

## Durham E-Theses

---

### *Another Dimension: Stereoscopic Photography and the Press, c. 1896-1911.*

BARBER, DAVID,CHRISTOPHER

#### How to cite:

---

BARBER, DAVID,CHRISTOPHER (2021) *Another Dimension: Stereoscopic Photography and the Press, c. 1896-1911.*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/13987/>

#### Use policy

---

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full Durham E-Theses policy](#) for further details.

**David Christopher Barber**

**PhD, 2020**

**Another Dimension: Stereoscopic Photography and the Press,  
c.1896-1911.**

## **ABSTRACT**

The phrase “another dimension” encapsulates the approach taken by this thesis to the visual history of the western press. It is the first study devoted to analysing how stereoscopic photography became integral to daily newspapers, illustrated weeklies, and magazines.

At the turn of the twentieth century, many tens of thousands of images conceived stereoscopically appeared in the pages of the press, shaping the “look” of titles on both sides of the Atlantic. To test this hypothesis, the choice of Underwood & Underwood of New York and London as a case study through which to explore my research questions is rooted in its eminence as a stereoscopic company, its pedigree as a press supplier, and access to previously unavailable primary source materials.

By approaching the history of early press photography using an institutional, medium-centric, business-orientated method rather than an individualised, personality-led one, an additional dimension can be gained. This approach not only offers details and insights previously missed or forgotten but makes the case for completely rewriting the visual history of the press to take full account of stereoscopy’s overlooked contribution.

**Another Dimension: Stereoscopic Photography and the Press, c.1896-1911.**

**David Christopher Barber**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**School of Modern Languages and Cultures**

**Durham University**

**December 2020**

# Table of Contents

<b>List of Illustrations</b> .....	6
<b>List of Abbreviations</b> .....	15
<b>Statement of Copyright</b> .....	16
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	17
<b>Dedication</b> .....	18
<b>Introduction</b> .....	19
<i>Aims and Approach of Thesis</i> .....	24
<i>Why Underwood?</i> .....	28
<i>Thesis Structure</i> .....	31
<b>1. Stereoscopic View to Press Photograph</b> .....	35
<i>Introduction</i> .....	35
<i>“Stereoscopically Recorded History”</i> .....	39
<i>Underwood’s First Press Photography</i> .....	44
<i>Greco-Turkish War, 1897</i> .....	49
<i>Spanish-American War, 1898</i> .....	56
<i>South African War, 1899-1902</i> .....	58
<i>Underwood in South Africa</i> .....	64
<i>Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner</i> .....	66
<i>“The Best Scoop I Have Had Yet”</i> .....	74
<i>Special Artists at War</i> .....	77
<i>“True Impression of Every Great Event”</i> .....	81
<i>“At the Seat of War”</i> .....	93
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	98
<b>2. The Business of Networking</b> .....	101
<i>Introduction</i> .....	101
<i>Underwood and the White House</i> .....	103
<i>Underwood and the Royal Family</i> .....	116
<i>“J.E. Ellam of Yarm”</i> .....	123
<i>King Edward VII’s Coronation</i> .....	126
<i>Buckingham Palace: Saturday August 9, 1902</i> .....	136
<i>Royal Family Photographs for the Press</i> .....	142
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	153



<b>3. The Training of Photographers</b>	157
<i>Introduction</i>	157
<i>Wanted: Photographers</i>	159
<i>“Stereograph Making”</i>	163
<i>Underwood’s Training Academy</i>	170
<i>Horace D. Ashton and Clarence L. Chester</i>	172
<i>In the Panama Canal Zone</i>	177
<i>Corporate Training: Clarence L. Chester</i>	183
<i>Corporate Training: Horace D. Ashton</i>	188
<i>Conclusion</i>	202
<b>4. Supply and Demand</b>	204
<i>Introduction</i>	204
<i>Early History</i>	206
<i>Mont Pelée, 1902</i>	210
<i>Yosemite, California</i>	214
<i>Lantern Slide Lectures</i>	216
<i>“Have You Any Good Pictures of Russian Scenes?”</i>	219
<i>Scenes from Every Land, 1907</i>	230
<i>“Good and Interesting Photographs”</i>	239
<i>Persia: The Awakening East</i>	241
<i>How the World is Shod</i>	245
<i>Where Roosevelt Will Hunt</i>	247
<i>Conclusion</i>	258
<b>5. Stereoscopic Celebrity</b>	261
<i>Introduction</i>	261
<i>Miss Mary Leiter and the Hon. George Curzon MP</i>	263
<i>Prominent People</i>	269
<i>The Belle of New York</i>	275
<i>Foulsham &amp; Banfield Ltd</i>	278
<i>Lady Curzon, Vicereine of India</i>	283
<i>Royalty and First Families</i>	291
<i>Swimmers and Suffragettes</i>	296
<i>Anniversary Journalism</i>	304
<i>Carnegie and Twain ... and Rockefeller</i>	308
<i>Aviation’s First Fatality</i>	317
<i>Conclusion</i>	321

<b>Epilogue</b> .....	323
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	330
<i>Core Findings</i> .....	330
<i>Challenges and Opportunities for Future Research</i> .....	335
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	341

## List of Illustrations

Figure 1. "Travelling by the Underwood Travel System." Private Collection.....	40
Figure 2. "Echo Lake, North Conway, New Hampshire." Charles Bierstadt stereo card. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	45
Figure 3. Underwood Office, 26 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London, WC. <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , June 1901.....	48
Figure 4. "Colonel Vassos Commanding the Greek Troops in Crete." <i>The Graphic</i> , March 20, 1897.....	49
Figure 5. "The Eastern Crisis: A Journey to Canea and the Headquarters of Colonel Vassos." <i>Illustrated London News</i> , April 3, 1897.....	51
Figure 6. "The Greco-Turkish War – With the Greek Forces on The Frontier." <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , May 22, 1897. Private Collection.....	52
Figure 7. "Greek Volunteers in Athens," <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , April 15, 1897, and "Greek Peasant Recruits," <i>ILN</i> , April 3, 1897.....	54
Figure 8. "Recruits for the Army before the Temple of Theseus, Athens, Greece." J.F. Jarvis stereocard sold by Underwood. Courtesy of Brian May Collection.....	54
Figure 9. "Skirmishing near the Meteora Monasteries." <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , May 22, 1897.....	55
Figure 10 "Skirmishing near the 'Monasteries in the Air,' Northern Greece." J.F. Jarvis stereocard sold by Underwood. Private Collection.....	55
Figure 11. "Charge. Troop C, 1st Cavalry." <i>Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest</i> (Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897).....	62
Figure 12. "Mr. F.H [sic] Mackern and outfit on the march with Lord Roberts on the way to Pretoria, South Africa." <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , July 1902.....	66
Figure 13. "Sir Alfred Milner and Staff. Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood." <i>Black and White</i> , February 17, 1900.....	68
Figure 14. "His Excellency Sir Alfred Milner and Staff, Cape Town, South Africa." Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.....	70
Figure 15. "Officials at the War Office." <i>The Graphic</i> , March 3, 1900.....	73
Figure 16. "General and Mrs. Cronje and Their Son (Just Behind) Escorted by General Douglas to the Train for Cape Town. Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood: Copyright." <i>Black and White</i> , April 7, 1900.....	74
Figure 17. "Lord Stanley Censoring Reports of a Battle. Photographed by Mr. H. Mackern, of <i>Scribner's Magazine</i> ." <i>The Friend</i> , April 3, 1900.....	78

Figure 18. "English Fighters in the War Against the Boers. From Stereoscopic Photographs by Underwood & Underwood, New York. Copyright 1900." <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , April 21, 1900.....	81
Figure 19. "The Warwicks Charging a Kopje Under Deadly Fire." <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , April 21, 1900.....	84
Figure 20. "The Dying Bugler's Last Call - A Battlefield Incident, Gras Pan, South Africa." National Museum of Science & Media / Science & Society Picture Library.....	85
Figure 21. "The Last Call," <i>Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest</i> . (Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897).....	86
Figure 22. "The Sad Side of the War in South Africa ... From Stereoscopic Photographs. Copyright, 1900, by Underwood & Underwood, New York." <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , June 9, 1900.....	87
Figure 23. "The Entry into Kroonstad - The Guards March Past Lord Roberts." <i>Black and White</i> , June 23, 1900.....	89
Figure 24. "From Mafeking to Pretoria ... Stereoscopic Photo by Underwood and Underwood" (right). <i>Black and White</i> , August 4, 1900.....	90
Figure 25. "Latest Portrait of Lord Roberts." <i>ILN</i> , August 11, 1900.....	92
Figure 26. Front cover of <i>Side-Lights on the March</i> by H.F. Mackern published in 1901 by John Murray, London.....	95
Figure 27. Mr. H. F. Mackern, Underwood stereographer. <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , June 1902.....	96
Figure 28. "The Crowned King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Coronation Robes..." Copyright 1902 by Underwood & Underwood. National Portrait Gallery, London.....	101
Figure 29. George Bruce Cortelyou (1862-1940) at his desk. Courtesy of National McKinley Birthplace Museum.....	104
Figure 30. "The Visit of President McKinley and His Cabinet to the West." <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , October 21, 1899.....	108
Figure 31. "A miners [sic] little daughter photographing the President." Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.....	109
Figure 32. "Mr. William McKinley, President of The United States, in His Study at White House." <i>The Graphic</i> , April 9, 1898.....	110
Figure 33. "President McKinley at his desk in the White House, Washington, U.S.A." Copyright 1898. Strohmeyer & Wyman. Sold only by Underwood & Underwood.....	111

Figure 34. Strohmeyer is next to Hare (back row, 1st and 2nd left) with Hemment and Dunn (back row, 2nd and 1st right). <i>The Call</i> , San Francisco, May 14, 1901.....	113
Figure 35. Advertisement for “A Series of Sixty Stereographs of the Late President William McKinley.” <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , March 1902.....	114
Figure 36. “Her Majesty Queen Victoria at Breakfast ... in the 60th year of her Reign.” Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.....	116
Figure 37. “Group, Including Queen Victoria, Nice, April 1895.” <i>Portraits of Royal Children Vol.42 1894-1895</i> , Royal Collection Trust.....	117
Figure 38. “An Impression of the Service at St. Paul’s.” <i>The Graphic</i> , “Diamond Jubilee Celebration Number,” June 28, 1897.....	121
Figure 39. Print of “Ambassadors and Royalties Witnessing the Thanksgiving Service” taken by James Edward Ellam. Submitted for copyright registration, June 30, 1897.....	122
Figure 40. Strickland & Holt’s outdoor portrait studio, Yarm, 1890s. Stereocard courtesy of Holt Family Collection.....	123
Figure 41. “The Second Engine and Tender” by James Edward Ellam, October 1894. Print submitted with copyright registration form. National Archives, Kew.....	124
Figure 42. Bert Underwood (extreme right) using an extended stepladder to stereograph the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain MP (2nd left) in London, summer 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.....	132
Figure 43. John Lemmon Russell (centre) and Bert Underwood (right) with unknown man, Hampton Court, London, summer 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.....	132
Figure 44. Bert Underwood and John Lemmon Russell, London, 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.....	133
Figure 45. “King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Coronation Robes, 9 August 1902.” W. & D. Downey, Royal Collection Trust.....	138
Figure 46. “A National Portrait: The King and Queen on Coronation Day.” <i>Black and White</i> , September 20, 1902.....	139
Figure 47. “Gossip of the Coronation.” <i>Collier’s Weekly</i> , August 30, 1902.....	142
Figure 48. “The Party on the King’s Yacht during the Coronation Manoeuvres.” <i>Harper’s Weekly</i> , September 20, 1902.....	144
Figure 49. “From the cares of Empire to the joys of Home – King Edward VII and his grandchildren ... Balmoral Castle, Scotland.” Underwood stereocard. Holt Family Collection.....	146

Figure 50. The Countess of Warwick (front row, middle, cradling her son) with Indian Princes and Colonial Premiers, Warwick Castle, August 2, 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman House.....	148
Figure 51. "Pope Pius X: First Picture Taken of the Pope in His Pontifical Robes." <i>Collier's</i> , November 14, 1903.....	149
Figure 52. "Cardinal Merry Del Val, Papal Secretary of State to Pope Pius X." <i>Goodwin's Weekly</i> , September 13, 1910.....	154
Figure 53. "President Roosevelt and Senator Fairbanks." New York Public Libraries Digital Collection.....	155
Figure 54. J. Hal Steffen, photographer with Bain's News Service. From <i>New York Times</i> obituary, 1937.....	161
Figure 55. <i>The Stereoscopic Photograph</i> . First published by Underwood in June 1901.....	162
Figure 56. "Graphic Cameras are Made to Use." <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , June 1901.....	165
Figure 57. "Stereograph Making." <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , June 1901.....	169
Figure 58. Clarence L. Chester (left) and Horace D. Ashton (right). Courtesy of California Museum of Photography (left) and George R. Rinhart Collection (right).....	172
Figure 59. "Some Snapshots at Statesmen and Politicians ...." <i>New York Tribune</i> , February 15, 1903.....	173
Figure 60. "Japanese 11 Inch Siege Gun Firing 500 Pound Shells into Port Arthur." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , March 29, 1905.....	175
Figure 61. "The Perils of a New York Photographer." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , December 5, 1905.....	176
Figure 62. "Photographs in the Panama Canal Zone..." <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> , February 11, 1906.....	178
Figure 63. "View of Broadway in Culebra, Panama." <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> , February 11, 1906.....	183
Figure 64. "View of Cass-St. in Colon, Panama." <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> , February 11, 1906.....	184
Figure 65. "Overlooking the Burned District in Colon, Panama." <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> , February 11, 1906.....	185
Figure 66. "The Latest Photographs of Scenes in Panama." <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , February 24, 1906.....	186
Figure 67. Underwood "From Stereographs" copyright notice, 1907. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	189

Figure 68. “Ashton’s Panama 95845-903” (3rd entry from bottom). Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	189
Figure 69. “Honouring the Memory of Paul Jones at Annapolis.” <i>Harper’s Weekly</i> , May 12, 1906.....	193
Figure 70. “New Honors Paid to the Remains of John Paul Jones.” <i>Leslie’s Weekly</i> , May 17, 1906.....	194
Figure 71. “President Roosevelt Modeled in Sand on the Beach at Atlantic City.” <i>Leslie’s Weekly</i> , October 6, 1904. New York Public Library Digital Collections.....	195
Figure 72. Herbert G. Ponting during his Underwood assignment in Japan. Taken from Underwood stereocard, 1904.....	196
Figure 73. “President Roosevelt Addressing the Steam Shovel Crew ....” <i>New York Tribune</i> , November 26, 1906.....	198
Figure 74. “Roosevelt, in white linen suit and boater hat, surrounded by workers....” Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard College Library.....	198
Figure 75. “An Example of President Roosevelt’s Method ....” <i>Harper’s Weekly</i> , December 8, 1906.....	200
Figure 76. “Noteworthy Scenes During President Roosevelt’s Visit to the Isthmus ....” <i>Leslie’s Weekly</i> , December 6, 1906.....	201
Figure 77. Underwood negative “95854.” Ashton’s contact print and verso. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	201
Figure 78. “Preparations for Thanksgiving Dinners...” <i>New York Tribune</i> “Illustrated Supplement,” November 22, 1903.....	208
Figure 79. Underwood photographer “Ledbetter” [sic], Martinique 1902. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	211
Figure 80. “A Terrible Volcanic Explosion – Mont Pelée in Eruption, June 5, 1902.” <i>Stereoscopic Photograph</i> , September 1902.....	212
Figure 81. “Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir at Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California.” US Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC....	215
Figure 82. “Home of Count Okuma, Tokyo, Japan.” Underwood lantern slide. Private Collection.....	217
Figure 83. “Evolution of Russian Government” by Edwin A. Grosvenor, LL.D. <i>National Geographic</i> front cover, July 1905.....	220
Figure 84. “Latest Picture of the Tsar of all the Russias [sic] ....” <i>National Geographic</i> , July 1905.....	222
Figure 85. “President Faure’s Visit to the Czar.” <i>The Graphic</i> , September 4, 1897.....	224

