitrate/01): A continuation of the IWMFVA's long standing commitment to secure and make accessible the future of the museum's original core collection of films.
- 4.1.2 Unstable/decomposing acetate (Project: Vinegar/01): In the light of current experiences worldwide of its potential instability, testing and appropriate conservation measures are carried out on acetate film in the collection.
- 4.1.3 Inaccessible (but stable) safety film (Project: Access/01): There are currently approaching 20,000 reels of inaccessible acetate film in the collection. This project addresses the issue of unlocking these films for public access.
- 4.1.4 Video material (Project: Video/01): Video recordings at risk must be migrated to the most viable digital format of the day as the only way of preserving the content.
- 4.1.5 Colour film freezing (Project: Freezer/01): The IWMFVA has over the past 20 years acquired a large body of vulnerable colour film. The only effective way of conserving colour film is to freeze it.
- 4.1.6 Accessioning backlog (Project Accession/01): The huge backlog of unaccessioned material causes severe storage problems and effectively locks away from use a very large quantity of potentially revenue earning material. This project is intended to tackle and clear this backlog.

#### **4.2 Resources, Backlogs and Priorities**

- 4.2.1 The projects are designed to run within the existing staff structure proposals for the Duxford unit, while still reserving a major part of the staff resources for dealing with acquisitions, the other main activity of the unit.
- 4.2.2 The projects have definite targets which will erode the existing backlogs of conservation work over the periods specified. The IWMFVA has planned resources and strategies for dealing with acquisitions which are designed to deal immediately with conservation and documentation in order that conservation and access backlogs do not increase faster than they can be dealt with.
- 4.2.3 None of the projects takes precedence. Each addresses a vital issue which cannot be postponed or ignored. A small reduction in the throughput of these projects would inevitably result in, at best, a steady-state position where conservation work only keeps pace with the rate of acquisition or, worse, the backlog continuously increases. The only option for reducing both the expenditure and the backlog would be to embark on a substantial deaccessioning programme. Such a programme is a virtual impossibility with the present deficient state of the IWMFVA's cataloguing resource. With no detailed catalogue and no historical experts on hand to judge the value of material, the IWMFVA cannot responsibly dispose of material.

## ANNEX 1: DEFINITIONS

The following are examples and definitions of the terms used above:

<b>Medium/Base:</b>	nitrate, acetate or polyester film; videotape
<b>Condition:</b>	stable; unstable
<b>Gauge (film only):</b>	large or professional gauge – 35mm, 16mm, etc. small, sub-standard or amateur gauge – 9.5mm, 8mm, etc.
<b>Copy type (film):</b>	<p>masters or sub-masters, pre-print elements, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- negative: camera original for most professional films</li><li>- reversal original: positive camera original, common in many amateur film systems</li><li>- fine grain (b/w) or interpositive (colour): a “duplicating” positive copy produced from a negative</li><li>- duplicate negative (b/w) or internegative (colour): second generation negative, made from a fine grain, an interpositive, a reversal original, or a “master print” – see below</li></ul> <p>access copies: - prints (<b>Note</b>, however, that a print will be considered a “master print” if it is the <u>only</u> copy of a film held.)</p> <p>sound elements: optical or magnetic soundtrack held as “separate” (track only) or “combined” (on the same strip of film as the image); optical track may be positive or negative</p> <p>colour elements: may be colour separations (a b/w copy corresponding to each of the three primary colours) or combined colour; positive or negative</p>
<b>Copy type (video):</b>	<p>analogue or digital</p> <p>broadcast/professional standard: analogue: 2-inch, 1-inch, U-matic, Beta-SP, etc. digital: D-1, D-2, D-3, D-5, Digital Betacam, DVCPro, etc.</p> <p>domestic: VHS, Video-8, Mini-DV, DVD etc.</p>
<b>Migrate:</b>	to copy media from one format to another, usually for conservation purposes (generally used in the context of videotape)

## ANNEX 2: FILM COPYING ROUTES

The rationale behind the differing treatment of different original copies is dictated by the constraints of film technology. Common printing routes are shown here:

**Negative:** designed for the production of a print; also used for the production of a fine grain positive (b/w) or interpositive (colour).

**Fine grain positive (b/w) or interpositive (colour):** designed for the production of a duplicate negative or internegative; a print cannot be made directly from it.

**Print:** designed as the end stage of the process and not for further duplication. May be copied on duplicate (or inter-) negative, and a new print struck from that, but copies made from a print are inevitably inferior not only due to the likelihood of damage and colour fading, but also because the image contrast and balance is designed for projection and not for copying. This is particularly true of small gauge amateur films.

