

### The Birth of Film

(Excerpted from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_film#The\\_Birth\\_of\\_Film](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_film#The_Birth_of_Film)>)

A two second experimental film, *Roundhay Garden Scene*, filmed by Louis Le Prince in October 1888 in Leeds, Yorkshire, is generally recognized as the earliest surviving motion picture.

William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, chief engineer with the Edison Laboratories, is credited with the invention of a practicable form of celluloid strip containing a sequence of images, the basis of a method of photographing and projecting moving images. Celluloid blocks were thinly sliced; the slice marks were then removed with heated pressure plates. After this, the celluloid strips were coated with a photosensitive gelatin emulsion. In 1893 at the Chicago World Fair Thomas Edison introduced to the public two pioneering inventions based on this innovation: the Kinetograph, the first practical moving picture camera, and the Kinetoscope. The latter was a cabinet in which a continuous loop of Dickson's celluloid film (powered by an electric motor) was backlit by an incandescent lamp and seen through a magnifying lens. The spectator neared an eye piece. Kinetoscope parlours were supplied with fifty-foot film snippets photographed by Dickson, in Edison's "Black Maria" studio. These sequences recorded mundane events (such as *Fred Ott's Sneeze*, 1894) as well as entertainment acts like acrobats, music hall performers and boxing demonstrations.

### Film in the 1930s

(Excerpted from <<http://library.thinkquest.org/29285/history/et3.html>>)

The major advance of the 1930's was the introduction of synchronous sound and dialogue in the late 1930's. First invented and shown in the 1920's, it became the standard by the early 1930's, partly due to the invention of a device based on the radio that could effectively amplify sound in the theater. Initially there were two available systems with which to record sound. The first was similar to a phonograph, and recorded the sound to a separate disc. The second, more popular, system recorded the sound directly onto the celluloid strip. Initially sound hindered the filmmaking process, since the cameras had to be encased to muffle the noise of their motors and actors could not stray far from the stationary microphones. However, technological advances soon made up for this and the sound became an integral part of filmmaking.

The incorporation of sound into film and the resulting movie theater draw triggered a number of mergers in Hollywood as companies tried to consolidate their power (and their wealth). The result of these unions was the creation of the first major studios that dominated the industry for decades, Fox Studios (later 20th Century Fox), Leow's Incorporated (later Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer), Paramount, RKO, and Warner Bros. These studios monopolized the industry through vertical consolidation, meaning they controlled every part of the production process. They owned the writers, the directors and producers, the actors, the equipment and crew, even the theaters. They controlled every step and dominated Hollywood until 1948 when the U.S. Government found them to be an illegal monopoly.

It was also during this time that color in movies became possible through the use of the Technicolor system. Technicolor was created using a special camera that ran three strips of film, one in red, one in blue, and one in yellow. When the three strips were consolidated, the resulting image was in full color, though the colors were frequently very exaggerated as can be seen in two such films that were filmed in this manner, *Gone With The Wind* (1939) and *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).

**All Quiet on the Western Front** (1930) Directed by Lewis Milestone. Lew Ayres, Louis Wolheim (138 min.) Based on the novel by Erich Maria Remarque

(Excerpted from: <[http://www.moviediva.com/MD\\_root/reviewpages/MDAllQuietWesternFront.htm](http://www.moviediva.com/MD_root/reviewpages/MDAllQuietWesternFront.htm)>).

Erich Maria Remarque was born with the middle name Paul. After his mother died, he adopted her name, giving his to the hero of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It was based on his experience in the trenches, and is told entirely from the German foot soldiers' point of view. Remarque's first professional writing was as an advertising copywriter, part of the reason for the novel's accessible style. When it was published in 1929, it swiftly became the best selling novel of the 20th century, although the complete text was not available in the US until 1975. The translator, A. W. Wheen, made a valuable contribution when he rendered *Im Westen nichts Neues* as not the literal *Nothing New on the Western Front*, but as the more poetic *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It remains in print, in effect an early cross-over hit, a serious literary novel that was widely read. It is still required reading in schools. The book and movie made him a fortune, and he spent the rest of his life trying to equal its success. He became a refugee from the Nazis (and they murdered his youngest sister for her anti-fascist activities)....