Figure 86. “Splendid Temple of Our Saviour in a Western District of Moscow.” <i>National Geographic</i> , July 1905.....	225
Figure 87. “Country Women Tramping into Krief [sic], Russia, with the Morning Supply of Milk.” <i>National Geographic</i> , July 1905.....	226
Figure 88. Underwood’s “Russian Troika” in St. Petersburg (left) and Moscow (right). <i>New York Tribune</i> , May 1903 (left), and <i>National Geographic</i> , July 1905 (right).....	229
Figure 89. “Monasteries of the Air.” <i>National Geographic</i> , January 1906.....	232
Figure 90. Underwood photographs from the Meteora Monasteries. <i>Harper’s Weekly</i> , 1897 (left) and <i>National Geographic</i> , 1906 (right).....	234
Figure 91. “A Half Mile of Pork.” <i>National Geographic</i> , September 1906.....	236
Figure 92. “A Half Mile of Pork” published in 1894 by Strohmeyer & Wyman and sold by Underwood. New York Public Library Digital Collections.....	236
Figure 93. Gathering Cacao Pods... (left) and “Llamas and Their Driver...” <i>National Geographic</i> , February 1907.....	238
Figure 94. “Persian Bakery to the Left and Grocer’s Shop to the Right: Teheran.” <i>National Geographic</i> , May 1908.....	243
Figure 95. “Crowd of Persian Revolutionists.” <i>National Geographic</i> , May 1908.....	243
Figure 96. Underwood invoice dated May 4, 1908 for nine photographs sold to <i>National Geographic</i> for \$13.50.....	245
Figure 97. “Probably the Oldest Shoes ...” (left) and “Bargain Sale of Japanese Clogs and Sandals.” <i>National Geographic</i> , September 1908.....	246
Figure 98. “Mr. Dutkewich [left] and His Carriers in the Taru Desert.” From <i>In Wildest Africa</i> (1910).....	248
Figure 99. “Where Roosevelt Will Hunt” article with “Map of Africa.” <i>National Geographic</i> , March 1909.....	251
Figure 100. “Masai Men Resting While Their Wives Build a New Village,” and “A Masai Settlement.” <i>National Geographic</i> , March 1909.....	252
Figure 101. “A Belle of Mombasa With Her Pet Deer.” <i>National Geographic</i> , March 1909.....	253
Figure 102. “In the Great Rift Valley of East Africa.” <i>National Geographic</i> , March 1909.....	254
Figure 103. “Resting and Feasting After a Morning’s Hunt in the Jungle.” <i>National Geographic</i> , March 1909.....	255
Figure 104. Close-up insets of Peter Dutkewich taken from figures 98 (left) and 103.....	256



Figure 105. Underwood stereocard retitled “East African hunters in camp after a day’s work with spear and gun.” Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	256
Figure 106. “Miss Leiter” and “Mr. Curzon.” <i>Evening Star</i> , Washington, DC, April 20, 1895.....	265
Figure 107. “Miss Mary Leiter” and “The Hon. George Curzon, M.P.” <i>New York Daily Tribune</i> , April 23, 1895.....	265
Figure 108. Artist drawings used to illustrate Leiter-Curzon wedding report. <i>Evening Star</i> , Washington, DC, April 22, 1895.....	265
Figure 109. “Marriage of the Hon. G. N. Curzon and Miss Mary Leiter.” <i>ILN</i> , April 27, 1895.....	266
Figure 110. “Her Excellency Lady Curzon on the terrace of a bungalow at Gulmarg.” Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.....	269
Figure 111. “First View of the Real McKinley.” From Underwood stereocard, late 1890s.....	270
Figure 112. “Three Famous Fighters,” including “Fighting Joe” (centre). <i>Black and White</i> , August 20, 1898.....	271
Figure 113. “The Right Hon. G. Wyndham, Esq .... The Man of the Hour.” Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London .....	273
Figure 114. “The Sketch Says ‘Au Revoir’ to Miss Edna May.” <i>The Sketch</i> , January 10, 1900.....	276
Figure 115. (Left to right) Misses Zena and Phyllis Dare, Miss Gabrielle Ray and Miss Marie Studholme. Photographs by Foulsham and Banfield. National Portrait Gallery, London.....	279
Figure 116. “Why, you little beauty! How long have you been our cook?” Underwood stereocard 2 of 10 © 1900.....	280
Figure 117. “Photographic Interviews: III. Mr. and Mrs. George Bernard Shaw.” <i>The Sketch</i> , March 12, 1902.....	282
Figure 118. “Her Excellency Lady Curzon in a Bungalow in Gulmarg, Kashmir, 1902.” Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.....	284
Figure 119. Lady Curzon’s oak leaf dress by the House of Worth. Courtesy of Fashion Museum, Bath, and North East Somerset Council.....	284
Figure 120. “Lady Curzon. The Latest Portrait of the Vicereine of India.” <i>Harper’s Weekly</i> , October 25, 1902.....	285
Figure 121. “Lady Curzon of Kedleston” (centre). <i>ILN</i> , January 3, 1903.....	286
Figure 122. “Lady Curzon in Durbar Dress.” <i>The Sketch</i> , January 28, 1903.....	287
Figure 123. “Death of Lady Curzon of Kedleston.” <i>Daily Mirror</i> , July 19, 1906....	288

Figure 124. "The Late Lady Curzon on a Tiger-Shooting Expedition." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , July 20, 1906.....	289
Figure 125. "Queen Victoria of Spain (right) at the Royal Bullfight." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , June 7, 1906.....	291
Figure 126. "The Queen of Spain as Horsewoman." <i>ILN</i> , July 28, 1906.....	292
Figure 127. "Miss Roosevelt and Mr. Longworth" during US Far East tour. <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , February 17, 1906.....	294
Figure 128. Taken from "The Public and Private Life of Grover Cleveland." <i>Leslie's Weekly</i> , July 9, 1908.....	295
Figure 129. "Lady Swimmers' Entente Cordiale in the Seine." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , July 17, 1906.....	297
Figure 130. "Great Seven Mile Swimming Race Through Paris." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , July 17, 1906.....	298
Figure 131. Miss Annette Kellerman in her "figure suit." National Portrait Gallery, London.....	299
Figure 132. "Imprisoned for Two Months." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , October 26, 1906.....	300
Figure 133. "Suffragette's Secret. Miss Gawthorpe ... To Be Married." <i>Daily Mirror</i> , February 12, 1907.....	302
Figure 134. Postcard of Miss Mary E. Gawthorpe, Organiser, WSPU. Parliamentary Archives.....	303
Figure 135. Suffragette Mary Gawthorpe (upper left) and actress Edna May (far right). <i>Daily Mirror</i> , February 15, 1907.....	304
Figure 136. "Booker T. Washington in Carnegie Hall last week." <i>New York Tribune</i> , January 28, 1906.....	305
Figure 137. "Booker T. Washington and distinguished guests, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama." Underwood stereocard. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.....	306
Figure 138. "Mark Twain at work." Underwood stereoscopic photograph. Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.....	310
Figure 139. "In his Hours of Ease." <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , August 24, 1907.....	312
Figure 140. "Mark Twain and Miss Clemens." Underwood stereoscopic photograph. Keystone-Mast Collection.....	313
Figure 141. Andrew Carnegie at his summer cottage, St. Andrews, New York. Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.....	314
Figure 142. "Mr. Carnegie's Golf Difficulties at the American St. Andrews." <i>ILN</i> , May 23, 1908.....	315

Figure 143. "John D. Rockefeller's 'Drive' ...."	
<i>Harper's Weekly</i> , February 13, 1909.....	315
Figure 144. "Mr. Taft revives the popularity of golf at the national capital."	
<i>New York Tribune</i> , April 4, 1909.....	316
Figure 145. "The Fatal Fall of the Wright Aeroplane."	
<i>Harper's Weekly</i> , September 26, 1908.....	318
Figure 146. "The Wright aeroplane in flight, Fort Myer, Va."	
Underwood stereocard © 1909. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	319
Figure 147. "117480," Underwood contact print.	
Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.....	320
Figure 148. "The Iceberg That Sank Titanic."	
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.....	324
Figure 149. "Titanic honeymooners Mr. and Mrs. George A. Harder."	
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.....	325
Figure 150. "First Photograph of Some of the Survivors...."	
<i>The Call</i> , San Francisco, April 24, 1912.....	326
Figure 151. "First Photographs of Scenes Connected with the Titanic Disaster."	
<i>The Call</i> , San Francisco, April 24, 1912.....	326
Figure 152. Underwood application for copyright for "U140432."	
US Copyright Office, Washington, DC.....	328
Figure 153. "Assignment of Copyright" for Titanic photographs to Bernice Palmer.	
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.....	329

## List of Abbreviations

BFI	British Film Institute
BJP	British Journal of Photography
NATSOPA	National Society of Operative Printers' Assistants
NGS	National Geographic Society, Washington, DC
NYPPA	New York Press Photographers Association
RGS	Royal Geographical Society, London
RPS	Royal Photographic Society, Bristol
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union

## **Statement of Copyright**

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the author's prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

## Acknowledgements

I am indebted to my supervisors at Durham University, Professor Jonathan Long and Professor Richard Huzzey, for their insight, support, and guidance.

I gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Northern Bridge Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Thanks to successful applications for Research Training Support Grants, I was able to make two trips to America which yielded materials that inform this thesis and its findings; and to present a research paper at *Stereo Photography: Images, Inventions and Advancements* at St. Andrews University, Scotland in 2018.

Of the scholars and curators who generously shared their time and knowledge, I would particularly like to thank David E. Haberstick, Curator of Photography at the National Museum of American History, Washington, DC; Ludmilla Jordanova; Simon Ward; and William Schaefer.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have taken part in discussions with research community colleagues at Durham, particularly during conferences and events organised by the Centre for Visual Arts and Culture, and the Centre for Nineteenth Century Studies.

I would also like to thank those at the Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, Leicester who initially encouraged my interest in stereoscopic photography, notably Elizabeth Edwards, Kelley Wilder, and Gil Pasternak.

Special thanks to Francis DiMauro and George Rinhart for their help throughout.

Finally, to my wife Helen, my family and friends who have lived and breathed Underwood & Underwood for so long: thank you.

## **Dedication**

To the memory of my parents, Gladys (1927-1980) and Peter (1919-1981).

And to my wife's great-great-uncle, Percy Richard Salmon (1872-1959), a stereographer for Lévy et ses Fils of Paris.

It was his diary of an 1898 company expedition to Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, and Greece which included the entry "Underwood here" that started my doctoral research journey.

## Introduction

The phrase “another dimension” encapsulates the approach taken by this thesis to the visual history of the press. It uncovers the role played by stereoscopic photography in creating the look of the news. Magazine and newspaper sub-editors aiming to create a catchy headline would recognise “another dimension” as offering a play on words and layers of meaning. In this case, it primarily alludes to the nature of stereoscopy as a photographic medium. The stereoscopic principle holds that when combined in a stereoscope or hand-held viewer, two slightly different images of the same subject produce an illusion of three dimensions.<sup>1</sup> From its emergence in the 1850s, this virtual experience offered an alternative view of the world and a new method of “seeing.”

The historiography confirms that press use of photography as an illustrative tool was enabled by halftone “dot” printing. This photomechanical breakthrough allowed publications to reproduce photographic images directly rather than through engravings.<sup>2</sup> Also, the advent of high-speed rotary presses meant photographs could be printed alongside text more speedily and cheaply.<sup>3</sup> However, in chronicling the widespread adoption of these innovations in the decades either side of 1900, stereoscopy’s contribution has been overlooked. Consideration of this omission offers the opportunity to tackle the photographic history of the press from a different angle. Through an extensive case study of a leading stereoscopic company of the era, Underwood & Underwood of New York and London, this thesis offers another dimension to existing analysis of and argument about the topic.<sup>4</sup>

Academic interest in the visual history of the press and its portrayal as “news photography” or “photojournalism” has taken various forms. In investigating its

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael Pritchard, *A History of Photography in 50 Cameras* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 26.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Marien Warner, *Photography: A Cultural History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2014), 163.

<sup>3</sup> Joel H. Wiener, “British and American Newspaper Journalism in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. Joanne Shattock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 275.

<sup>4</sup> From this point in the thesis, Underwood & Underwood is “Underwood” unless the context merits use of its full name.



emergence, scholars from a variety of disciplines have taken different directions. Some stressed the importance of technological determinism, some the role played by photographers, whilst others were interested in aesthetics and visual form. Research concentrating on the many factors that drove and defined early press photography in the United States and Europe has though found only an off-stage role for stereoscopy.

In America, Michael L. Carlebach studied various aspects of news photography and photojournalism. His work produced a comprehensive overview of how illustrated journalism at the turn of the twentieth century helped popularise news and made the printed photograph an indispensable part of the end-product. His study of the pioneering Bain's News Service in New York analysed the agency model by which photographs were collected and distributed across America. Also evident from his research was the importance of the recruitment and training of photographers to produce and deliver a saleable product.<sup>5</sup> In framing this narrative, Carlebach attached importance to the part played by "unsung" photographers. This characterisation omits the involvement of stereographers and requires further investigation.

Using a transatlantic perspective, Joel H. Wiener surveyed press photography in America and Britain by exploring its origins in both countries in terms of what they shared and where they differed. This flow of ideas and influences with interplay between differing journalistic traditions produced a rich source of research material. This has been analysed in a series of studies over the past three decades, some attracting contributions from other scholars.<sup>6</sup> Overall, Wiener concluded that American newspapers were more receptive to faster printing presses, automatic type

---

<sup>5</sup> Michael L. Carlebach, *The Origins of Photojournalism in America* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); *American Photojournalism Comes of Age* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997); and *Bain's New York: The City in News Pictures 1900-1925* (New York: Dover Publications, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Joel H. Wiener, ed., *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain 1850s – 1914* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); Wiener, Joel H., and Mark Hampton, eds., *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); and Joel H. Wiener, *The Americanization of the British Press, 1830s-1914: Speed in the Age of Transatlantic Journalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

setting machines, and halftone printing for making newspaper photographs. However, visual journalism emanated from Britain with greater energy and enthusiasm for much of the period during which these innovations emerged.<sup>7</sup> Another important socio-historical factor he identified was the impact of a newly created state education system in Britain. After 1880, this made school attendance compulsory for children aged between five and ten.<sup>8</sup> He also concluded that changes in journalism were long-range and did not rest exclusively on the innovations of a few individuals or contributions of a single nation.<sup>9</sup> This overview of press photography in America and Britain emphasised the importance of an institutional, medium-centric, business-orientated method rather than an individualised, personality-led one. Stereoscopy's contribution emerges more clearly by taking such an approach.

In Britain, Jeffrey Wright's groundwork tracing the origins and development of press photography between 1884 and 1914 proved invaluable to later studies including this one. His observation that British press photography lacked a literature and historiography of its own encouraged interest in this field that has grown exponentially, and to which this thesis seeks to contribute by filling a significant gap. Wright highlighted illustrated weeklies as a Victorian publishing phenomenon, utilising thousands of photographs. Only after 1904 though did they find a regular place in the columns of Britain's newspapers.<sup>10</sup> Also, Wright argued the *Daily Mirror*, long seen as a pioneer of newspaper illustration using real photographs creating press photography as we know it today, simply applied more rigorously a development that spread throughout the British press from the 1880s.<sup>11</sup> The photographic link he highlighted between illustrated weeklies and tabloid dailies is one that offers further research possibilities, particularly when considering a stereoscopic dimension.

As well as considering a transatlantic perspective, press historian Kevin Williams

---

<sup>7</sup> Wiener, "British and American," 275-7.

<sup>8</sup> Wiener, *Americanization*, 156.

<sup>9</sup> Wiener, *Americanization*, 6.

<sup>10</sup> Jeffrey Wright, "The Origins and Development of British Press Photography 1884-1914" (MSc diss., University College of Swansea, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> See "The Myth in the Mirror," *British Journalism Review* 14, no.3 (2003): 59-66.

pointed out that photography was a distinctive feature of reporting the second Boer War, or South African War of 1899-1902 as referred to by this study. The invention of hand-held light-weight cameras complemented improvements in print technology together with the arrival of newspaper distribution to the new conurbations. As a conflict that mobilised British public opinion, Williams observed that the South African War increased demand for news.<sup>12</sup> The visual aspect of the war's reporting, by an international press corps employing stereoscopic photography alongside the tried-and-tested methods employed by special artists, offers further research possibilities.

Other UK press historians have added intellectual weight to understanding the genre. Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy turned their attention to the popular press during the twentieth century, though photography's role in the emergence of the tabloid press was outside the scope of their study.<sup>13</sup> However, Ryan Linkof's study of British tabloid journalism successfully viewed the genre using the prism of celebrity. He explored the phenomenon by analysing the use of photography by pioneering papers such as the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Sketch*.<sup>14</sup> The portrayal of celebrity, bestowing fame on people from all walks of life and classes of society, is a photographic genre requiring further attention to more fully understand its invention and evolution.

Other disciplines have brought fresh insights to understanding early press photography and its place in the history of visual culture. Gerry Beegan introduced the perspective of an American design historian to assessing the role played by press photographers in Victorian London, and the printing techniques used to reproduce their work.<sup>15</sup> Identifying which companies and agencies supplied illustrative photographic material has opened up a research area into which new contributions can add value to our understanding of a complex and understudied

---

<sup>12</sup> Kevin Williams, *Read All About It! A History of the British Newspaper* (London: Routledge, 2010), 137.