**(Separate) Soundtrack:** intermediate stage in the production of a final “combined” print with sound. It is possible, at some loss of sound quality, to include a combined soundtrack on a black and white negative or fine grain to avoid the production of a separate track; this is not feasible with colour intermediates.

**Digital intermediate:** an electronically scanned digital data copy of any of the above picture formats, which can be used to produce a new negative. This technique is capable of producing superior copies of prints and at the same time offers a practical method of restoring the colour of badly faded copies. This powerful but difficult-to-control technology has the unfortunate disadvantage of making the production of highly inauthentic copies very easy. The digital intermediate files themselves do not constitute a reliable long-term preservation medium.

## ANNEX 3: PRODUCTION OF ACCESS COPIES

The IWMFVA will adopt the following routes in the production of access copies of stable safety films:

**From master positive originals** (see *Annex 1* for definitions, *Annex 2* for film copying routes), a duplicate negative or internegative (and soundtrack where appropriate), plus access print will be produced.

**From negatives**, an access print will be produced. If film is judged of high value (curatorial decision), a fine grain positive or interpositive will also be produced.

**From b/w prints**, following a curatorial assessment of the anticipated demand for access and a check for additional copies elsewhere, *either* a duplicate negative or internegative (and soundtrack where appropriate), plus access print, *or* a video sub-master and video access copy will be produced where deemed appropriate.

**From colour prints** (all gauges) and small-gauge b/w prints, following a curatorial assessment of the material's likely usage, *either* a video sub-master and video access copy, *or* (for films needing digital restoration or likely to require cinema projection) a negative via a digital intermediate and an access print will be made.

**Note:** it must be understood that due to the complexity of the film production process, many items do not fit these simple categories and will be dealt with using the nearest appropriate model.

## ANNEX 4: DUPLICATION COSTS

(February 2004 - All sums approximate)

### Nitrate film

(based on typical reel 700-800 ft)

Rejuvenation treatment	£100
New b/w master (Duplicate Negative, Fine Grain)	£400
New print	£200
∴ Average cost for a reel	£700

### Safety film

(based on a typical reel 700-800 ft 35mm or 500-600 ft 16mm)

New b/w master (Duplicate Negative, Fine Grain)	£300
New colour master (Internegative, Interpositive)	£700
New soundtrack	£200
New print	£150
∴ Average cost for a reel (assuming ¼ are colour and ¼ need soundtracks)	£600

### Digital Copying

(based on a typical reel 700-800 ft 35mm or 500-600 ft 16mm)

New master negative £2000-5000\*

\*costs of digital work are falling and are very dependent of quantity of footage and the amount of restoration work needed. Note that digital copying replaces some of the most expensive conventional film processes, such as Technicolor restoration.

### Video copying of film

(based on a typical 10minute reel)

New Digital Betacam at commercial company	£100
New Digital Betacam or Beta SP in-house	£20*

\*cost of tape. A proportion of video transfer work can be done in-house, depending on staff availability and the remaining lifetime of the telecine machine.

### Video duplication

(based on a typical 30 minute tape )

Duplicate master on Digital Betacam and VHS Access copy	£100
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The average cost of producing access copies in project *Access/01* is calculated using a formula reflecting the proportions of the various master copy types in the inaccessible collection, as follows:

B/w Master Positives (for new dupe negative plus print)	5% of £450 = £22
Colour Master Positives (for new internegative and track plus print)	2% of £1050 = £21
Negatives (for new print)	35% of £150 = £52
B/w Prints (for new dupe negative plus print)	15% of £450 = £67
Prints (for new “digital” negative plus print)	3% of £3000 = £90
Prints (for new video sub-master plus access copy)	40% of £100 = £40
∴ Average cost of a typical reel	approx. £300

## APPENDIX 4

Extracts from correspondence received by the Imperial War Museum in reply to an invitation to comment on the nomination of *The Battle of the Somme* for inclusion in the Memory of the World Register.

**Extract from an email from Dr Stephen Badsey, FRHistS, dated 16 May 2004:**

*The idea of including Battle of the Somme in the UNESCO 'Memory of the World' Register is an excellent one. This feature-length documentary represents the earliest and most enduring case of a film record playing a major part in shaping collective memory of a major historical event, both at the time and ever since, up to the present day. Battle of the Somme is a true cultural icon as well as an invaluable archival record.*

Stephen Badsey, editor of *The Media and International Security*, etc., is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of War Studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Brian Bond, FRHistS, dated 24 May 2004:**