*All Quiet on the Western Front* may be the definitive anti-war film, not for the Great War alone, but all wars. It was the most powerful statement about WWI by the generation that fought it. Andrew Kelly writes in *Cinema and the Great War*: "No war

was as violent, pointless and miserable as the First World War. With 8 1/2 million dead and 20 million injured it was a disaster unparalleled in human history. There was nothing great about the Great War, except the scale of despair and destruction." This film was so controversial that a tangle of different versions existed from the effort to make its uncompromising message palatable to the widest possible audience....

To begin with, *All Quiet...* was made in both silent and sound versions, since not every theater had adopted the new technology by 1930. The LOC labored to restore the original soundtrack, removing distracting layers of music and sound effects added over the years. The original track attempted to recreate, as closely as possible, being in a war zone. The experience is so intense, two older couples walked out of the NCMA screening after the first bombardment. The 1934 re-release was 90 minutes long, 45 minutes shorter than the original. A 1939 release added an extra reel of news footage at the beginning and end, with a narrator decrying the rise of Nazism. In 1950, there was a Cold War version, with swing music added at the end. In 1984 a dubbed reconstruction aired on West German television. One of the prints used in that restoration was from the personal collection of Joseph Goebbels, who had denounced the film at the premiere and burned Remarque's novel. Ironically, *All Quiet...*'s greatest enemy had contributed to its preservation....

*All Quiet on the Western Front* was censored and banned in many countries. The French did not like aspersions cast upon the virtue of its women. Germans objected particularly to the character of Himmelstross, who becomes a sadistic Army-sanctioned martinet, and to the discussion amongst the soldiers about the causes of war. Germany was the 2nd biggest European market for American films in 1930, and Universal wanted to make a cut that would be acceptable there, partly because it was the homeland of Universal's founder, Carl Laemmle. But the Nazis disrupted the premiere, Joseph Goebbels made a speech denouncing it, mice, stink bombs and sneezing powder were released in the theater and outside, the SS instigated a riot. The Nazi paper called it "A Jewish lie" and "a hate film slandering the German soldier." The film was banned inside Germany, but the German language version played to full houses just over the border, and special trains and buses transported the audience to theaters in Switzerland, France and the Netherlands. In Poland, the ending was cut. *All Quiet...* was banned in Italy and did not play there until 1956. It was banned in Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and New Zealand. It finally played Australia with severe cuts. The film was not seen in Germany again until 1952.

### Synopsis / Themes

(Excerpted from < [http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/41745/all\\_quiet\\_on\\_the\\_western\\_front\\_movie.html](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/41745/all_quiet_on_the_western_front_movie.html)>)

The movie *All Quiet on the Western Front* is a World War I movie, meant to depict the German viewpoint of the war. This movie showed that both sides of the war suffered great losses during the war and in the end there were also several philosophical questions about war addressed. The movie starts out when there were problems between Serbia and Austria-Hungary over an assassination of an Austria-Hungarian important historical figure by a young radically nationalist Slavic man. World War broke out. This is the beginning setting of the movie, "All Quiet on the Western Front."

The protagonist of this story is Paul Baumer. He is first seen in, *All Quiet on the Western Front* as a young student who daydreams about war.

The first setting is Germany at the beginning of the war. Schools were spreading propaganda, hoping to recruit young soldiers to fight the war, "for father Germany." The professor with glasses that taught Paul's class was very enthusiastic in his lectures of serving the nation. He said things like "your nation has served you well; now it is time for you to serve your nation!" Things like this inspired the schoolboys to become soldiers in the new German army. While the professor talked about how courageous heroes they could be if they joined the army, the young boys went off daydreaming about being victorious heroes in the war. It would be unfortunately otherwise after they start fighting in the war. **One theme of the story in *All Quiet on the Western Front* is that reality is different from fantasy....**

In analysis of this movie, it can be learned that **war is nothing to be glorified**. In truth, it is really a bad thing. Many people lose their lives to war. The movie "All Quiet on the Western Front" tries to illustrate this point and it does so very well. Friends went into war with high hopes but in the end were killed off one by one by the horrific war. They also discussed philosophical questions such as why there had to be war. It can be concluded that **many soldiers don't understand the real purpose for war and such human sacrifice**. As seen in the German soldiers and friends of Paul, many didn't really want to fight in such conditions, where there was no food and they had to live in crowded trenches for months at a time. World War I was truly a devastating historical event.