<sup>13</sup> Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Ryan Linkof, *Public Images: Celebrity, Photojournalism, and the Making of the Tabloid Press* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> Gerry Beegan, *The Mass Image: A Social History of Photomechanical Reproduction in Victorian London* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

picture. Estelle Blaschke's study of the role of stock photography, as it affected advertising and marketing, briefly touched on the first trade in press photographs at the start of the twentieth century. She argued the United States was a mirror image of the European market with volume higher in the former. Thanks to halftone printing and high-speed rotary presses, American newspapers were able to produce illustrated supplements, especially at weekends, requiring a ready supply of photographs. She also concluded that the British tabloid model exemplified by the *Daily Mirror* fell within the tradition of nineteenth century pictorial magazines. What her study pinpointed was how early press photography led to the creation of large-scale photographic libraries that later formed the basis of the stock photography industry.<sup>16</sup> This phenomenon is another understudied aspect of the historiography.

Recent scholarship has added further understanding to how photography visually shaped and influenced news reporting in the press. Thierry Gervais and Gaëlle Morel produced an historical overview of what they termed "visual news."<sup>17</sup> They traced scholarly assessment of press photography and photojournalism to the work of Robert Taft in the 1930s, and later to Tim N. Gidal, and Gisèle Freund.<sup>18</sup> By regarding photography as a faithful reflection of reality laid down by the profession, a gendered narrative was developed by "the men of the press and historians" in which the photographer, far from disappearing, played the leading role.<sup>19</sup> To illustrate this stereotype, they cited James H. "Jimmy" Hare's photographic coverage of the Russo-Japanese conflict of 1904-05. Hare was among a select group of press photographers whose life and careers were celebrated in biographical studies such as that by Lewis L. Gould and Richard Greffe.<sup>20</sup> The genre though has tended to

---

<sup>16</sup> Estelle Blaschke, *Banking on Images: The Bettmann Archive and Corbis* (Leipzig: Spector Books, 2016), 84.

<sup>17</sup> Thierry Gervais and Gaëlle Morel, *The Making of Visual News: A History of Photography in the Press* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839-1889* (New York: Dover Publications, 1938); Tim N. Gidal, *Modern Photojournalism: Origin and Evolution, 1910-1933* (New York: Macmillan, 1973); and Gisele Freund, *Photography and Society* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 3-4.

<sup>20</sup> Lewis L. Gould and Richard Greffe, *Photojournalist: The Career of Jimmy Hare*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977.

overstate the role of individuals, creating a mythological figure celebrated as being prepared to risk their lives for the journalistic cause.

For their study, Gervais and Morel chose instead to build on new methodologies and research considerations developed since the 1970s to focus on what they labelled “the aesthetics of press photography.” This method aimed to historicise the information value of the images and enhance understanding of the belief systems exploited by press publishers. It called for detachment from the mere information value of images in the interests of assessing their potential to seduce. As a result, the history of press photography they portrayed involved technical, economic, and cultural parameters. It was one that looked at the western press, informed by access to a variety of private and public collections of newspapers and periodicals.<sup>21</sup> The sheer scope and scale of the press in America and Britain around 1900 means that titles which previously fell outside the remit of such studies remain to be analysed.

### *Aims and Approach of Thesis*

Continuing interest in the origins of press photography as a fertile area for scholastic study has allowed an established view of stereoscopy’s contribution to perpetuate. Invariably, the medium receives only a brief mention *en passant* in many of the studies cited above. When describing those involved in meeting the level of demand for news photographs in America, Gervais and Morel made a connection with companies that were distributors of stereoscopic images. They named Underwood and Keystone as two firms that started in the 1880s and 1890s respectively, who became what they termed “major press suppliers.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Blaschke highlighted Underwood and Keystone as “large picture agencies” who sought to respond to altered demand, adapting their offerings from stereographs to news images. In Underwood’s case, she observed, the company shifted its business towards news photography by 1910.<sup>23</sup> In listing specialist agencies and new firms who ensured a

---

<sup>21</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 26.

<sup>23</sup> Blaschke, *Banking on Images*, 88.

regular supply of illustrative material, Beegan included Underwood as one that started out producing stereocards. But his assessment included the more emphatic statement that the company “would later dominate press photography.”<sup>24</sup> These characterisations are not unique to recent academic endeavours. Studies in the 1990s such as Carlebach’s singled out stereoscopic companies like Underwood and Keystone as distributors of what he termed “news pictures printed in black-and-white.”<sup>25</sup>

In summary, whilst different scholars acknowledge that stereoscopic photography played a part in the formative period of press illustration, particularly in America and Britain, the medium’s contribution has never been the focus of a study in the way offered by this thesis. If such stereoscopic companies did indeed become “major press suppliers” or “would later dominate press photography,” what was it about their *modus operandi* that led to such a position? This is a blind spot in the existing literature and is the driving question animating my own research and work in this field.

In agreeing that general observations about stereoscopy offered by other studies are correct, a key research question appears overlooked. It is this: what exactly was stereoscopy’s role in the embryonic period of press photography, and what impact did it have on the genre? In seeking to answer this question, my thesis argues that photographs originated as stereographs and supplied to the press in their many thousands were not simply a commercial by-product as the current literature implies. Instead, this study offers evidence that as a photographic medium, stereoscopy was fully committed to capturing the era’s events and protagonists. It also offers a wide-ranging investigation of the visual economy of the press and the shaping role played by stereoscopy in its development.

---

<sup>24</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 164.

<sup>25</sup> Carlebach, *American Photojournalism*, 8.

In making this argument, other related research questions follow. What was the nature of the relationship between a stereoscopic view, or stereo, and a press photograph? What part did the business of networking play in enabling access to those making the news and recording such events stereoscopically? What training did stereographers receive so they could create saleable images for a variety of media platforms? How did the aesthetic practice of creating stereographs affect consequent press photography? And how was reception affected by the shift from the stereoscope to the printed page?

In addressing these questions, I move beyond adding missing detail to the historical account of what happened, though that has proved essential to gaining answers to my central research question. The wider aim of this thesis is to engage with the implications of acknowledging another dimension to the story of early press photography. This centres on the aesthetic qualities inherent in a stereograph and the role played by stereographers in the creation of photographs taken from their negatives. In summary, it is an argument that has implications not only for the existing historiography of the press and its photographic illustration. It adds fresh perspectives to the visual culture of the early twentieth century and how images conceived stereoscopically translated to the printed page. Further understanding is gained of day-to-day business practices that enabled a stereoscopic photography company to successfully compete with other players in what was an international market.

A lack of engagement with this aspect of photographic history is understandable. Analysing the nature of stereoscopy's contribution to early press photography presents a daunting task. Several interrelated practical challenges need to be overcome. Firstly, surviving photographs taken from stereographs and distributed for press use remain widely dispersed in public and private collections across the world. Many prints have been lost, a fact that reflects the limited shelf life of a disposable media that had its moment in the sun. Establishing the stereoscopic provenance of individual photographs is also difficult in the absence of a paper trail from which to work. Equally difficult to trace is the relationship between those stereoscopic

photographs and publications that constituted “the press” of the time in whose pages they appeared. Down the decades, titles have passed from press baron to multi-media conglomerates, allowing archives of physical copies and photographic prints to survive intact. Enabled by appropriate budgets, parts of the surviving press canon have been digitised and are available to researchers online.<sup>26</sup> These remnants though can be prone to the effects of physical deterioration, particularly if stored inadequately or using poor quality newsprint. Also, injudicious editing has complicated understanding of what constituted a title in its original form. Despite these limitations and caveats, exciting opportunities are available for the motivated researcher. Connections can link a range of periodical publications with stereoscopic photography companies, who supplied myriad images to illustrate news stories and features.

In pursuing source material that might offer answers to my research questions, it is important to recognise that this task has involved a self-selecting corpus. This consists of titles that have survived and are accessible in some form. Of course, digitisation has proved transformative. From a study laptop, it has proved possible to access a wide range of newspaper, illustrated weekly, and magazine titles that would previously have required a physical trip to an overseas museum or collection. In many cases, these digital sources are also searchable, though the programmed algorithms require considerable mental agility and imagination to yield their full riches. Without such access though, budget considerations and time parameters would have limited this study’s eventual scope.

Alongside the digital dimension of this study, the materiality that is central to my training as a photographic historian has still played a role. Where possible, physical copies of publications studied digitally have been located. This has allowed full pages of photographs deployed in a layout or as a sequence to be seen in context rather than as a single illustrated article yielded by a digital search engine. It has also provided the perspective of a reader, one engaging with and viewing photographs

---

<sup>26</sup> See Bob Nicholson, “The Digital Turn: Exploring the Methodological Possibilities of Digital Newspaper Archives,” *Media History* 19, no.1 (2013): 59-73.



throughout a particular issue alongside engravings and other illustrative material including advertisements. Photographic prints supplied by stereoscopic companies that passed across picture desks have been examined for the tell-tale pencil markings and stamps on the verso that yield a multitude of clues about their provenance and back story.

Despite this complex archival picture, stereoscopic photography has proved a remarkably resilient beast. The products of its most successful exponents, such as Underwood and Keystone, still exist in physical and, increasingly, digital form. Their stereocards and those produced by other publishers appear daily on auction sites such as ebay at eye-watering prices. In the past, Underwood and Keystone recognised each other's commercial strengths during battles they engaged in as business rivals. Having bought out most of the competition by the close of the First World War, agreements made between the two companies enabled Underwood to pursue its news photography leaving Keystone to dominate the stereoscopic market. These lucrative deals involved the exchange and preservation of tens of thousands of stereoscopic negatives and photographic prints. These objects linked to the relevant company paperwork help inform their creation and afterlife. Such materials form a culturally significant primary source that continues to offer research opportunities for photographic historians and scholars wishing to harness an interdisciplinary approach.

### *Why Underwood?*

The choice of Underwood as a case study through which to explore my research questions is rooted in its eminence as a stereoscopic company, its pedigree as a press supplier, and access to previously unavailable primary source materials. Brothers Elmer and Bert Underwood set up their company in Ottawa, Kansas in 1882. Underwood & Underwood distributed stereocards produced by other American firms for the first decade of its life before originating and publishing its own. The *Underwood Travel System* enabled virtual travellers to roam the globe using sets of stereos accompanied by guidebooks, location maps, and hand-held stereoscopic

viewers. This international project was at the heart of the company's photographic business interests. These were manifest in complementary media formats such as stereos, lantern slides, and photographic prints promoted by a number of dedicated departments including those devoted to education and illustration. For a brief period between 1901 and 1903, the company even published its own quarterly magazine, *The Stereoscopic Photograph*, later retitled *The Traveller*. This was aimed at publicising its activities and selling its latest stereo series and extensive back catalogue.<sup>27</sup> The company's commercial success was driven by a global network of offices with those in New York and London as its main hubs.

Because of its ubiquity and success, academics have long been drawn to studying Underwood. Harold Layer looked at the company's impact on education.<sup>28</sup> William C. Darrah featured Underwood in his overview of commercial stereoscopy.<sup>29</sup> David E. Haberstich and Robert DeLeskie studied the firm's *Travel System*.<sup>30</sup> John Plunkett assessed its sales techniques.<sup>31</sup> Paul T. Nicholson critiqued its Egypt sets.<sup>32</sup> More recently, Douglas M. Klahr analysed an Underwood stereocard set on Rome as "virtual reality."<sup>33</sup> The company also constituted an important element of Leigh Gleason's thesis on the marketing strategy employed by its main stereoscopic rival, the Keystone View Company, between 1898 and 1910.<sup>34</sup> Underwood's overarching influence on the stereoscopic field can even be found in its competitor's origins. It

---

<sup>27</sup> My thanks to Dr. Leigh Gleason, Director of Collections, University of California Riverside Arts, for making me aware of these titles.

<sup>28</sup> Harold A. Layer, "Stereoscopy: An Analysis of its History and its Import to Education and the Communication Process" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1970).

<sup>29</sup> William C. Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: W.C. Darrah, 1977), 46-8.

<sup>30</sup> David E. Haberstich, "Souvenirs of Roads Not Taken: Virtual Travel with the Underwood & Underwood Travel System and the World Wide Web," in *Culture as the Tourist Product*, eds. Mike Robinson, Nigel Evans, and Paul Callaghan (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1996), 131-39; and Robert DeLeskie, "The Underwood Stereographic Travel System: A Historical and Cultural Thesis" (MA diss., Concordia University, Montreal, 2000).

<sup>31</sup> John Plunkett, "Selling Stereoscopy, 1890-1915: Penny Arcades, Automatic Machines and American Salesmen," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 6 (2008): 239-255.

<sup>32</sup> Paul T. Nicholson, "Egyptology for the Masses: James Henry Breasted and the Underwood Brothers," in *Sitting Beside Lepsius: Studies in Honour of Jeromir Malek at the Griffith Institute*, eds. Diana Magee, Janine Bourriau and Stephen Quirke (Leuven, Paris, Walpole, MA: Uitgeverij Peters, 2009), 381-422.

<sup>33</sup> Douglas M. Klahr, "Traveling via Rome Through the Stereoscope: Reality, Memory, and Virtual Travel," *Architectural Histories* 4, no.1 (2016): 1-14.

<sup>34</sup> Leigh Gleason, "Canvassed and Delivered: Direct Selling at Keystone View Company, 1898-1910" (PhD diss., De Montfort University, 2018).

was a former member of Underwood sales staff, B.L. Singley of Meadville, Pennsylvania, who established Keystone in 1892.<sup>35</sup> The period analysed by Gleason mirrors that offered by this study, c.1896-1911, as one during which stereoscopy was an influential force in commercial photography. In Underwood's case, its interest in press photography ran in parallel with the company's stereoscopic endeavours from the second half of the 1890s. The establishment around 1906 of an Illustration Department, later renamed its News Photo Department, mimicked those already devoted by the company to lantern slides and education. This innovation clearly signalled that servicing the press with photographs was itself a business.

Indeed, the sheer volume of pictures taken from Underwood stereographs supplied to newspapers and periodicals is another factor that informs its choice as a case study. This study has benefited from access to an extant Underwood company archive of its press photography. In total, it consists of more than one million photographs and contact prints, and 250,000 glass plate negatives plus accompanying paperwork related to its operations. This posed a potentially overwhelming amount of primary source material with which to engage in any meaningful way within the limitations of a doctoral study. Fortunately for this researcher, the task became achievable thanks to Mr. George R. Rinhart, one of the world's pre-eminent photography collectors, who has owned the Underwood news photography archive since 1978.<sup>36</sup> Mr. Rinhart agreed my access to this archive, first through a research trip to the United States and later via a productive email relationship. This has enabled unique prints and previously unpublished information about Underwood to feature in this study. My project has also been the beneficiary of his extensive first-hand knowledge of the stereoscopic company and its wider activities. Mr. Rinhart has also not placed any restrictions on my use of original photographs, stereocards, contact prints, and other materials that are credited in this thesis.

---

<sup>35</sup> "Keystone View Company," accessed November 15, 2020, <http://scua.library.umass.edu/umarmot/keystone-view-company/>

<sup>36</sup> My thanks to Professor Bill Hart in the Department of History, Middlebury College, VT, for the introduction to Mr. Rinhart.

Aside from a wealth of previously unstudied data, this research project would have been the poorer without access to and study of a memoranda book that accompanied the Underwood company archive and has acted as a key to help unlock its treasures. Covering the years between 1906 and 1914, it catalogues around 75,000 negatives. Entries consist of a title/subject, a date, and sequences that are mostly in single figures, but run into tens or even hundreds when related to a themed project. These statistics reveal the scale and scope of the company's press interests. In some cases, surnames of stereoscopic photographers appear alongside subject entries. The wealth of clues yielded by this hand-written document, though prone to human error in its compilation and occasionally difficult to decipher, constitute a rare opportunity.

The memoranda book has contributed significant and previously unknown factual and biographical detail to the story of early press photography. Consequently, stereographers, previously nameless and relegated to the margins of the historiography, take their place alongside more celebrated press photography figures. While it can be argued this further perpetuates the author-centred approach to photographic history, this study tries to understand them in terms of a complex network of business relationships that shed light on the corporate development of Underwood. In summary, this thesis looks to add to the existing narrative and more fully understand the contribution made by stereoscopy to shaping the early years of press photography's existence.

### *Thesis Structure*

The thesis divides into an Introduction, five inter-related chapters that are the core of the study, an Epilogue, and a Conclusion. Each of the chapters addresses the research questions highlighted above. They explore aspects of the overlooked role played by stereoscopic photography in the development of early press photography.