*I am pleased to offer you my strongest support in your application to get the 1916 film The Battle of the Somme included in UNESCO 'Memory of the World' Register. I am confident the BCMH would endorse this letter... I entirely agree with the case you make for the film's importance. It was one of the very first attempts to show the reality of war to cinema audiences and had a tremendous impact when first shown. Moreover, it has remained a source of interest and debate over the employment of 'real' or 'reconstituted' or 'fake' film footage. Finally, its striking images are still frequently shown, or adopted, in modern depictions of the First World War. For these, and other reasons which you cite, it seems to me to have an undisputable case for inclusion.*

Brian Bond, author of *The Unquiet Western Front: Britain's Role in Literature and History*, etc., is Emeritus Professor of Military History in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London and President of the British Commission for Military History (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Dr John M Bourne, FRHistS, dated 13 May 2004:**

*It is difficult to better your own description of The Battle of the Somme. It was the first of its kind in the history of film. It was the first of its kind in the history of war. It was the first of its kind in the history of propaganda. It was the first of its kind in the history of film documentary. It was one of the foundation stones of the important archive of which you are now the Keeper. And it is a film that even after the passage of time still has the power to move.*

John Bourne, author of *Britain and the Great War, 1914-18*, is Director of the Centre for First World War Studies at the University of Birmingham (UK).

**Extract from an email from William Boyd, dated 7 June 2004:**

*I'm very happy to support Battle of the Somme for the Memory of the World register. I have seen it many times myself and can testify to its abiding power as a film and to its unrelenting ability to move – as well as it being a film of incalculable archival importance.*

William Boyd is a novelist (author of *The New Confessions*, *An Ice-Cream War*, etc.) and the writer/director of the 1999 film *The Trench* (UK).

**Extract from an email from Malcolm Brown, dated 17 June 2004:**



*Compared with the modest trickle of 'newsreel' films shown by the nation's picture houses during the early years of the First World War, The Battle of the Somme, 1916, represented a distinct and definitive advance. Having the length, and therefore the stature, of what would come to be called a feature film, it commanded far greater respect. Coming on the heels of the start of a battle that was meant to win the war but was clearly, and sacrificially, failing to do so, it also commanded enormous interest. The newspapers, innocent of any urge to question or denigrate a new arrival in the world of the media, hailed it with the utmost enthusiasm. Hence the headline in the London Evening News: THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME . . . IS THE GREATEST MOVING PICTURE IN THE WORLD - THE GREATEST THAT HAS EVER BEEN PRODUCED'.*

*A fact that gives the film an extra interest is that within weeks it was being shown on the Somme to British forces while the Battle of the Somme was still in progress. (It is almost as if a film of the Battle of Borodino were shown to Napoleon's troops in Moscow.) A battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Rowland Feilding, who saw it in early September 'on a screen erected on a muddy field under the open sky' at a village some ten lines behind the fighting front, wrote: 'The battle film is really a wonderful and most realistic production, but must of necessity be wanting in that the battle is fought in silence', except that, he added, 'on this occasion the roar of the real battle was loudly audible in the distance'. There could surely have been no more remarkable example of sound effects to a film during the era of the silent cinema.*

*Perhaps most importantly of all, however, the film raised the moral question as to how far the media can go in the matter of showing the realities of war. The Dean of Durham, the Reverend Henley Henson, wrote: 'I beg leave to enter a protest against an entertainment which wounds the heart and violates the very sanctity of bereavement'; it appalled him that someone should see a relative alive and well on the film who was now 'dead on the fields of Flanders'. It can be fairly be claimed that the debate thus opened during the First World War in 1916 remains unresolved during the Iraq crisis of 2004.*

Malcolm Brown, author of *Tommy Goes to War*, etc., is a freelance historian who has written *The Imperial War Museum Book of the Somme* and a number of similar titles (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Kevin Brownlow, dated 4 May 2004:**

*[The Battle of the Somme] is an enormously important film as much for what it fails to show as for what it shows so successfully. It deals with the most appalling defeat in military history – in terms of men lost – and transforms it into a victory. It could not show the slaughter, even if it had wanted to, but the periphery of that slaughter is captured in mesmeric detail. We see images from it in almost every film dealing with early 20<sup>th</sup> century history.*

Kevin Brownlow, producer of *Hollywood and Cinema Europe* and author of *The War, The West, and the Wilderness*, etc., is a noted British filmmaker and film historian.