Chapter 1 analyses the role of stereoscopy in chronicling news events in the years before and after 1900. After outlining Underwood's formative years in both America and Britain, a survey reveals the company's first photography for the press during the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. Illustrated weekly papers in both New York and London used Underwood photographs taken from stereographs. To illustrate the giant strides made in a short period, the chapter's second half explores the company's coverage of the South African War of 1899 to 1902 by H.F. Mackern, a previously unidentified American stereographer employed by Underwood. This supply of stereoscopic war photographs is seen in the context of the international press corps reporting the conflict, and the wider debate involving the contrasting illustrative merits of special artists and photography.

Chapter 2 explores Underwood's successful stereography of the royal family in Britain during the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. To access the establishment, the company utilised experience gained during its two decades of business activity in the United States involving a network of powerful and influential connections. This proved invaluable in creating royal stereos used to service the world's press with commercially valuable and editorially pertinent photographs. The extent of the company's network of freelance photographers is shown by one of its stereographers, James Edward Ellam, who enjoyed a successful career in Fleet Street.

Chapter 3 investigates the corporate role played in its stereoscopic practice by Underwood's training academy at Arlington, New Jersey. Because of stereoscopy's popularity, companies engaged in its commercial manifestations faced competition from both long-established firms and newcomers in search of a fast buck. To stay ahead of its rivals, Underwood needed a strategic business approach. To explore this phenomenon, work created by two of its stereographers, Horace D. Ashton and Clarence L. Chester, is examined through coverage of a rolling news story, the construction of the Panama Canal. Company photographs, primarily used by the American press, offer useful insights into the aesthetic considerations necessary to create a successful stereograph. This analysis also reveals how stereoscopic

appearance was integral to the visual grammar of press photography, particularly at this early stage in its genesis.

Whilst daily newspapers and illustrated weeklies were initially the prime outlet for Underwood's press photography, Chapter 4 charts the company's relationship with *National Geographic*. An analysis of the magazine's early development as a platform for photography uses business correspondence dating from 1903 to 1909 between the company and *National Geographic* editor, Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor. This unique archive material and its wider evaluation informs greater understanding of stereoscopic photography's role in the fast-evolving world of magazine publishing in the first decade of the twentieth century. The correspondence also reveals how Underwood's stereoscopic input during these formative years in the magazine's history significantly shaped its pictorial evolution, so much so that photography became integral to its editorial offer.

Chapter 5 traces the changing social mores of the period covered by this study. Underwood stereoscopically captured a virtual "who's who" of well-known figures from both sides of the Atlantic. These photographs offered an opportunity to translate an intimate three-dimensional stereocard experience onto the pages of the world's press. This was one that the company was quick to exploit. Empowered by its international network of connections and a workforce of trained stereoscopic photographers, the company actively sought out people who were in the news. The establishment of Underwood's Illustration Department around 1906 and the style of new tabloid papers in Britain like the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Sketch* signalled a move towards recognisable forms of news photography. Real-time events unfolded in front of its stereoscopic cameras and many figures became famous in the process. They were celebrated by the simple act of their photo appearing in the press. Such images, captured away from the studio and enabled by light-weight cameras, reflected a changing society that embraced new media such as motion pictures which in time outmanoeuvred stereoscopy.

The Epilogue analyses Underwood's role in a major news story that still resonates more than century after it took place, that of the sinking of RMS *Titanic* in 1912. The company secured use of snapshots of the iceberg and survivors of the disaster taken by a seventeen-year-old girl using her Kodak *Brownie* camera. The episode epitomises Underwood's pedigree as a photographic supplier, utilising its fifteen years of experience servicing the international press. It is also one that signals a shift from stereoscopic photography to a recognisable photo agency model that the company further pursued and refined before and beyond the First World War.

Finally, the Conclusion outlines four core findings drawn from my case study of Underwood that inform understanding of the role of stereoscopy in the early years of press photography and describes challenges and opportunities for future research prompted by this thesis.

# 1. Stereoscopic View to Press Photograph

## *Introduction*

In tracing the visual history of the press, the role played by stereoscopy has been overlooked. When combined in a stereoscope or hand-held viewer, the stereoscopic principle holds that two slightly different images of the same subject produce an illusion of three dimensions. The Great Exhibition of 1851 at Crystal Palace in London acted as a catalyst. Stereoscopy transformed from a minor scientific interest into a popular one that quickly spread around the world. Following the introduction of the wet-collodion process, stereoscopic photographs and slides could be mass produced more easily and cheaply. In 1854, the London Stereoscopic Company began selling stereocards of people and places in their hundreds of thousands. Photographers, print dealers, and booksellers were all engaged in supplying this new and vibrant market. During the 1860s, the stereoscopic craze reached its zenith by which point a stereoscope and set of stereocards were essential items in every middle-class home.<sup>37</sup>

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, photographic reproduction was enabled by the widespread adoption of halftone “dot” printing. As a photomechanical process, it used the shades of grey between the lightest and darkest parts of a photographic image. Halftone’s monotony attracted unfavourable comment and its greyness lacked the appealing contrasts of engravings, but it resulted in ninety per cent savings for publishers in time and money, and greater flexibility in terms of layout.<sup>38</sup> As a result, plain one-impression halftone printed by letterpress dominated mass-produced photographic publications from about 1900 until the refinement of offset lithography in the 1960s.<sup>39</sup> Alongside other forms of photography, stereographs provided a source of affordable halftone images.

Amid renewed engagement with stereoscopy either side of 1900, photographic

---

<sup>37</sup> Pritchard, *50 Cameras* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 26-7.

<sup>38</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 21.

<sup>39</sup> Richard Benson, *The Printed Picture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 222.



companies stereographed national and international events they recognised as being of public interest. The key commercial question was whether these “views” and “subjects” could be sold to customers in the form of individual cards or in sets. In common parlance, “views” and “subjects” were terms used by stereoscopic photography companies in advertisements, and by sales staff when promoting “stereoscopic views” and “stereographs of many subjects.” As a photographic phenomenon, the possibilities offered by news event stereoscopy attracted publishers of daily newspapers, illustrated weeklies, and monthly magazines. Particularly interested were those looking to use photographs as a complementary or alternative medium of representation to engravings.

Commercially, stereoscopic photography companies were also quick to exploit the possibilities that halftone printing technology offered using photographs taken from one-half of a stereoscopic negative. In the press, these images could then appear alongside drawings and paintings that had traditionally accompanied journalism and reportage during the previous half century. The eventual emergence of photography as the predominant illustrative form, particularly within daily newspapers, added what one commentator called:

... immediacy to the recording of an event, instead of being interpreted in second-hand form through a reporter’s description or the more nuanced processes of drawing or lithography. It allowed you, the reader, to feel something of being there.<sup>40</sup>

This sense of “being there” was one that chimed strongly with the medium of stereoscopic photography and influenced the visual evolution of the press. In 1901, the *Daily Telegraph* described the experience obtained from looking at a set of stereocards:

When viewed through the stereoscope, the result is marvelous [sic] for a wonderful realism is conveyed to a picture which otherwise possesses the same flatness and lack of perspective as any ordinary snapshot ... the

---

<sup>40</sup> Roger Hargreaves, *Daily Encounters: Photographs from Fleet Street* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2007), 6.

spectator appears to be transported into the actual scene itself and to be almost a participant in what is occurring.<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, Roland Barthes later argued that the photograph's "ontological realism" invoked a sense "being there," transported back to the pictured scene. This process activated what he called "imaginative journeys." The power to make sense of "being there" was also culturally constructed, "animated by faith in the medium's superior realism."<sup>42</sup> The three-dimensional effect of reality achieved by stereoscopic photography was not the result of chance. Rather, it was a carefully executed process that required the endeavours of trained and skilled photographers servicing a variety of media platforms. As well as being used to create stereocards and lantern slides, these photographs taken "from stereographs" were increasingly used by daily, weekly, and monthly publications, and were highlighted as such in captions and company credits.

To meet the specific needs of this multiplicity of platforms, the composition of each shot needed particular care. As highlighted by Jonathan Crary, pronounced stereoscopic effects depended upon the presence of objects or obtrusive forms in the near or middle ground of a stereograph.<sup>43</sup> This subtle relationship between foreground and other planes of stereoscopic photographs meant that they had a recognisable "look." This occurred even when appearing two-dimensionally in the pages of the press. As a result, this thesis argues throughout that the increasing and widespread use of photographs taken from stereoscopic views had a noticeable impact on the visual look and style of the press, one that has been overlooked by scholars.

This chapter, and indeed this thesis, explores the contribution of stereoscopic photography to the visual evolution of the press at the turn of the twentieth century.

---

<sup>41</sup> "Under the Stirring Title of 'For Empire, Queen, and...,' *Daily Telegraph*, December 12, 1900, cited in "A Manifest Growth of Interest," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1elli/page/30/mode/1up>

<sup>42</sup> John Urry and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (London: Sage, 2011), 168.

<sup>43</sup> Jonathan Crary, *'Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century'* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1992), 124.

To achieve this, the activities of one of the medium's leading lights, Underwood & Underwood of New York & London, are analysed in the context of a competitive marketplace supplying stereographs of news events. The choice of Underwood as the focus for this study results from its contribution to this formative period for press photography. It was a position crystallised by the design historian Gerry Beegan in his account of photomechanical reproduction in Victorian London. Listing players in the market supplying illustrative material to the press in the 1890s, he noted:

Underwood and Underwood, which started as a producer of stereoscopic cards, would later dominate press photography."<sup>44</sup>

The scale of that stereoscopic contribution was striking. A 1939 *New York Times* obituary for Charles Richard Abbott, long-serving manager of Underwood's Illustration Department and later News Photo Department, estimated that it handled more than five million photographs in the period either side of the First World War.<sup>45</sup> This is the background against which this study argues that stereoscopy's role in shaping early press photography has been overlooked.

Analysis of this formative period corrects inaccuracies and misconceptions concerning Underwood's earliest efforts to supply photographs to the press in America and Europe. It culminates in a detailed study of Underwood's stereography of the South African War of 1899-1902, the second conflict between the British and the Boers. For the first time, the stereographer who covered the war for the company has been identified and his work placed within the context of the international press corps sent to report it. Examination of the photographs he produced offers an opportunity to trace and explore the evolving relationship between a stereoscopic view and what constituted a press photograph of a news event. A variety of previously unstudied and unpublished sources inform this examination. These help to paint a picture of how a leading stereoscopic company went about its multi-platform photography. They also inform a more detailed assessment of the impact

---

<sup>44</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 164.

<sup>45</sup> "Charles Abbott Dies: News Photo Official," *New York Times*, July 9, 1939, <https://nyti.ms/3fVbi5e>

made by photographs appearing in the transatlantic press originated for the stereoscopic market.

### *“Stereoscopically Recorded History”*

At this dynamic moment in photographic history, the commercial market for supplying stereographs of news events was a competitive one. In a trade list from the period, the leading American company, B.W. Kilburn of Littleton, New Hampshire, boasted a comprehensive back catalogue of popular sellers. These included *Queen Victoria Jubilee 1897*, *Spanish-American War 1898*, *William McKinley 1898-1901*, *Alaska Gold Rush 1898-1902*, *Boer War 1898-1902* [sic], *International Exposition, Paris 1900*, *Pan-American Exposition 1901*, *Russo-Japanese War 1904* and *Louisiana Purchase Exposition 1904*.<sup>46</sup> Other stereoscopic companies whose brands featured prominently in this global market included Keystone View, American Stereoscopic, Griffith & Griffith, W.H. Rau, H.C. White, Standard Scenic, Whiting View Co., London Stereoscopic and, the company that is the focus of this study, Underwood.

Further understanding of how stereoscopy shaped early press photography is complicated by the fact that the views business was a multi-faceted entity. Like many of its rivals, Underwood used its products to sell back catalogues and promote new stereos recently added to its trade lists. The guidebooks sold with sets of its stereos included advertisements aimed primarily at the tourist trade. Some customers wanted to research their actual trip to a particular location in advance and re-live it afterwards. Others were armchair tourists with aspirations to learn more about the world beyond their own (figure 1).

---

<sup>46</sup> Darrah, *World of Stereographs*, 46.

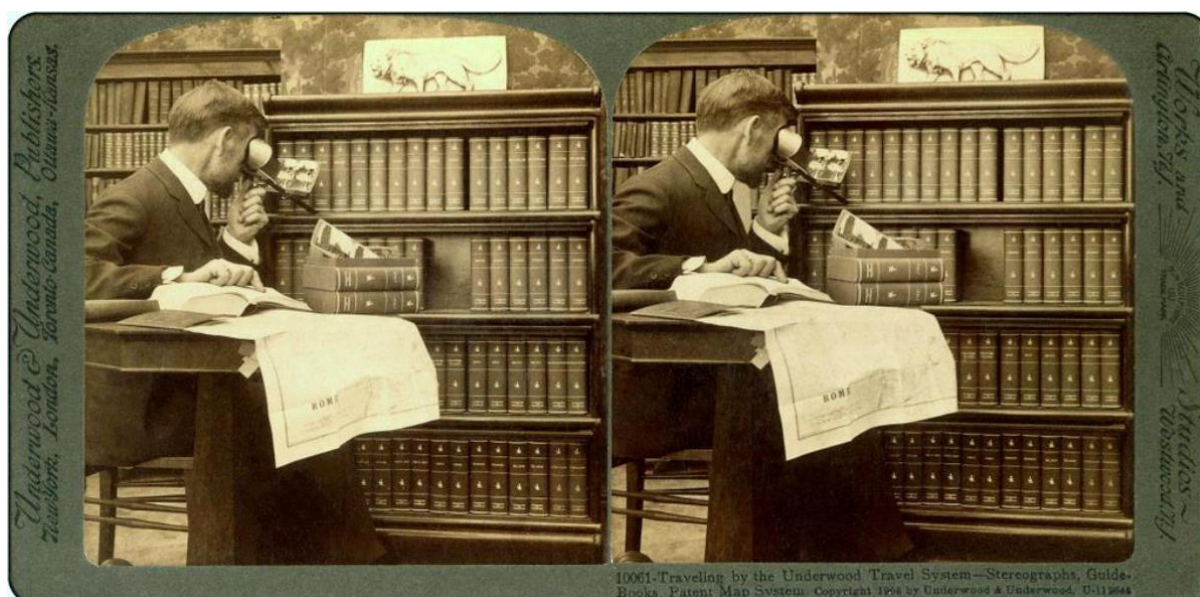


Figure 1. "Travelling by the Underwood Travel System."  
Private Collection.

First published by Underwood in 1901, *China Through the Stereoscope* offers a typical snapshot of the state of the stereoscopic views market. An advertisement for *Underwood Stereoscopic Tours*, inserted prior to the guidebook's endpapers, offered more than forty different titles. Customers were promised "original stereoscopic photographs" and that the stereographs were "arranged in the order a tourist would visit the actual places."<sup>47</sup> This approach has been characterised by John Urry and Jonas Larsen as part of the "tourist gaze." They argued that photography became coupled to consumer capitalism.

The globe was now offered by way of limitless quantities, figures, landscape, events which had not previously been utilised, either at all, or only as pictures for one customer.<sup>48</sup>

The reason customers should be interested in seeing views of any country and the people who lived there was explicit in Underwood's literature. Its sales pitch for stereoscopic travel was firmly rooted in the novelty of the experience for western audiences, here in relation to a country such as China. As well as producing the stereos, James Ricalton, a well-travelled photographer who worked with Underwood

<sup>47</sup> James Ricalton, *China Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Through the Dragon Empire at the Time of the Boxer Uprising* (New York and London: Underwood & Underwood, 1901), 359-60.

<sup>48</sup> Urry and Larsen, *Tourist Gaze*, 167.

from around 1890, was credited with the text of *China Through the Stereoscope*.<sup>49</sup> In a section titled “Where Are We Going?” he articulated the particular appeal of stereoscopic travel:

It has been my privilege to visit many countries in different parts of the world; twice I have wandered over portions of the “Flowery Kingdom,” and I do not hesitate to assure those who are to follow me on this journey of observation ... that nowhere over the whole world could we see so much of the past which is still in the present, and so many differences in conditions of life from what we are accustomed to see in our home surroundings.<sup>50</sup>

To meet audience demands for such a “journey of observation,” Underwood published stereocards as series ranging in size from a dozen to as many as 200. These were presented in “neat leatherette cases” along with a descriptive guidebook or leaflet together with a set of maps.<sup>51</sup> Underwood’s *Map System* patented in Britain, France, and the United States in 1900 enabled users to view each stereograph by pinpointing the exact location at which it had been taken. This marriage of photograph and map as complementary forms of territorial representation created a sophisticated sensory experience. By echoing the three-dimensional nature of a relief map, the consumer could fully appreciate the topography of any location including its buildings. In visual terms, these precisely pinpointed places and the people who lived there came to life photographically by looking through a stereoscope or hand-held viewer.