**Extract from a letter from Professor John Whiteclay Chambers II, dated 21 June 2004:**

*I heartily endorse the nomination of The Battle of the Somme, the 1916 British documentary and propaganda film, for inclusion in UNESCO's "Memory of the World" Register.*

*As widely recognized by authorities in film history and the history of the First World War, this film is of enormous historical importance. It was the first feature-length documentary film on modern combat, and it has shaped the visual memory of the Western Front in World War I ever since then.*

*As a "realistic" depiction of battle, it greatly influenced public opinion in the Allied and neutral nations in which it was shown and thus was an important dimension of public culture during the war. Its "realism," including the portrayal of both enemy and compatriot dead and the "over the top" shots, marked a major departure and innovation in filmmaking. Indeed many of its shots have been reused in documentary films about the war to the present day. It helped shape the methodology of*

*documentary and propaganda filmmaking throughout the world. Other Allied Powers and the Central Powers sought to imitate it, and subsequent documentary filmmakers and propagandists were influenced by it.*

*The Imperial War Museum has painstakingly reconstructed the original film and made it available to the public on video format. The museum has also provided extremely useful analysis of the film (including shot-by-shot analysis) and its impact at the time and subsequently. The IWM's guide also offers helpful advice for classroom use of the film as well.*

*Illustrating the importance that scholars give to this film is the fact that there have been a number of scholarly articles about the film itself as well as references to the film in scholarly and popular works on the First World War... Calling it "the most important documentary to come out of World War I," David Culbert included it in his article on "War, Film, and the Military," in the one-volume reference work I edited, *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).*

John Whiteclay Chambers II, editor-in-chief of *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, etc., is Distinguished Professor of History at Rutgers University (USA).

**Extract from a letter from Dr James Chapman, dated 19 May 2004:**

*I feel strongly that the academic community should support the Imperial War Museum in [your bid]. It is not just the importance of recognising non-manuscript documents as being of value in their own right. To nominate The Battle of the Somme would be to recognise the place of actuality and documentary film alongside the more 'artistic' types of film. As I see it, the historical importance of this film is twofold. In the first place it is a historical document of great significance in its own right, representing as it does a visual record of a major event that had profound effects not only on the British Army but also on the home front. And, secondly, it established a model for the feature-length propaganda/documentary film that has been extremely influential in the development of the medium. If one film were to be seen as marking the origin of documentary film, then, in my view, there is at least as good a case for The Battle of the Somme as there is for the more usual candidates such as Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* or John Grierson's *Drifters*.*

*As you know, the Open University was at the forefront of introducing archive film into the teaching of modern history in its ground-breaking War and Society course in the 1970s. We continue to use extracts from The Battle of the Somme in the latest heir of that course, AA312 Total War and Social Change: Europe 1914-1955. In my experience it is an exceptionally useful means of bringing the First World War alive for students, as it has an immediacy that other media do not, even the war poets. Recently, the inclusion of The Battle of the Somme as the highlight of the seventh British Silent Cinema Festival in Nottingham (April 2004) demonstrated once again the value of this film in helping to disseminate knowledge of our historical and cultural heritage and to make archive film known beyond the archives.*

James Chapman, author of *The British at War: Cinema, State and Propaganda, 1939-45*, etc., is Senior Lecturer in Film and Television History at The Open University (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Ian Christie, dated 25 May 2004:**

*As a film historian with a particular [interest] in the 'silent' period, I am struck by the widespread ignorance of documentary film before the 1930s – a prejudice that is probably greater in the UK than elsewhere, due to the fame of our 30s and 40s work in this genre.*

*But in global terms there can be no doubt that The Battle of the Somme was a pioneering and powerful demonstration of what the 'creative treatment of actuality' (to borrow Grierson's phrase) could do, in terms of bringing home the experience of the Western Front to audiences in Britain, and eventually around the world. Before Flaherty and before Shoedsack and Cooper, the pioneers of anthropological documentary in the 20s, Geoffrey Malins created something which for too long was considered merely propagandist by British film historians.*

*Happily, I think there is now a reconsideration under way and the film is beginning to be understood both as a remarkable film in its own right, and as marking an important stage in the acceptance of film as a medium of national – and international – significance.*

Ian Christie, author of *The Last Machine: Early Cinema and the Birth of the Modern World*, etc., is Director of the AHRB Centre for British Film and Television Studies and Anniversary Professor of Film and Media History at Birkbeck, University of London (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Nicholas J Cull, FRHistS, dated 13 May 2004:**

*The Battle of the Somme is a milestone in the representation of warfare and a memorial to the men of all nations who died in the Great War. Like the Bayeux Tapestry it is both a powerful social document of men at war and a vivid political document of the history of propaganda. For audiences at the time it conveyed a powerful sense of conditions in France and played a part in awakening American sympathy to the allied cause. For audiences since its images – especially the staged scene of soldiers advancing into the battlefield smoke on the first day of the battle – have come to define the scale and futility of the conflict. The Battle of the Somme is a treasure of international significance. It deserves to be viewed and studied as part of the effort both to understand what the Great War was like for those who fought in it, and as a document of how the still young art of cinema was used to manipulate people at the time.*

Nicholas Cull, author of *Selling War: British Propaganda Campaign Against American Neutrality in World War II*, etc., is Director of the Centre for American Studies at the University of Leicester (UK).