Purchasers of multiple sets were also encouraged to build up their collections and equip themselves with the “New Underwood Extension Cabinet” that could be “built-up from time to time as desired.” It accommodated from 200 up to 2,000

---

<sup>49</sup> James Ricalton (1844-1929) has been the subject of many academic theses and articles, evaluating his photography for Underwood. For example, Jane Elliott, “American Photographs of the Boxer Rising,” *History of Photography* 21, no. 2 (1997): 162-169; Susan Kempler, “America ‘Discovers’ the World: James Ricalton’s ‘Travels on Next to Nothing,’ 1844-1929” (PhD diss., Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey: New Brunswick, 1991); Brij Bhushan Sharma, “James Ricalton: An American Photographer in India,” *History of Photography* 11, no. 1 (1987): 53-61; Mitchell Arthur Winter, “Optics of American Empire: James Ricalton and Stereoscopic Ethnography in Early Twentieth Century India, 1888-1907,” MA diss., UC Santa Cruz, 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Ricalton, *China*, 10-11.

<sup>51</sup> Maps were part of board games used as entertainment dating back to the late eighteenth century. See Jane Dove, “Geographical Board Game: Promoting Tourism and Travel in Georgian England and Wales,” *Journal of Tourism History* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1-18.

stereographs in a single piece of furniture. The *Underwood Stereoscopic Tours* advertisement also highlighted the educational value of the company's products:

Many of our patrons are placing all of our Educational Stereoscopic Tours in their homes alongside of the standard works in their libraries.

Schools and public libraries are also finding our Stereographs very helpful in their work.

What was particularly striking was the way in which Underwood actively marketed what it called "tours" to particular locations alongside "sets" featuring topical news events. "Tours" with their itemised itineraries such as *Egypt and its Wonders* and *Travelling in the Holy Land* were interspersed with "sets" of one hundred stereos. Among these were the *Spanish-American War* of 1898 and what it labelled the *British-Boer War* that began the following year. Additionally, five were sets of varying sizes devoted to America's recently assassinated *President McKinley* numbering between twelve and sixty stereos. In one case, there was an overlap between a "tour" and a "set." Twenty-six stereos titled *Boxer Uprising Cheefoo, Taku, Tien-Tsin* dating from 1900 were part of the one hundred stereo "tour" of China under discussion here. The company's flexible approach to what constituted a stereoscopic tour coupled with its desire to portray recent world events in the form of stereocard sets was clear in the advertisement rubric:

Other interesting and instructive tours can be made up from our large collection of stereographs always in stock."

In whatever ways they were packaged and sold to a public keen to sample a novel consumer experience, Underwood's growing stock of images was an expanding photographic library upon which it could draw. This was to prove commercially valuable to the company in both the short and longer term as it began supplying photographs to the press. The existence of this library both helped create and shape the market for such material.

As to its own motivations for stereographing world events, Underwood had a vested interest in growing the overall stereoscopic sector as well as its own part within it. This was reflected in use of the credit "from a stereograph" as well as mention of the

company name in press photograph captions. In 1901, Underwood put on record how it viewed this aspect of its company photography in the inaugural issue of *The Stereoscopic Photograph*. With the strapline “The World and Its People Through the Stereoscope,” each magazine cost 25¢ and appeared quarterly between 1901 and 1903. Its policy statement on stereographing news events began by posing a question:

Should we keep pace as the world moves on? Is it an undertaking worthwhile to record stereoscopically every important occurrence of world-wide interest?

The writer continued in the affirmative, emphasising the uniqueness of the three-dimensional photographic experience compared with two-dimensional photography or written reports:

By means of the stereoscopic photograph these history-making incidents are recorded incomparably better than any word description can picture them, and with a vividness that no single photograph can approach.

Through the stereoscope one is forced to comprehend an important occurrence in a perfectly true way, it being as impossible to form any misconception as it would have been if on the spot when the stereograph was taken.

This latter observation overlooked the fact that viewing a stereograph was a cumbersome physical experience that involved the placing and replacing of a stereocard within a stereoscope or hand-held viewer. It also required a particular spatial organisation to produce the promised and desired visual illusion of three-dimensions. After highlighting company coverage of recent world events and the work of its own “competent staff of operators,” the article concluded with further observations about the value of what it labelled “stereoscopically recorded history.” It proclaimed:

We can gather around the actual scenes as we see and read of them. There is no word picture that can misshape our imaginations of a place or occurrence when we have once seen it through the stereoscope.

Finally, turning to traditional modes of press illustration, the Underwood writer went on the offensive.



Truth crushed to earth by imaginary newspaper drawings will rise again in the stereoscopic photograph ... the stereograph will preserve for future generations these events of history.<sup>52</sup>

What was notable about this portrayal of the superiority of “stereoscopically recorded history” was that by this point, Underwood had been regularly supplying the press with photographs taken “from stereographs” for a number of years. A clearer picture of how this supply chain was established is crucial to fully understanding stereoscopy’s integral role in the development of press photography.

### *Underwood’s First Press Photography*

The primary source that has informed scholarship about Underwood’s role in shaping press photography is a brief company history written in the 1920s by Elmer Underwood, its founding partner. Robert Taft, the historian of photography, endorsed the credibility of this account by referring to it in his study *Photography and the American Scene* published in 1938. Though Underwood’s trajectory as a commercial firm fell well outside the period covered by the study, Taft included a précis of a twelve-page document originated by Elmer Underwood in “1924 or 1925.” This précis was among the volume’s extensive footnotes offering a “sketch of the organisation” tracing the company’s origins.<sup>53</sup>

According to this account, Elmer and his younger brother Bert began selling stereoscopic photographs and stereoscopes from the Midwest town of Ottawa, Kansas in the early 1880s. Using house-to-house canvassers, the business rapidly expanded. By 1884, Underwood became the exclusive agents in the United States for three established stereoscopic publishers. They were J.F. Jarvis of Washington, DC, the Littleton View Company of Littleton, New Hampshire, and Charles Bierstadt of Niagara Falls (figure 2).

---

<sup>52</sup> “Timely Scenes,” *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901, 22-23, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1elli/page/21/mode/1up>

<sup>53</sup> Taft, *American Scene*, 502-03.



Figure 2. "Echo Lake, North Conway, New Hampshire." Charles Bierstadt stereocard. Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

In 1891, Underwood set up a company head office in New York City and branch offices "over the entire civilized world." The organisation then began originating its own negatives with the Underwood brothers "making many of the important records themselves." This laid the foundations for the company's stereoscopic *Travel System* offering "Tours of the World" that was its photographic *raison d'être*. In one section of the "sketch," Taft authoritatively wrote:

In 1896, the firm began to sell news photographs to newspapers and magazines.

For the purposes of this study and in the interests of historiography, this statement bears closer scrutiny. It invites the question of not only when, but how and why a stereoscopic photography company chose to enter the emerging market for supplying the press with "news photographs." In the original document supplied to Taft, Elmer Underwood was less precise about the start of its *modus operandi*. Rather than "in 1896," the company's co-founder wrote:

About 1896 the firm began to secure news photographs for the illustrated papers of London and New York.

He then supplied informative background about the motivation for this decision, which he described in overtly commercial terms.

Very few periodicals then used photographic illustrations, but the *Illustrated London News*, the *Graphic* and *Black and White* were in the market and willing to pay well for photographic news pictures of national and international interest.<sup>54</sup>

This description accords with the emergence of London in the mid-1890s as “the picture capital of the world.”<sup>55</sup> Indeed, circumstantial evidence suggests that Underwood took a strategic decision to be involved in the consolidation of this trend.

The origins of this decision dated back to the beginning of the decade. In October 1890, Bert Underwood accompanied by his wife Susie and a small team of company canvassers arrived in Britain from New York to establish an office in Liverpool.<sup>56</sup> Chief among the firm’s reasons for choosing the port city were access to transatlantic trade routes as well as a flourishing provincial press.<sup>57</sup> The 1891 UK Census recorded Bert Underwood, a “Wholesaler of Photographs,” and his wife Susie lodging together with Charles Richard Abbott, a nineteen year-old “book keeper,” close to Liverpool’s Lime Street railway station.<sup>58</sup> Fresh from a stint in the company’s Toronto office, it was C.R. Abbott who later established and managed the company’s Illustration Department in New York. Its principal role was servicing the press with photographs. A year after arriving in Liverpool, a small ad in the city’s *Mercury* newspaper gave a flavour of how Underwood was ferrying its stereoscopic goods across the Atlantic:

For sale, about Fifty strong Pine CASES, made from three-quarter inch boards. These having been used only once, are in good condition, with covers. Dimensions in inches, 43 by 27 by 24.

---

<sup>54</sup> “Copy of an Outline re. the firm of Underwood & Underwood,” Robert Taft Photography Correspondence, Kansas Memory, Kansas Historical Society, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/698>

Also see Elmer Underwood Papers, Kenneth Spencer Research Library Archival Collections, University of Kansas, <https://archives.lib.ku.edu/repositories/3/resources/682>

<sup>55</sup> Ryan Linkof, “The Public Eye: Celebrity and Photojournalism in the Making of the British Tabloids, 1904-1938” (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2015), 63.

<sup>56</sup> “Bert Underwood,” passport no. 457, US Consul, Liverpool, November 28, 1890, My Ancestry.

<sup>57</sup> Wiener, “British and American,” 279.

<sup>58</sup> 1891 UK Census, 18 Seymour Street, Liverpool, St. Mary Magdalene Parish, schedule no. 39, My Ancestry.

A permanent customer for such cases preferred – Address Underwood & Co.  
19, Oxford Street, Liverpool.<sup>59</sup>

Whilst at Oxford Street, Bert and Susie's first child, Elmer Roy Underwood, was born.<sup>60</sup> Bert also began his career as a stereoscopic photographer, fulfilling a company ambition to produce its own stereos alongside those of the other firms that it distributed.<sup>61</sup> The impact was immediate. In 1894, *Wilson's Photographic Magazine* reported on the scope and scale of Underwood's expanding stereoscopic photography empire:

They [Underwood] have scattered their views either by direct shipments or through their agents, through France, Germany, Spain, Scandinavia, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Japan, Cuba, Mexico, Central America and nearly every South American state.

In a number of these countries, they now have permanent branch agencies.<sup>62</sup>

In the same year, the company moved its UK office from Liverpool to London where a four-storey building at 26 Red Lion Square, Holborn became the nerve-centre of the firm's European operations. It was a well-chosen location being close to Fleet Street and its newspaper industry. Another contributory factor to the company's activities during this period was that both Underwood brothers lived in the capital. In the summer of 1896, Elmer and Bert returned to London after successfully completing their first stereoscopic photography trip together to Egypt and Palestine.<sup>63</sup> This yielded the company's first original sets of travel stereos sold as *Egypt and its Wonders* and *Travelling in the Holy Land*. Propitiously, the brothers' arrival in London synchronised with the launch of the *Daily Mail* with its twin mottos of "A Penny

---

<sup>59</sup> "For Sale," *Liverpool Mercury*, October 12, 1891, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>60</sup> "Elmer Roy Underwood," Register of Births, May 18, 1891, Mount Pleasant sub-district, Liverpool, My Ancestry.

<sup>61</sup> For Bert Underwood's own account of becoming a photographer, see "My First Efforts with a Camera: Monte Carlo, St. Peters [sic] and the Vatican," Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum, Box 1, Folder 4.

<sup>62</sup> "Industrial Photography: II. Stereoscopic Views," *Wilson's Photographic Magazine*, February 1, 1894, British Library.

<sup>63</sup> Elmer Underwood to Jennie Underwood, April 5, 7, 14 and 25, 1896, Keystone-Mass Collection, University of California Riverside.

In the summer of 1896, Elmer and Bert Underwood with their wives and young families moved into a new mansion flat at 17 St. James Mansions, West Hampstead, London.

Newspaper for One Halfpenny” and “The Busy Man’s Daily Journal.” Within three months, daily circulation reached more than 200,000 copies and the title soon became Britain’s biggest-selling newspaper.<sup>64</sup> Underwood had positioned itself in the right place at the right time (figure 3).



Figure 3. Underwood Office, 26 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London, WC.  
From *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901.

To meet increasing demand from the press for a regular supply of illustrative material, a variety of new firms started up during this period. In London, these included Hare and Company, Walter Hill and Company, the National Press Agency, and T.B. Browne. Major photographic agencies supplied images of events distant from the capital. Additionally, a small number of publications started to employ in-house photographers. For images of celebrities, *The Sketch* was amongst those that drew on well-known portrait photographers such as Alfred Ellis, Bassano, W. & D. Downey, and Russell & Sons for its coverage of theatre and its stars. Free images were offered by those with something to sell. Editors could also call on professional photographers in the regions to cover news events and local celebrities, but only a handful of firms specialised in what Beegan described as “press imagery.”<sup>65</sup> Given this entrepreneurial backdrop, Underwood company managers recognised an

<sup>64</sup> For an account of its launch, see Sally J. Taylor, *The Great Outsiders: Northcliffe, Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996), 31-37.

<sup>65</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 164.

opportunity to meet the new press demand for photographs of all types by utilising its stereoscopic sources.

### *Greco-Turkish War, 1897*

Underwood's first entry into the world of press photography can be dated to 1897 rather than "about 1896" or "in 1896." The evidence for this timing is supported by Elmer Underwood's company history cited earlier which included verifiable details. The historical context was the so-called Eastern Crisis over the status of Crete and its escalation into the Greco-Turkish War. The first use of an Underwood photograph in a news context revealed by this study occurred on March 20, 1897. In a column headlined "Our Portraits," *The Graphic* in London published an engraving of Colonel Vassos, described as "commanding the Greek troops in Crete" (figure 4).



Figure 4. "Colonel Vassos. Commanding the Greek Troops in Crete."  
*The Graphic*, March 20, 1897.

The accompanying report explained to *Graphic* readers that:

Our portrait is from a photograph taken by Mr. Bert Underwood, of Messrs Underwood & Underwood, New York and London.



Colonel Vassos had not had a photograph taken for years, and the portrait in oils is the only likeness of him.”<sup>66</sup>

This example encapsulated the nature of press illustration as photography began to enter the picture. To summarise the *Graphic*’s position, the option of using Underwood’s photograph of an oil painting featuring Colonel Vassos was ignored. Instead, the photograph was the basis of an engraving produced by one of the paper’s special artists. This method of illustration using photographs as source material was well established. But within a fortnight, a significant development occurred. Actual photographs taken from Underwood stereographs started appearing in print in the press, first in London, then in New York. Later, Elmer Underwood recalled this moment:

The first lot of photographs so supplied was a lay-out of Graeco-Turkish War views made by Mr. Bert Underwood, personally, while at the front with the Greeks.

The use of the term “Graeco-Turkish War views” here underlined that from the outset, the stereoscopic origins of the company’s photographs for the press were explicit. The account continued:

Prints were made from negatives in Greece and forwarded to Elmer Underwood, then in the London office. From these a lay-out of about fifteen or twenty subjects was offered to the paper which would bid highest for them.

The *Illustrated London News* took them for sixty guineas and made a double page of real pictures of the War in the center of their paper. The same photographs were then sent to Underwood & Underwood, New York, and sold to a publication there (probably *Colliers*) for a like amount, \$300.<sup>67</sup>

Given that Elmer was recalling events that took place thirty years earlier, it is unsurprising his account conflated different episodes. Indeed, the reference to “probably *Collier’s*” emphasised his own uncertainty about the facts. Analysis by this study of issues published between March and May 1897 has established that his

---

<sup>66</sup> “Our Portraits,” *Graphic*, March 20, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>67</sup> “Copy of an Outline,” Robert Taft Photography Correspondence, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/698>

attribution to the *Illustrated London News* as home to “the first lot of photographs so supplied” was incorrect. His confusion though was understandable.

On April 3 in the build-up to hostilities, the *ILN* published a three-page article, headlined “The Eastern Crisis: A Journey to Canea and the Headquarters of Colonel Vassos.”<sup>68</sup> By-lined as “narrative and photographs by Bert Underwood,” it gave a first-hand account of his journey from Athens to Crete and back to the Greek capital. In terms of significance for early press photography, a total of ten photographs taken by a stereoscopic camera appeared with the report. A paragraph at the article’s conclusion acknowledged the source of the photographs. It noted “our indebtedness to the well-known publishers of stereoscopic views, Messrs. Underwood and Underwood, of London and New York” (figure 5).



Figure 5. “The Eastern Crisis: A Journey to Canea and the Headquarters of Colonel Vassos.”  
*Illustrated London News*, April 3, 1897.

Amongst those published was a conventional posed portrait of Colonel Vassos, this time with his son at their headquarters on Crete. Also featured was a shot of the severe physical damage suffered to buildings in Canea, and a flag-waving group of

<sup>68</sup> “The Eastern Crisis: A Journey to Canea and the Headquarters of Colonel Vassos,” *ILN*, April 3, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.