**Extract from an email from Professor Modris Eksteins, dated 26 May 2004:**

*Violence and movement were two of the stunning motifs of the twentieth century, and the First World War played an enormous role in establishing these motifs. I can think of no historical document more indicative of this development than the 1916 film, The Battle of the Somme.*

Modris Eksteins, author of *Rites of Spring: the Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, etc., is Professor of History at the University of Toronto (Canada).

**Extract from a letter from David Francis, OBE, dated 3 June 2004:**

*The British documentary tradition is associated internationally with John Grierson and the Empire Marketing Board. However, it was another arm of government, the military, which first appreciated its importance as a means of disseminating information and encouraging patriotism.*

*The Battle of the Somme, produced in 1916, was the first feature length documentary anywhere in the world, to record war in action. Newspapers and still photographs did not give the civilian population a true idea of life in the trenches. It was only moving images, which captured the horrors of war and the terrible conditions on the front line.*

*The Battle of the Somme was the model for the Why We Fight films in the United States, the Victory films in the United Kingdom. In fact every country involved in a major war produced this type of film to inspire its civilian population and record its victories in foreign lands.*

*The Battle of the Somme was also a popular success. Night after night, screenings at London's prestigious Scala Theatre were accompanied by an orchestra and interpreted by a noted military historian.*

*The film was considered such an important record that a copy was deposited at the Imperial War Museum and became the cornerstone of a moving image archive that has preserved and made available the images of conflict for nearly ninety years.*

*I cannot think of a film produced anywhere in the world that better represents the importance and power of the factual film. Today it is television that records life on the battlefield, but despite significant improvements in equipment and technology, the images of Iraq seen on our screens every night are not dissimilar from those represented in The Battle of the Somme in 1916.*

David Francis, archival consultant and writer, was formerly Curator of the National Film Archive (UK) and Chief of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress (USA).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Sir Christopher Frayling, dated 20 May 2004:**

*When we think of 'archives' and 'libraries' we tend to think of paper. But film, for the modern world, is equally important – and especially documentary film. Battle of the Somme, as the first-ever feature-length documentary of combat laid down the ground rules. It is part of our visual heritage; part of popular memory; part of the storehouse of key images of modern times. So I'm delighted to support its inclusion in 'Memory of the World'.*

Christopher Frayling is Rector of the Royal College of Art and Chairman of Arts Council England (UK).

**Extract from an email from Professor Richard Holmes, dated 3 May 2004:**

*I regard The Battle of the Somme as a document of great importance in the history of warfare in general, and for Britain and the First World War in particular. It was the first time that cinema audiences had been able to see moving images of a major battle actually in progress at the time. The film marks an important stage in the evolution of the news media and its approach to war, and still resonates powerfully into our own days.*

Richard Holmes, author of *Tommy: The British Soldier on the Western Front*, etc., is Professor of Military and Security Studies at Cranfield University and teaches at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham (UK).

**Extract from an email from Jerry Kuehl, dated 21 May 2004:**

*I am pleased to support inclusion of The Battle of the Somme on the Unesco register. Unquestionably this account of the battle is of immense importance, not only because it was the first feature length documentary to show conditions under which the British Army fought at a critical period of the 1st World War but because of the influence it has had on subsequent developments in documentary film. The model which it developed has marked every documentary about war since it was made, not only in its depiction of activity behind the lines, but in what it showed of front line troops. Its scenes of combat which are now known to have been filmed during training, have marked the limits for future generations of what can or cannot be shown.*

Jerry Kuehl is a television writer, researcher, and producer, whose credits include *The Great War*, *The World at War*, *The Cold War* and *La Grande Aventure de la Presse Filmée* (UK).

**Extract from an email from Professor Martin Loiperdinger, dated 15 June 2004:**

*The Battle of the Somme clearly marks the birth of the documentary: this official propaganda film issued by the British War Office is the first major film to link dramatization with the representation of facts. The Battle of the Somme certainly achieved overwhelming success in Britain and in neutral foreign countries. This is not only because the film shows the facts of the trenches, but also because it dramatizes. The famous over-the-top sequence forms its visual climax. And it is precisely this re-enactment that contributed so decisively to the impact of The Battle of the Somme as a film report showing the event in a way that was regarded as authentic. Paradoxical as this may sound today, it*

*should be regarded as an indication of how closely documentary and propaganda have been related all along.*

Martin Loiperdinger, author of *Film & Schokolade: Stollwercks Geschäfte mit lebenden Bildern*, etc., is Professor of Media Studies at Trier University (Germany).

**Extract from an email from Professor Arthur Marwick, FRHistS, dated 21 May 2004:**

*As well as being a crucial historical source, which in addition to the evidence it contains raises fascinating methodological issues, The Battle of the Somme is in itself a unique piece of history.*

Arthur Marwick, author of *Total War and Social Change*, etc., is Emeritus Professor of History at the Open University (UK).

**Extract from an email from Professor Michael Paris, FRHistS, dated 14 May 2004:**

*The Somme is highly significant, not just because it was the first really important documentary film, but because of the manner in which it captured much of the essential nature of the war that shaped the early twentieth century. It must surely be one of the key (filmic) documents of the age.*

Michael Paris, author of *Warrior Nation: Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850-2000*, etc., is Professor of Modern History at the University of Central Lancashire (UK).

**Extract from an email from Professor John Ramsden, FRHistS, dated 17 May 2004:**

*It seems highly appropriate that the 1916 documentary film The Battle of the Somme should be included in UNESCO's "Memory of the World" Register. It played then – and has continued to play ever since – a critical role in establishing the broad cultural response to a key event in modern history, and it has received as a result the prolonged critical scrutiny that is devoted only to documents of outstanding importance.*

John Ramsden, editor of *The Oxford Companion to 20th-Century British Politics*, etc., is Professor Modern History at Queen Mary, University of London (UK).

**Extract from an email from Dr Nicholas Reeves, dated 7 June 2004:**

*Battle of the Somme occupies a unique position in the history of British cinema. When it was screened in Britain in the summer of 1916, it was seen by an audience of some 20 million people, and it may ultimately have been seen by a majority of the domestic population. All of this makes it not only the most popular film of its period, but arguably one of the most popular films of all time.*

*The astonishing character of that achievement becomes even more clear when one remembers that this was an official factual film, derived almost entirely from footage shot at or near the front line between the 25<sup>th</sup> June and 10<sup>th</sup> July 1916. Thus, at a time when the full-length feature film had already established itself as the dominant form of popular cinema, with its strong narrative lines, established stars and extensive marketing, the fact that this official documentary film should achieve such a large audience is quite extraordinary.*

*Significant as the audience numbers are, however, it is in fact the character of the film that represents its most enduring achievement. For in total contrast to so many propaganda films, Battle of the Somme provided its audiences (now as much as then) with a unique and direct access to the experience of the war. The hectoring, didactic tone of so many other propaganda films is entirely absent. In contrast, short, factual inter-titles provide the minimum of comment, leaving the audience free to construct its own meaning in the actuality footage that is there on the screen before them. The film does include powerful images of the military hardware deployed on the Somme, but it is above all else the ordinary serving soldier who is at its heart. The officer class is conspicuous by its absence –*

*in its place, the film returns again and again to the tens of thousands of ordinary working men who made up the British army of 1916.*

*It is their faces which confront us on the screen – jokey and smiling as they ‘perform’ for the camera en route to the front; fixed and immobile, staring through and past the camera as they wait to go ‘over the top’; exhausted, shattered, staring again as they return from the battle. These are ordinary men enduring the unendurable, men who in the face of apparently impossible odds retain their dignity, their self-respect, even their humanity. This is the nature of the war on the western front to which Battle of the Somme gives the audience access, today (at the beginning of the twenty-first century) quite as much as it did in 1916, and it does so to an extent unparalleled in any other single cultural product of the period.*

*It is above all else for this reason, that this film should be included in the UNESCO ‘Memory of the World’ Register.*

Nicholas Reeves, historian, is author of *The Power of Film Propaganda: Myth or Reality?* (London, 1999), etc. (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Jeffrey Richards, FRHistS, dated 6 May 2004:**

*Film was the 20th Century’s contribution to the documentary record of history, supplementing, deepening and extending the written record. ‘The Memory of the World’ Register should include the key filmic records of that century. The Battle of the Somme, as the first feature-length combat film ever made is a prime candidate for inclusion. It captured the experience of World War One on celluloid and has shaped the popular reaction to and memory of that war ever since. It is a document of fundamental historical importance.*

Jeffrey Richards, author of *Films and British National Identity: From Dickens to “Dad’s Army”*, etc., is Professor of Cultural History at Lancaster University (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Dr Rainer Rother, dated 17 May 2004:**

*The Battle of the Somme cannot be overestimated in its significance for the history of documentary film. It became the prototype for the depiction of armed conflict between nations, and thereby had – and to this day still has – extensive consequences for humanity.*

Reiner Rother, author of *Der Weltkrieg 1914-1918. Ereignis und Erinnerung*, etc., is head of the Kinemathek at the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (Germany).