Greek army recruits in front of the Temple of Theseus in Athens. Even at this distance, Underwood's *ILN* article was an impressive scoop. But it was not the company's only success. On the same day, *Black and White*, another illustrated weekly in London, published six credited Underwood photographs on a single page above the headline "Cretan Scenes and Incidents."

However, the description provided in Underwood's company history of "a lay-out of about fifteen or twenty subjects ... a double page of real pictures of the War" more accurately fits another paper and another episode in the conflict. On May 22, 1897, *Harper's Weekly* in New York published a total of twenty-four photographs laid out in a double page spread. It was headlined "The Greco-Turkish War – With the Greek Forces on the Frontier," and credited "photographs by Mr. Bert Underwood of the firm of Underwood & Underwood, New York and London."<sup>69</sup> This example better fits the description of the "Greco-Turkish War views being made by Mr. Bert Underwood, personally, while at the front with the Greeks" (figure 6).



Figure 6. "The Greco-Turkish War – With the Greek Forces on The Frontier ..." *Harper's Weekly*, May 22, 1897. Private Collection.

<sup>69</sup> "The Greco-Turkish War ...," *Harper's Weekly*, May 22, 1897, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015014126190>

A week earlier, some of the same photographs had appeared in London. *The Graphic* featured nine in a layout across two pages, sharing the space with a half-page artist's drawing of a battlefield sketch.<sup>70</sup> An accompanying first-hand account credited to "a correspondent (Mr. Bert Underwood)" was headlined "Five Days With the Macedonian Insurgents."<sup>71</sup>

As these examples show, those few highlighted in Underwood's company history gave a limited picture of the impact achieved by the firm's Greco-Turkish War photography in the illustrated weekly press. In total, this study has found several dozen photographs credited to Underwood that appeared before, during, and after the brief period of hostilities. Among those papers that used the images were all three London illustrated weeklies highlighted by Elmer Underwood in his account, *The Graphic*, *ILN*, and *Black and White*, as well as their equivalents in New York, notably *Harper's Weekly* and *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*.

Aside from a passing acknowledgement in the *ILN* of April 3, all other publications ignored the stereoscopic origins of these photographs. This was a position that changed as Underwood developed its commercial position in this market. In time, use of its copyrighted photographs became dependent on a company credit published by the purchasing title. A clear statement that the images were "from stereographs" was also a pre-requisite for their use. At this early stage in the company's relationship with the press, headlines, or captions referred to "photographs," "photos," and "snapshots."

Despite this lack of stereoscopic recognition, the company appeared undeterred from its core business. Many of the Greco-Turkish War photographs used by the press (figure 7) duly appeared on sale as stereocards (figure 8).

---

<sup>70</sup> "Snapshots on the Turco-Greek Frontier," *Graphic*, May 15, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>71</sup> "Five Days with the Macedonian Insurgents," *Graphic*, May 15, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.



Figure 7. “Greek Volunteers in Athens,” *Leslie’s Weekly*, April 15, 1897 (left) and “Greek Peasant Recruits,” *ILN*, April 3, 1897 (right).



Figure 8. “Recruits for the Army before the Temple of Theseus, Athens, Greece.” J.F. Jarvis stereocard sold by Underwood. Courtesy of Brian May Collection.

Published by Underwood under its “J.F. Jarvis” imprint, locations in classical Athens like the Temple of Theseus and the spectacular mountain scenery of the Macedonian border not only embodied the qualities required for a visually stimulating stereoscopic “tour.” They simultaneously provided a sense of “being there” as an international news event unfolded (figures 9 and 10).

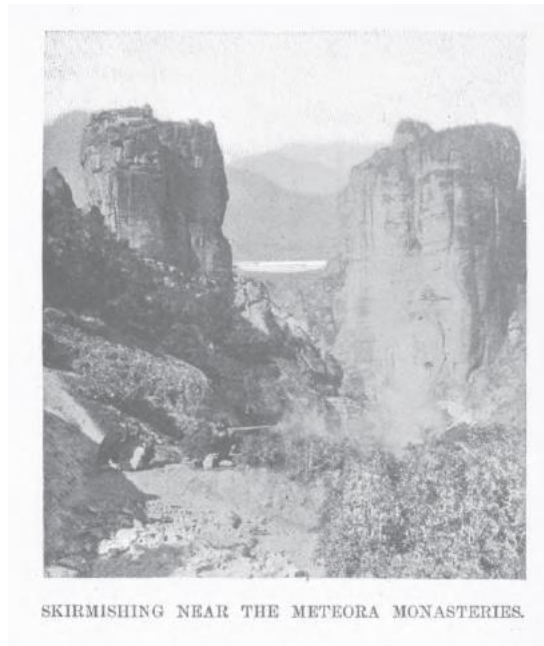


Figure 9. "Skirmishing near the Meteora Monasteries."  
*Harper's Weekly*, May 22, 1897.

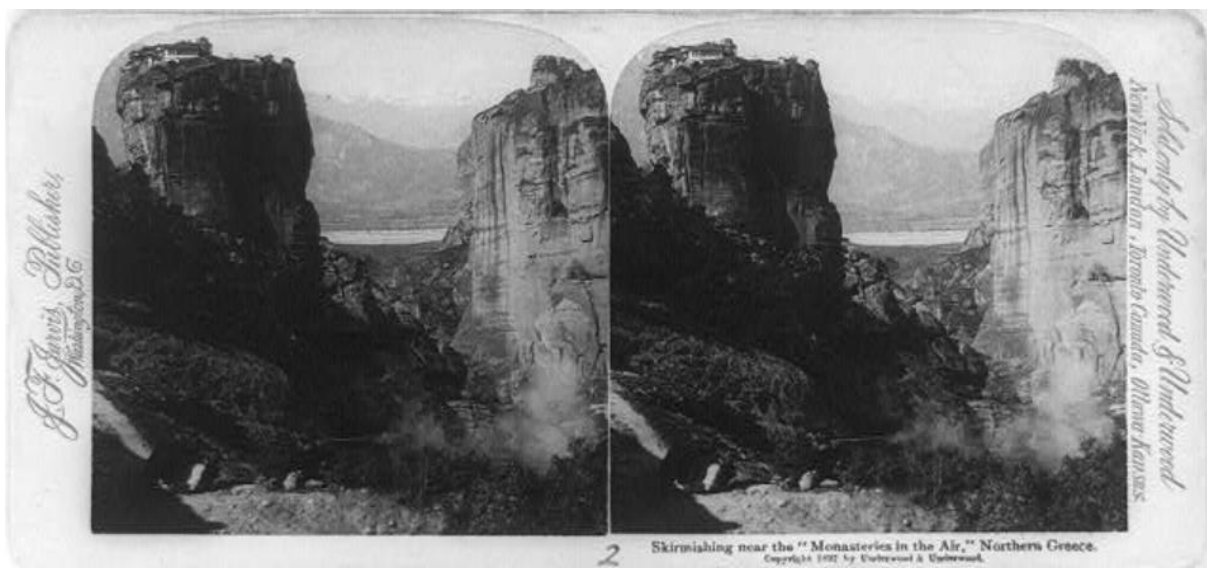


Figure 10 "Skirmishing near the 'Monasteries in the Air,' Northern Greece."  
 J.F. Jarvis stereocard sold by Underwood. Private Collection.

The portrayal of the singular role played by Bert Underwood in these events needs to account for the likely input of others from the company. James Ricalton, another of its photographers, spent the winter months of 1897 in Greece taking stereoscopic views. These were subsequently used by the American lecturer Professor Albert S.

Bickmore as lantern slides for his popular educational lectures.<sup>72</sup> Made from photographic negatives, the slides were projected on to a screen via an optical lantern or stereopticon as the gadget was termed in America.<sup>73</sup> This piece of circumstantial evidence, locating James Ricalton in Greece at the same time as Bert Underwood, raises the strong possibility that the pair collaborated. Photographs produced from their stereoscopic views were then made available to a range of customers including illustrated weekly papers. Unlike his boss, Ricalton was not credited, but as will be revealed in later sections of this study, his name and reputation were regularly exploited by Underwood to add kudos to its role as a credible press supplier.

Analysis of this inaugural contribution by a stereoscopic company to an early phase of press photography adds to recent work in this field by Gervais and Morel. In contrast to the role played by photography companies, their study highlighted the contribution of professional photographers working for individual publications. Notable among them was James H. “Jimmy” Hare.<sup>74</sup> British-born, Hare enjoyed a long career as a news photographer in America, initially working for publications such as *The Illustrated American*, *Collier’s Weekly*, and *Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly*.<sup>75</sup> An early example of his prowess was demonstrated during the Spanish-American War of 1898.

### *Spanish-American War, 1898*

The sinking of USS *Maine* in the harbour at Havana, Cuba in mid-February triggered the conflict between America and Spain. Of the 345-strong crew on board, 266 men died. The scale of the event and the brief war that followed triggered an

---

<sup>72</sup> “Prof. Bickmore On Athens,” *New York Times*, October 10, 1897, <https://nyti.ms/3lqM4wH>. In the report, James Ricalton’s surname was spelt “Ricarton.”

<sup>73</sup> Bernard E. Jones, ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Early Photography* (London: Bishopsgate Press, 1981), 520.

<sup>74</sup> See Thierry Gervais, trans. James Gussen, “The ‘Greatest of War Photographers:’ Jimmy Hare, A Photojournalist at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Études Photographiques* 26 (November 2010), online.

<sup>75</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 26.



unprecedented response from American newspapers. During the hostilities, the *New York Journal* issued as many as forty editions a day. Telegraphy enabled the news to be categorised as “breaking events, instalments, series and features.” In an article titled “The Modern Newspaper in War Time,” Arthur Brisbane, the paper’s managing editor, described its approach. No expense was too costly, no idea too eccentric. First-class cameras were bought whilst hundreds of war correspondents were deployed in the field.<sup>76</sup> At Brisbane’s newspaper alone, around fifty correspondents were sent to cover the story, twenty or so more than the *New York Herald*, one of its city rivals. At the Associated Press, costs incurred by the twenty-three correspondents covering the conflict totalled \$284,210, more than \$8 million today.<sup>77</sup> Budgets were willingly spent by editors who were still heavily reliant on graphic illustrators to produce images quickly and inexpensively. This had the added benefit that they could break “the formal constraints of accuracy” and invent details to animate events into the illusion of live action. However, photography was playing an increasingly prominent role.

When the *New York World* published the first photograph of the wreck of the USS *Maine*, the caption detailed the journey it undertook to reach the paper and its readers. This offered a fascinating insight into what constituted speed at that time.

The photograph left Havana by steamship *Olivette* at 2pm Wednesday, arrived at Key West at 10.30pm; at Port Tampa, Florida 4pm Thursday; left Tampa by New York express at 7pm Thursday and arrived at New York at 2.15 yesterday afternoon.

It is here reproduced exactly.<sup>78</sup>

A stereocard of the wreck followed. Of all its pictures, the Keystone View Company, one of Underwood’s stereoscopic competitors, claimed it sold more copies of the

---

<sup>76</sup> Craig Carey, “Breaking the News: Telegraphy and Yellow Journalism in the Spanish-American War,” *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 26, no. 2 (2016): 134-35, Project MUSE.

<sup>77</sup> Charles H. Brown, *The Correspondents’ War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War* (New York: Scribner, 1967), 445-46.

Throughout this thesis, monetary amounts are expressed using [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com) to estimate their relative values in 2019, the latest available conversion date.

<sup>78</sup> Carey, “Breaking the News,” 139-40.

wreckage of the *Maine* than any other.<sup>79</sup> In their study, Gervais and Morel highlighted the significance of Jimmy Hare's photographic contribution to coverage of the resulting war. In the July 30, 1898 edition of *Collier's Weekly*, thirty-seven of Hare's photographs were "sorted, cropped, sequenced and captioned" by the paper's editors "so as to ensure their meaning and their impact." Using this example, Gervais and Morel argued that the international publication of Hare's war photographs signalled the inception of a new profession, that of the photojournalist.<sup>80</sup> Stereoscopy though was also part of his photographic skill set. When Hare left *Collier's* in 1902, he spent a year working for an old friend in a project gathering stereopticon slides of religious sites in Palestine.<sup>81</sup>

While Underwood's Greco-Turkish War photographs are not as celebrated as Jimmy Hare's, this thesis argues that the company's stereoscopic views were part of a gradual adoption by the press of new photographic modes of reporting. By approaching the history of early press photography using an institutional, medium-centric, business-orientated method rather than an individualised, personality-led one, a wider perspective reveals itself. This not only offers missing or overlooked details and insights but adds nuance to a visual history that in the past has lacked this dimension.

### *South African War, 1899-1902*

By the end of the nineteenth century, photography was increasingly at odds with the illustrative work created by special artists. As the principal suppliers of sketches or paintings to the press, they had suffered no competition from photography for half a century.<sup>82</sup> This contrast in illustrative approaches was writ large during coverage of the South African War of 1899-1902. The rest of this chapter explores Underwood's

---

<sup>79</sup> Warner, *Cultural History*, 223.

<sup>80</sup> Gervais and Morel, *Visual News*, 30-31.

<sup>81</sup> Gould and Greffe, *Jimmy Hare*, 31.

<sup>82</sup> Paul Hogarth, *The Artist as Reporter* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1986), 31.

stereoscopic photography during that conflict and how it created images that appeared extensively in a wide range of titles in Britain and America.

As with the Spanish-American War, huge domestic and international interest meant the press fielded a veritable army. A South African study by Donal P. McCrachen named around ninety agencies and newspapers employing more than 300 war correspondents on British fronts. While an overwhelming majority of publications were British, the remainder came, in descending order of size, from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, America, Canada and Sweden.<sup>83</sup> This largely reflected the preponderance of English-speaking audiences being served, many with connections to the British Empire. Led by the agencies Reuters and Central News, London dailies represented included the *Daily Mail*, *The Times*, *Morning Post*, *Daily News*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Graphic* as well as periodicals including *Black and White*, *The Graphic*, *ILN* and a new entrant to the market, *The Sphere*. American publications represented included four dailies from New York, two from Chicago, one from Philadelphia as well as *Harper's Weekly* and *Scribner's Magazine*.<sup>84</sup>

Many of these publications were heavily committed to using the tried-and-tested illustrative methods of special artists. Many who travelled to South Africa from Britain were familiar and respected names. Godfrey Giles and Charles Fripp went on behalf of *The Graphic* and *Daily Graphic*. Press adverts for *The Sphere* promised "a faithful pictorial record of the war" from "six special war artists." To deliver this coverage, it hired William Wollen and Inglis Sheldon-Williams. As in-house artists, it also employed Stanley Berkeley, John Hassall, Ernest Prater and the Pagets, Sidney and Walter. Rather than use photography, illustrations of the battles were produced by John Charlton on the staff of *The Graphic*, Richard Caton Woodville for the *ILN*, and

---

<sup>83</sup> Donal P. McCrachen, "The Relationship Between British War Correspondents in the Field and British Military Intelligence During the Anglo-Boer War," *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies* 43, no. 1 (2015): 99-101, <https://doi.org/10.5787/43-1-1111>

<sup>84</sup> McCrachen, "British War Correspondents," 102.



Allan Stewart for the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. Many of these illustrations were based on sketches made by soldiers in the field.

In terms of photographic history, the conflict's wider significance was as the first involving British forces recorded in depth by the camera. By way of illustrating the schizophrenic nature of illustrative work at this point, many of the special artists operating in South Africa were equipped with hand-held cameras.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the range of photographic images captured, notably those made by soldiers using their own cameras, allowed a very different picture to emerge of the realities of colonial warfare.<sup>86</sup> For Underwood, the war signalled a new development in its photographic operations that emerges for the first time. A study of its stereography in South Africa by H.J. Erasmus argued that:

...the Underwood & Underwood photographers were not news photographers who were after the fresh sensation of the latest scoop. Nor were they part of any pro-British propaganda campaign.<sup>87</sup>

His study concluded that the company's stereographs of the war:

...were not intended to afford coverage of the latest news from the front. Nor do they cast any fresh or independent light on the war and the conduct of the war.<sup>88</sup>

However, this characterisation overlooked Underwood's extensive role in supplying photographs to the press taken from its stereographs. As during the Greco-Turkish War, its principal customers were the illustrated weekly papers in Britain and America. Rather than using multiple photographers, as Erasmus suggested, this study has discovered that Underwood employed a single photographer to

---

<sup>85</sup> Peter Harrington, *British Artists and War: The Face of Battle in Paintings and Prints, 1700-1914* (Greenhill Books, London and Stackpole Books, Pennsylvania in conjunction with Brown University Library, Rhode Island, 1993), 275-76.

<sup>86</sup> James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 98.

<sup>87</sup> H.J. Erasmus, "The Underwood & Underwood Stereographs of the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902," *South African Journal of Cultural and Art History* 26, no.2 (2012): 63, <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/82250>

<sup>88</sup> Erasmus, "Anglo-Boer War," 82.

stereograph the war. More significantly, he was a recognised member of the international press corps.