**Extract from an email from Professor Peter Simkins, FRHistS, dated 14 May 2004:**

*From a British, and Commonwealth, viewpoint, the 1916 Somme offensive was the first major battle fought by the British Empire’s first-ever mass citizen army. In numerical terms, the casualties suffered by the British and Dominion forces on the Somme were the highest incurred in any single battle, and British losses on the first day alone (1 July 1916) were the worst ever suffered by the British Army in a single day in its entire history. The British Army on the Western Front in July 1916 was also still a volunteer army and, moreover, it was notable for the strong local links which most of its formations had with towns, cities and rural areas at home. Scarcely a family in Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand was therefore left untouched by the battle which, as a result, occupies a unique place in our collective folk memory as well as leaving a permanent scar on our collective psyche.*

*Since the film under discussion is one of the major documentary records of the Battle of the Somme, and since it also represented, in its time, a new documentary medium, I would argue that it has a very strong claim for inclusion in the Register.*

Peter Simkins, author of *Kitchener's Army: The Raising of the New Armies, 1914-16*, etc., is Honorary Professor of Modern History at the Centre for First World War Studies, University of Birmingham (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Hew Strachan, FRHistS, dated 6 May 2004:**

*I am very happy to give my support to your proposal that the film, The Battle of the Somme, be included in UNESCO's 'Memory of the World' Register. Your own description of the case for its inclusion seems to me to say it all. However, I suppose that there is a further additional point. We know an extraordinary amount [about] how the film was put together, and about which units are shown, when they were filmed, and where they are. Few other documentary film sequences from the First World War, if any, are as precise. Moreover, the film contains not just generic scenes of combat on the Western Front but a portrayal of one of the major battles of the twentieth century. In other words, it has a specific historical context in addition to its claims to be pioneering in terms of documentary and propaganda film.*

Hew Strachan, author of *The First World War*, and of *The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War*, etc., is Chichele Professor of the History of War at the University of Oxford (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Philip M Taylor, FRHistS, dated 6 May 2004:**

*The film [Battle of the Somme]'s significance has been fully recognised by the academic historical profession and many of its images and sequences have shaped the popular and enduring memory of the Great War down to this day. It also has a unique place in the history of the cinema, not just for Britain, but worldwide – and no military historian can ignore the significance of its visual documentation for understanding the specific battle and the impact which it had on a wider audience. In the process, the film helped shape many perceptions about modern industrialised warfare.*

Philip Taylor, author of *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Day*, etc., is Professor of International Communications at the University of Leeds (UK).

**Extract from a letter from Professor David Welch, dated 20 May 2004:**

*I would strongly support the 1916 British documentary film The Battle of the Somme for inclusion in UNESCO's 'Memory of the World' Register.*

*Not only is this the first feature-length documentary film record of combat produced anywhere in the world, but its impact went far beyond Britain and its Allies. When the film was released in 1916 it caught the popular imagination of British film audiences. The film helped raise morale, but more importantly, it immediately struck a chord that allowed a civilian home-front audience to share the experiences of the front-line soldier. Moreover, some of the images that appear in the film have become synonymous with combat in general on the Western Front. It is no coincidence that television companies to this day still use extracts from the film as iconic 'short-hand' to explain what it was like on the Western Front during the Great War. As an historian who has written widely on German propaganda I can also confirm the enormous impact this film had on German Imperial propaganda and on neutral opinion throughout the world.*

*Not only is The Battle of the Somme an important historical document, but it is also an enduring example of successful propaganda. It was one of the first major examples of how state-sponsored propaganda could use the relatively new medium of film for its own propagandistic purposes. Not only is the film a compelling visual record of one of the most important events of the twentieth century, it has become a bench-mark for any feature length documentary film about war.*

David Welch, author of *Germany, Propaganda and Total War, 1914-1918*, etc., is Director of the Centre for the Study of Propaganda and Professor in Modern History at the University of Kent at Canterbury (UK).



**Extract from an email from Christine Whittaker, dated 18 May 2004:**

*The importance of the moving image in public perception of war needs no introduction today. The British government's recognition of the power of film came as early as August 1916, when The Battle of the Somme, the first ever feature length battle documentary, was released before the outcome of that battle was known. The audience's reaction to the images from the Western Front exceeded expectation and the film's place in history was firmly established.*

*Scenes from The Battle of the Somme were recognised as being reconstructions very soon after its release and the ensuing debate on the authenticity of factual film continues today. The importance of releasing only genuine images of warfare is painfully obvious to politicians and journalists in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, whose careers have been affected by ignoring this.*

*The Battle of the Somme is important both as a historical document and as an early and very effective documentary film and merits its place in the Memory of the World Register.*

Christine Whittaker, archive producer for the BBC Series *People's Century*, is President of IAMHIST, the International Association for Media and History.