Press licences required in order to report the conflict were issued by the War Office in London, or military authorities in the Cape and Natal. According to correspondence at the time, this process was chaotic and inconsistent. The secretary of war in London noted:

They [foreign correspondents] will have to go out [to South Africa] at their own risk, and it will be for the local [military] authorities to deal with them if they present themselves. We can make an exception in the case of one or two Americans.<sup>89</sup>

Whilst Underwood did not feature in McCrachen's list of those issued with press licences, this study has found a connection with a publication that did, *Scribner's Magazine* of New York. According to McCrachen, its press licence was issued to "H.F. Mackem." Research by this study has revealed that this was a misspelling. In fact, "H.F. Mackern" was also employed by Underwood to stereograph the war.<sup>90</sup> At this point, a brief resumé of his curriculum vitae is instructive in highlighting the skillset of those working for stereoscopic photography companies whose images were used to service the press.

Henry Frederico Mackern, known as 'Harry,' was born in 1864 in Buenos Aires in the then Argentine Republic.<sup>91</sup> As a teenager, he attended school in London.<sup>92</sup> In 1894, Mackern became an American citizen, and was soon operating as a photographer in Chicago.<sup>93</sup> Whilst there, he self-published *Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest*, a photographic record of life at a 600-acre US military base, established in 1887, on

---

<sup>89</sup> McCrachen, "*British War Correspondents*," 104.

<sup>90</sup> McCrachen, "*British War Correspondents*," 118-22.

Mackern's surname has alternate spellings in official documents, either Mackern or MacKern. This study uses Mackern unless directly quoting its use as MacKern.

<sup>91</sup> The 1869 Argentine Republic Census records "Frederico Mackern," the youngest of five children living with their English-born parents in Buenos Aires, My Ancestry.

<sup>92</sup> 1881 UK Census, 9 Elish Place, Lewisham, London, schedule no.6, My Ancestry.

<sup>93</sup> Henry F. Mackern, US Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Circuit Court, Cook County, Illinois, November 5, 1894, M265; and *Chicago Trade Directory* (Chicago: Unknown, 1898), 1338.

the shores of Lake Michigan.<sup>94</sup> Though Mackern's pictures were presented photolithographically in full-page landscape format, the introductory text referred to "the following series of views illustrating different phases of soldier life, as well as the natural features of Fort Sheridan." The use of the term "views" here implied a connection with stereoscopic photography though it was not explicit. As well as being a photographic calling card, it showed his ability to collaborate with a military establishment. Mackern's photographs included "The Soldier Life Saving Crew" with a lightning effect painted on to the sky, and an action shot, "Charge. Troop C, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry," that captured clouds of dust and horses' hooves in mid-air (figure 11).

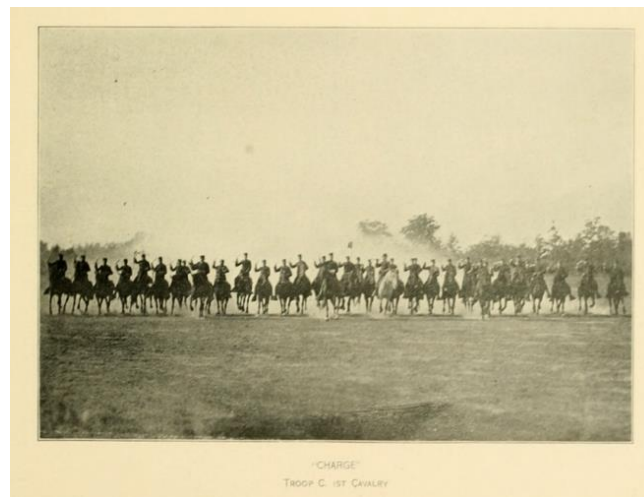


Figure 11. "Charge. Troop C, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry."  
*Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest* (Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897).

Details of how Mackern came to be working for Underwood during the South African War come from a memoir he wrote about the experience. *Side-Lights on the March* was published in London in 1901 by John Murray, a firm whose list of authors included Jane Austen, Lord Byron and Charles Darwin.<sup>95</sup> In the book's *Foreword*, a company credit confirmed Mackern's stereoscopic credentials:

---

<sup>94</sup> H.F. Mackern, *Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest* (Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897).

<sup>95</sup> "About John Murray Press," John Murray Press, accessed November 21, 2020, <https://www.johnmurraypress.co.uk/imprint/john-murray/page/about-john-murray-press/>

To Messrs. Underwood & Underwood, London, I am indebted for the kind permission to use in this book a few of the negatives I made for them during the South African Campaign."<sup>96</sup>

Amidst its 256 pages, *Side-Lights on the March* contained nearly sixty photographs, many presented with their curved stereoscopic arches. This design detail employed by book publishers as well as the press throughout this period demonstrably referenced the stereoscopic origin of such photographs. The curved arch shape of a stereocard was visible when viewed through a stereoscope or hand-held viewer. Mackern's reference to "a few of the negatives I made for them" underlined the sheer scale of his work for Underwood in South Africa. It ran into many hundreds if not thousands of stereos.<sup>97</sup> As to his relationship with *Scribner's Magazine* and how that related to his work for Underwood, Mackern's memoir was ambiguous. Reflecting on the start of hostilities in October 1899, he wrote:

Correspondents and illustrators of the great dailies and magazines immediately flocked to the scene of action: among the representatives of the latter publications I found myself numbered and within a few days of receiving my instructions I sailed for South Africa via London.<sup>98</sup>

These instructions may have come from *Scribner's Magazine* alone, or included Underwood too, given that its company headquarters was also in New York. The passenger list for the trip to Liverpool recorded Mackern's "profession, occupation or calling" as "photographer."<sup>99</sup> But what is surprising is the lack of any photographs or illustrations credited to either Mackern or Underwood in *Scribner's Magazine* during the 1899-1900 phase of the war. Instead, its pages featured correspondents' reports illustrated by their own photographs. This was another practice that was common following the advent of Kodak hand-held cameras and roll-film. Indeed, correspondents used by *Scribner's Magazine* included such well-known journalists

---

<sup>96</sup> H.F. Mackern, *Side-Lights on the March: The Experiences of an American Journalist in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1901), x.

<sup>97</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, xiii-xv.

<sup>98</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 1.

<sup>99</sup> "Henry F. Mackern," SS *Bavarian* passenger log, New York to Liverpool, October 21, 1899, 145, My Ancestry.

as H.J. Whigham and, later in the campaign, Richard Harding Davis.<sup>100</sup> In light of using the pulling power of their by-lines to sell the magazine, the lack of identifiable work by Mackern was explicable.

Turning to Mackern's arrangement to work for "Messrs. Underwood & Underwood, London," he spent a month or so in the capital en route from New York before setting off for Cape Town. This would have given the company the opportunity to brief him as to its photographic requirements.<sup>101</sup> With war fever in full cry, London was an ideal place for a freelancer like Mackern to attract writing commissions alongside his photography work. As an American, his book contract with John Murray may have resulted from his New York connections at *Scribner's Magazine*. During this period, the periodical carried adverts for titles such as *The Works of Lord Byron* and *Murray's European Guidebooks*. Aside from its literary reputation, the publisher started in the travel business in 1836 when its pioneering travel books first appeared.<sup>102</sup> Given Underwood's use of stereoscopy to target latter-day armchair tourists using its *Travel System*, the companies may have shared a mutual commercial interest.

### *Underwood in South Africa*

In terms of his photography for Underwood, Mackern's stereoscopic negatives in South Africa covered the period between November 1899 and the late summer of 1900. By way of a progress report, the *British Journal of Photography* reported in early May 1900 that 200 negatives had been made of "scenes" in and around Cape Town, "disembarking, entraining of troops, &c.," and these were already in Underwood's hands in London. A further 400, "all from the front as far as his field of operations has been conducted," were also reported as being on their way back to

---

<sup>100</sup> Davis' role in reporting from the Greco-Turkish War, Spanish-American War and South African War is analysed in Arthur Lubow, *The Reporter who Would be King: A Biography of Richard Harding Davis* (New York: Scribner, 1992).

<sup>101</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 2.

<sup>102</sup> James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 66.

Britain.<sup>103</sup> However, these figures were slightly unreliable. Mackern and his employers had suffered a serious and expensive setback. A brief note in *Side-Lights on the March* provided the context:

Owing to the loss of a case containing 250 plates, which unfortunately went down on the *Mexican*, off Cape Town, I lost nearly all of my work from Modder River to Bloemfontein.<sup>104</sup>

According to one account, the SS *Mexican* sank eighty miles north of Cape Town on April 5 after colliding at night in heavy fog with a troopship. There were no casualties among the 244 passengers and crew. Some mail and luggage were salvaged, though apparently not Underwood's glass plates.<sup>105</sup> In the days before phototelegraphy, this incident was a graphic illustration of the logistical challenges and risks faced by photographic companies. This was especially so when employees were working thousands of miles from their home base.

Any financial losses incurred by the ship's sinking appear to have been ones Underwood was willing and able to bear. The following year, it incorporated as a company in New Jersey with capital stock of \$100,000, more than \$3 million today. Despite the loss of its stereoscopic plates, or perhaps because of it, Mackern continued photographing in South Africa for a few more months after the first round of hostilities ended. Amongst the places he later visited were Ladysmith, Spion Kop and Calenso. These were not part of his original itinerary but were significant locations in the South African War. Their inclusion emphasised their importance, particularly when compiling an authoritative set of stereos.<sup>106</sup> In total, Underwood used Mackern's work to generate three different sets of what it called *The British-Boer War*. At the time of publication in 1900, the company described these as "from Capetown to Bloemfontein, from Bloemfontein to Pretoria (with Lord Roberts), and the Gen. Buller ground and Natal" (figure 12).

---

<sup>103</sup> "Stereoscopy at the Seat of War," *British Journal of Photography*, May 4, 1900, Special Collections, De Montfort University, Leicester.

<sup>104</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 106.

<sup>105</sup> "Daily Event for April 5, 2009," *Maritime Quest*, accessed November 26, 2020, [http://www.maritimequest.com/daily\\_event\\_archive/2009/04\\_apr/05\\_ss\\_mexican.htm](http://www.maritimequest.com/daily_event_archive/2009/04_apr/05_ss_mexican.htm)

<sup>106</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 250.



Figure 12. “Mr. F.H [sic] Mackern and outfit on the march with Lord Roberts on the way to Pretoria, South Africa,” *Stereoscopic Photograph*, July 1902.

Given the scale of its stereography, it is notable that other studies have overlooked Underwood’s photographic contribution to reporting this phase of the war by the British and American press. Using Mackern’s memoir and other newly located sources including correspondence with his publisher, Underwood’s photographic work in South Africa emerges as a multi-media operation. These sources shed fresh light on Mackern’s activities as part of the international press corps and how a stereoscopic photographer worked in the field. They also help pinpoint the stereo views that he created for Underwood which were significant in terms of reporting events as news. In summary, photographs principally created for the stereoscopic market are traceable through the pages of the press in Britain and America as they were repurposed and given an editorial role. The rest of this chapter explores this previously unstudied phenomenon.

### *Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner*

According to his memoir, Mackern departed Britain from Southampton on RMS *Dunvegan Castle* bound for Cape Town in November 1899. On arrival, one of his first duties was to call on the American Consul-General, Colonel James G. Stowe. Prior to joining the diplomatic service, Stowe was in the “implement business” in

Kansas City and “was kind, genial and ready to do anything in his power to assist me.” It was through Stowe that Underwood gained access to Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa, and Governor of Cape Colony. According to Mackern, he and Stowe called on Milner, who offered the stereographer the opportunity to take his picture.<sup>107</sup> Afterwards, Mackern remembered how:

... the Governor very courteously offered me one of his cigars. On my saying that with his permission I would keep it as a pleasant memento of the occasion, he replied, ‘well, have another.’ Needless to say, I have them both.”<sup>108</sup>

This cigar anecdote later featured in a brief syndicated extract from *Side-Lights on the March* used by the press to promote the book’s publication in Britain.<sup>109</sup> This apparently informal and convivial meeting perhaps masks an important point about Underwood’s operations as a stereoscopic photography company. High-level networks with their inherent characteristics of power and influence were clearly important in securing access to the places and people it wished to stereograph. The next chapter of this study explores this aspect of its work. Stereographing two American presidents, members of the British royal family and a new pope were assignments that created commercially valuable and newsworthy photographs. In turn, the press snapped these up.

After leaving Milner, Mackern had another important meeting. He presented his credentials to the British press censor, a “Major Jones.” These are likely to have included letters of introduction from both *Scribner’s Magazine* and Underwood. Given his recent encounters with Milner and Stowe, endorsements from the British and American governments respectively could also have been forthcoming. The result was that he successfully obtained a “regular Press permit” to cover the hostilities. This, he fondly thought, would allow him access to the front. After three weeks spent securing a wagon, horses, and provisions, he was denied permission to join Lord Methuen at Modder River where active operations were taking place. It was

---

<sup>107</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 11-12.

<sup>108</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 13.

<sup>109</sup> “Sir Alfred Milner and the Cigars,” *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, May 16, 1901, British Newspaper Archive.



only following further negotiations with the military authorities that Mackern finally set off in mid-January by train, initially to join General French at Rensburg.<sup>110</sup>

Despite this series of delays, photographs taken in Cape Town including that of Sir Alfred Milner reached the British press the following month. The illustrated weekly *Black and White* was among those that published “Sir Alfred Milner and Staff” and credited it as a copyrighted “Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood.” It portrayed Milner looking at ease, cross-legged in a wicker chair on a manicured lawn. Flanked by his “staff” of three men in uniform and two in suits, their air was that of military and civil order (figure 13).



Figure 13. “Sir Alfred Milner and Staff. Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood.” *Black and White*, February 17, 1900.

<sup>110</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 15-18.

In terms of the group's eye-lines, four were looking straight into Mackern's stereoscopic lens while the rest stared off-camera in different directions.

Photographically, this stylistic approach had a stereoscopic purpose. It offered a variety of angles within the frame, adding depth of field and the required three-dimensional effect. Visually, the group had all the angles covered and was ready to deal with any threat from whatever direction it might come. Far from the muddy conditions of any battlefield, Mackern managed to capture the shine of their shoes and the bristle of their moustaches. It was a photograph clearly intended to portray a body of men not unduly worried about anything.

*Black and White* placed this highly choreographed image at the heart of a page, surrounded by an extended column of theatre and concert reviews. Readers found an editorial connection to the South African War in a brief adjacent report about the "Stormont Invisible War Shield." This was a piece of military equipment accepted by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts for use by the British army and made of aluminium lined with sheepskin. When worn under uniform, it was designed to divert a bullet or sword.<sup>111</sup> As the war was not progressing as smoothly as anticipated, the report's down-page billing alongside the Milner group photograph seemed designed to reassure readers it was business as usual in the British Empire and there was no cause for concern.

Though *Black and White* made no reference to Underwood's photograph being "new" or "exclusive," the portrait added both editorial and illustrative value to the paper's coverage. From the company's stereoscopic perspective, the photograph soon appeared as a stereocard designed to tap into public fervour about the latest South African War and its progress (figure 14).

---

<sup>111</sup> "Play and Masque," *Black and White*, February 17, 1900, British Library.



Figure 14. "His Excellency Sir Alfred Milner and Staff, Cape Town, South Africa." Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.

As to the audience for Underwood's press photographs, the conflict was the first major war involving the British since the advent of mass literacy. Following the Education Act of 1870, a new readership emerged, anxious to learn about such events even when thousands of miles away.<sup>112</sup> After the first three months of the war, the *Pall Mall Gazette* reported on the rapid growth in sales of daily newspapers and themed periodicals:

Somebody has estimated the increased sale of the higher class of illustrated journals since the beginning of the war at one hundred thousand copies, and there is no reason why the estimate should be extravagant.

Not only are the bookstalls crowded with illustrated matter, but there seems a ready welcome for every newcomer.<sup>113</sup>

It was middle-class readers of "the higher class of illustrated journals" that initially were the main consumers of Underwood's press photographs. By contrast, turn-of-the-century urban workers were reading evening, Sunday, and sporting papers as well as local weeklies. But as Jonathan Rose has pointed out, these publications did

<sup>112</sup> Kenneth O. Morgan, "The Boer War and the Media (1899-1902)," *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no. 1 (2002): 2, <https://doi-org/10.1093/tcbh/13.1.1>

<sup>113</sup> *The Pall Mall Gazette*, January 31, 1900, cited in Simon Popple, "Fresh From the Front": Performance, War News and Popular Culture during the Boer War," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 4 (2010): 405.

not carry much national or world news.<sup>114</sup> As to public attitudes to the South African War among the literate working class in Britain, they were actually shaped by a profound instinct of loyalty, not to Empire but to families and neighbours in their local communities.<sup>115</sup> In servicing the illustrated press, Underwood strategically targeted the same affluent customer base to which it marketed “neat leatherette cases” containing stereocard sets and the “New Underwood Extension Cabinet” in which to house a customer’s collection. Press credits for these photographs “from stereographs” were another way in which the company’s name could reach its stereoscopic patrons.