**Extract from a letter from Sam Kula, dated 9 October 2004:**

*I agree most enthusiastically that this film is an extremely important record of a monumental battle in the Great War and as the first feature-length documentary of combat it is a very significant milestone in film history.*

*I recently reviewed all the surviving motion picture records of the Canadian participation in the Great War for a Canadian digitization project and Battle of the Somme is among the great documents of that conflict. It was widely seen in Canada in order to convey to civilian audiences the scope of the Allied response to the German threat and the tremendous obstacles the men in the field faced in mounting the offensive. The intent, of course, was to raise support for the war effort and to encourage enlistment. As propaganda it was enormously successful with special screenings arranged in parts of the country where regular cinemas were not available, usually accompanied by talks from veterans recently returned from France.*

*Much can be said of how accurate the film is terms of military history, but that is not the point. As the first major effort to bring the conflict home to civilian audiences Battle of the Somme is and remains a valuable record of how the War was fought, with images that have become reference points for thousands of films and television broadcasts on the Great War, and how the authorities of the day tried to present the War to the home front. It is a very important document and belongs in the 'Memory of the World' Register.*

Sam Kula is Former Director of the Audiovisual Archives at Library and Archives Canada and Past President of the Association of Moving Image Archivists (Canada).

**Extract from a letter from Professor Antonia Lant, dated 20 July 2004:**

*For documents to qualify for the Memory of the World collection, they must be of world significance. They should be objects we must endeavour never to lose. Let me summarize why Battle of the Somme (1916) more than meets this test:*

- 1) It is a film without peer. Film began its commercial life in the last years of the nineteenth century. The medium was still very young in 1916. There are only a handful of surviving filmed scenes of the First World War, and none approaching The Battle of the Somme in length, coherence, brilliance and content. This extraordinary document lasts 70 minutes and is entirely shot on the battlefields of Northern France.*
- 2) The 1914-18 war, as its grander name so chillingly reminds us, was the first ever war on a world scale. The appalling size of its casualties has never been surpassed. As historians, poets, photographers and novelists have asserted ever since, here, on these battlefields, an entire generation of young men was lost. Battle of the Somme is a transcription of this world event, now beyond the point of memory's eclipse.*
- 3) If the Vietnam War was the Television War, the First World War was the first war to mobilize*

*film as a vehicle of propaganda and communication with the Home Front. Battle of the Somme lies at the origin of this cultural use of motion pictures.*

- 4) *Film is, as yet, a scarce medium on MOW's list, and yet is arguably the most powerful documentary form of the twentieth century. Appointment of Battle of the Somme to MOW's roster would contribute to rectifying this imbalance with a work of inestimable global importance.*

*Battle of the Somme's five sections trace a path from battle preparations to shell bombardment, mounting the trenches, prisoner transportation, battalion manoeuvres, and the work of field hospitals and mess stations, and closes with a map of the state of the war, mid-way through, in late 1916. Intertitles encapsulate the battle's activities in words, or itemize specific measurements of weapons types. A chronology in title cards draws the various scenes into a logical, linear form: the arrival of British infantrymen for the offensive; the weakening of German positions through mortar and fire; troop advancement; the taking of captives; further advancement. While the film clearly addresses those on the Home Front—it shows the arrival of the packages they have sent and the munitions they have made—it does not shelter our gaze from war's horrors. Three hundred and sixty degree pans register the total destruction of entire villages, the scorched landscape immortalized on Paul Nash's canvases. Tilts and pans explore the demolition of entire trench systems, and their live burials; corpses from both sides lie strewn before the camera; men fall from fire as the camera keeps turning; staring faces remind us again and again how strange it still was to be filmed at all, in 1916.*

*The shock of this imagery endures. Indeed, Battle of the Somme has provided almost all cinematic footage used in subsequent films about the First World War.*

*Exposed as we now are to endless images of war, why do we need to safeguard these? In this film we watch, with disbelief, the war that was supposed to end all wars. The footage confronts us, as no other medium could, with the visual evidence of its raw brutality. Fought with minimal material support, here troops arrive on foot, sit on the ground, live in the earth, wash in ponds. The largest objects on screen are not buildings, or trees, but Howitzers. Here are the flesh, mud, blood, and exhaustion of the Somme. Not in verse or brushwork, but moving before us.*

*The Imperial War Museum's proposition that this film be held safe and disseminated as an invaluable part of the world's collective heritage is inspired. As it heads for its 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday, let Battle of the Somme join the other magnificent documents of our terrible international history, lest we forget.*

*Antonia Lant, author of *Blackout: the Cinema of the Second World War*, etc., is Professor of Cinema Studies at New York University (USA).*