Early on in hostilities, the harsh realities of reporting the South African War were clear. Mackern’s memoir later noted that thirty-five per cent of correspondents covering the conflict were either “killed or incapacitated.”<sup>116</sup> *Black and White* was one of several British publications affected by the high casualty rate. The paper’s special artist René Bull was among half a dozen war correspondents wounded. Others were not so fortunate. Six were killed, three died of disease, thirteen went down with fever, and nineteen were taken prisoner.<sup>117</sup> Among the fatalities was G.W. Steevens, war correspondent with the *Daily Mail*. At the siege of Ladysmith, he contracted enteric fever caused by salmonella.<sup>118</sup> As a consequence of these threats to life, behind-the-lines photographs played an increasing part in illustrating the war. Aside from requiring less exposure to physical dangers, these images compensated for a lack of front-line action. The situation was compounded by restrictions exercised by the military authorities, and the British censorship of letters and telegrams.<sup>119</sup>

In terms of “action,” portrait photographs like that of Milner and his staff were far removed from the battle scenes Underwood might have hoped to secure when

---

<sup>114</sup> Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 344.

<sup>115</sup> Rose, *Intellectual Life*, 335.

<sup>116</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, preface.

<sup>117</sup> McCrachen, “*British War Correspondents*,” 100.

<sup>118</sup> For an evaluation of the literary qualities of Steevens’ journalism, see Andrew Griffiths, “Literary Journalism and Empire: George Warrington Steevens in Africa, 1898-1900,” *Literary Journalism Studies* 9, no.1 (Spring 2017): 60-81, <https://ialjs.org/spring-2017-vol-9-no-1/>

<sup>119</sup> Morgan, “The Boer War,” 4.

Mackern left London. But there was a commercial spin-off. Once taken, any posed pictures of key personalities in an evolving news story became part of a company or publication photo library. To illustrate the point, Mackern's memoir named the figure on the right of the Milner photograph as Lord Belgrave, his aide-de-camp. In 1899 on the death of his father, Belgrave succeeded to the title. As Duke of Westminster, he became a figure of greater public interest.<sup>120</sup> Stock photography and its commercial possibilities was to prove highly significant to Underwood's future as a stereoscopic company servicing the press. This awareness of "who's who" and "what's what" enabled the company to extract a photograph of a particular personality or place from its growing library of negatives. Whenever one was needed to illustrate a news story or feature, a print could be produced.

The company's back catalogue was married to a corporate collective memory. This was the preserve of managers with long years of service and working knowledge of its photographic output. Chief among these was Charles N. Thomas whose Underwood career lasted more than half a century before his retirement as general manager in 1936. Born in Illinois in 1868, Charles Nathan Thomas was a canvassing agent who went on to manage the company's office in Baltimore, Maryland in the late 1880s.<sup>121</sup> As Underwood's operations extended across the United States, it was "Charlie" Thomas who managed its new head office in New York City that was established in 1891. He even briefly oversaw the London operation during 1906. Thomas's encyclopaedic knowledge of Underwood's photographic output stood the firm in good stead throughout its history.<sup>122</sup>

While its London managers waited for Mackern to send back stereoscopic negatives from South Africa via its office in Cape Town, Underwood issued a series of posed portraits to meet demand for relevant photographs. *The Graphic* devoted a full-page to these headlined "Officials at the War Office." Six mid-shots referred to generically

---

<sup>120</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 13.

<sup>121</sup> "Copy of an Outline," Robert Taft Photography Correspondence, accessed November 21, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/695>

<sup>122</sup> "Charles N. Thomas. Retired Executive of Underwood and Underwood, Photographers," *New York Times*, January 24, 1937, <https://nyti.ms/3fXNcql>



as “prominent men” were credited as “From Stereophotographs by Underwood and Underwood, Red Lion Square (Copyright 1900).” Though conventional images in photographic or illustrative terms, the officials posed while reading or writing. The chosen office or library settings featured visible maps of South Africa in the background (figure 15).

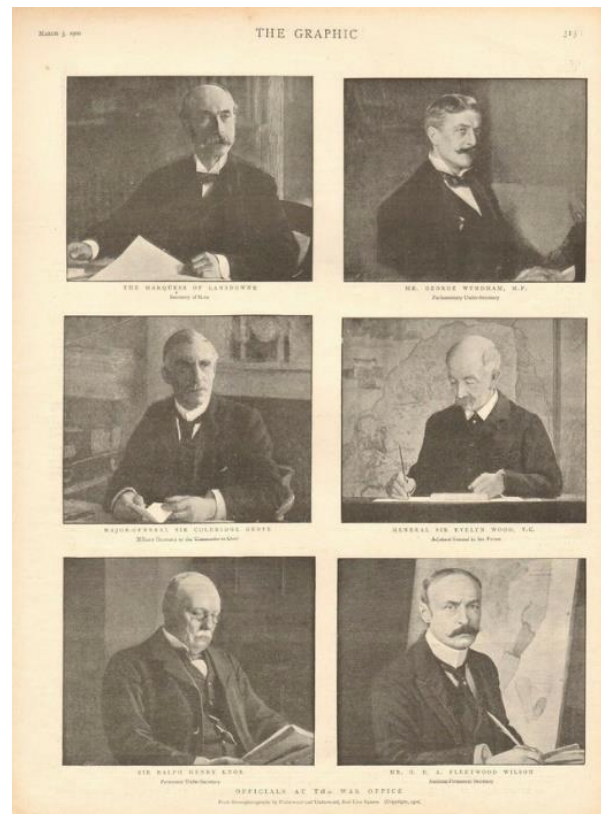


Figure 15. “Officials at the War Office.”  
*The Graphic*, March 3, 1900.

A stereocard of at least one of these figures, George Wyndham MP, the parliamentary under-secretary, was also issued. Celebrated as “The Man of the Hour” after a rallying speech in the House of Commons, Underwood’s photography in this instance demonstrably served a dual purpose. It commercially exploited the public mood for a stereocard and met the press’s demand for new photographs published as part of its reportage.

*“The Best Scoop I Have Had Yet”*

Back in South Africa, it was towards the end of February 1900 before Mackern, helped by various military figures, finally reached the British army encampment at Modder River. Soon after his arrival, a scene unfolded that illustrated the convergence between a stereoscopic view and a photograph capturing a recognisable news event. Following defeat at Paardeberg by Lord Roberts’ troops, Boer forces led by General Cronje surrendered. Taken to Modder River as a prisoner of war, he was transported by train to Cape Town the following day. In his memoir, Mackern described the scene which unfolded before his stereoscopic camera.

At four o’clock promptly the guard was assembled outside the entrance of the hotel, which was about a hundred yards from the railway station; the party stepped down from the verandah, General Cronje in the centre, his wife on the right, and on his left, General Douglas, while behind came the interpreter, General Cronje’s son as adjutant, and one or two servants.

The guard came to the present, and a bugler sounded a General’s flourish.<sup>123</sup>

As described by Mackern, a photograph portraying this moment was published by *Black and White* in London on April 7, credited as “Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood: Copyright” (figure 16).



Figure 16. “General and Mrs. Cronje and Their Son (Just Behind) Escorted by General Douglas to the Train for Cape Town. Stereo-Photo by Underwood and Underwood: Copyright.”  
*Black & White*, April 7, 1900.

---

<sup>123</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 59.

Despite a time-lag of several weeks before its appearance in print, the photograph fulfilled any definition of being “newsworthy.” The term had been in common usage for about a decade at this point, describing an event thought “interesting enough to the general public to warrant reporting.”<sup>124</sup> Mackern’s photograph caught several key figures from the South African War in the same location at the same time. Indeed, it explicitly portrayed an “event,” defined as “something that happens, especially when it is unusual or important.”<sup>125</sup> The photograph of General Cronje and his family was an example of an early photo opportunity. It appeared to be one that Mackern knew about in advance or had received a tip-off from the military authorities.

Editorially, *Black and White* placed the photograph at the centre of a page. It appeared together with an article paying tribute to General Joubert, the Commandant-General of Boer forces who had died the previous week. The same issue featured a further four photographs taken by Mackern, all credited to Underwood. These were captioned “Boer Prisoners on the March from Paardeberg to the Modder River, February 27, etc,” and included one of “The Chief Boer Commandants Who Had Served under General Cronje.” In a report about this episode carried by the *BJP*, Mackern was quoted: “I was glad to get the only stereographs made.”<sup>126</sup> This statement suggested that while other photographers might have been present, those working for rival stereoscopic companies did not capture this series of views.

The fact that a leading illustrated weekly in London published Underwood’s photographs and gave them due prominence was important. In terms of capturing such a newsworthy event, they were the best photographs available, whether stereoscopic in origin or not. As well as their editorial and commercial value, Mackern was confident about the technical quality of what he was producing. In the same *BJP* report, he described his shot of the captured General Cronje as “the best

---

<sup>124</sup> “Newsworthy,” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed October 29, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/newsworthy#h>

<sup>125</sup> “Event,” *Collins Dictionary*, accessed November 21, 2020, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/event>

<sup>126</sup> “Stereoscopy,” *BJP*, May 4, 1900, Special Collections, De Montfort University, Leicester.



scoop I have had yet.” This use of recognisably journalistic language further highlighted the dual photographic role he occupied for Underwood. Primarily, he was on the look-out for exclusive views that would set his employers apart from other stereoscopic companies when publishing their tours or sets. However, prints made from half stereos of the same images, as in the General Cronje example, were also made available to the press as illustrative news photographs.

The journalistic language and terminology used by Mackern, “the best scoop I have had yet,” was in keeping with an event he experienced in mid-March. On reaching “the correspondents camp,” he found “most of the representatives of the great journals of England and America.” As a photographer, Mackern recognised a factor that differentiated him from other members of the international press corps. Their reports needed to reach their editors as quickly as possible:

One thing that has possibly made my relations with them pleasanter than might otherwise have been, was the fact that I had no necessity to use the cables, and consequently was not an additional rival.

It was at Modder River that Mackern first met the war correspondent James Barnes, a fellow American, with whom he became “inseparable friends.”<sup>127</sup> Their relationship was such that Mackern later dedicated his memoir to Barnes, describing him as “my chum on the march.” Barnes reciprocated in his account, *The Great War Trek with the British Army on the Veldt*, published in 1901 by Appleton in New York. In one passage, he described how “Mackern, of *Scribner’s*, and I started together at daylight.”<sup>128</sup> The mention of *Scribner’s* rather than Underwood underlined that both Barnes and Mackern were servicing a range of publishers and publications. According to his memoir, Barnes began the war representing New York’s *Outlook* magazine and the McClure News Syndicate.<sup>129</sup> Later, he added the *Cape Times* and *Daily Mail* in London to those papers he supplied with reports.<sup>130</sup> In this context, Mackern as a stereoscopic photographer can be viewed as part of this press

---

<sup>127</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 77.

<sup>128</sup> James Barnes, *The Great War Trek with the British Army on the Veldt* (New York: D. Appleton, 1901), 332.

<sup>129</sup> Barnes, *Great War Trek*, 1.

<sup>130</sup> Barnes, *Great War Trek*, 204.

collective. Establishing a working relationship with Barnes, he showed an ability to successfully network that characterised other Underwood stereographers. Mackern's instincts in this case were impeccable. During the First World War, Barnes was a prime mover in aerial photography for the American military.<sup>131</sup>

### *Special Artists at War*

It was at this point that a fevered debate broke out in South Africa about the illustration of correspondents' reports. This exchange of opinions revolved around art on one hand, and art informed by photography on the other. The debate centred on a simple question: Which was the superior medium in terms of truthful representation? The polarized argument was played out in the columns of *The Friend* in Bloemfontein after Lord Roberts agreed to hand the title over to the press corps to be run as the British army's newspaper. Publication began on March 16, lasted for a month, and at its peak achieved a daily circulation of more than 5,000 copies. Representative of the literary elite of *fin de siècle* Britain, the paper's eminent editorial team featured both Rudyard Kipling and Arthur Conan Doyle, who was in South Africa as a medical doctor.<sup>132</sup>

Underwood's stereographer also had a role in the project. Two photographs credited to "H. Mackern of *Scribner's Magazine*" later appeared in a detailed account of the venture written by another American, *Daily Mail* journalist Julian Ralph.<sup>133</sup> These images visibly demonstrated Mackern's active part in a well-connected network of journalists, correspondents, and government officials. One photograph captioned "The Editors in their Office" featured Ralph along with Perceval Landon of *The Times*, H.A. Gwynne of *Reuters*, and Kipling. The other was a humorous group shot

---

<sup>131</sup> Terrence J. Finnegan, *Shooting the Front: Allied Aerial Reconnaissance in the First World War* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2014), 176-78.

<sup>132</sup> Morgan, "The Boer War," 3.

<sup>133</sup> Julian Ralph, *War's Brighter Side: The Story of 'The Friend' Newspaper, Edited by the Correspondents with Lord Roberts's Forces, March - April 1900* (New York: D. Appleton, 1901). Photographs credited to Mackern face pages 7 and 16.

featuring a dozen members of the press corps surrounding the desk of the press censor, Lord Stanley (figure 17).



Figure 17. "Lord Stanley Censoring Reports of a Battle. Photographed by Mr. H. Mackern, of *Scribner's Magazine*." *The Friend*, April 3, 1900.

Whilst in South Africa, Mackern had seen for himself the increasing use of photography to inform illustrations produced by special artists. To save time, they had used Kodak cameras since the late-1880s. The arrival of its *Pocket Camera* in 1895 was another significant development. As the first to be mass produced, it offered several advantages compared with large and heavy plate cameras. It weighed just five ounces, used packaged celluloid film, could be loaded safely in daylight, and produced a picture one-and-a-half inches by two inches.<sup>134</sup> By 1900, the implications of using photography to aid the creation of sketches or paintings were though still being worked through. Gentlemanly though passionate exchanges published in *The Friend* exemplified the clash between these established and emerging visual cultures.

The newspaper debate began with a pro-camera article penned by H. Owen Scott of the *ILN*. Titled "The War Artist of To-day," Scott argued that the South African War signalled a new era in the history of illustrated journalism. This had been brought about by a new school of war artists "whose method is camera work, and whose aim

---

<sup>134</sup> Hogarth, *Artist as Reporter*, 31.

is to faithfully produce the actualities demanded by a picture-loving public.” By using this term, Scott was acknowledging that consumers of news through the press were visually orientated. He then continued with a direct attack on other members of his profession:

The artistic value of this means of illustrating is becoming more and more realised every day and will prove an effectual factor in crowding out the old-fashioned war artist who draws on his imagination.<sup>135</sup>

This condemnation of a long-established illustrative tradition prompted a spirited riposte from another war artist. William Wollen of *The Sphere* and *Pen and Pencil* was particularly outraged by what he called a “very unjust” reference to “the old-fashioned war artists, who draw on their imagination.” This group were:

... men who have seen a large amount of fighting, have sketched and worked under fire, sent their work home often under enormous difficulties and been in very many tight places.

Whilst agreeing that a new era of illustrated journalism had indeed begun, Wollen responded that as far as battle scenes were concerned:

... the man with the [K]odak cannot compete for one single moment with the individual who is using the pencil.”

However, he did concede that the camera had its virtues.

What it can do, and does, is scenes which are more or less peaceful, such as camp views, incidents in regimental life and also bits on the line of march, but of an action – no!<sup>136</sup>

A last word on the subject went to H.C. Shelley of *Westminster Gazette* and *The King*. Launched in January 1900, *The King*, a new title produced by George Newnes’ publishing conglomerate, was the first British magazine that relied entirely on

---

<sup>135</sup> Ralph, *Brighter Side*, 409.

<sup>136</sup> Ralph, *Brighter Side*, 431-3.

Several paintings of the South African War of 1899-1902 credited to William Barnes Wollen (1857-1936) feature in Harrington, *British Artists*.

photography for its documentary images.<sup>137</sup> This move by Newnes, who first established his reputation as the publisher of *Tit Bits*, was an act of aggression towards his Fleet Street rivals Alfred Harmsworth and Arthur Pearson. Assessing coverage of the South African War, Shelley's article cited Modder River and Magersfontein as representative of the difficulties faced by illustrators. Facing a battle line of five or six miles, the enemy was invisible. This meant, argued Shelley, that it was physically impossible to show the public what Wollen had described as "an accurate bird's-eye view of what a battle is like." Taking the example of an artillery battery in action, which Wollen had cited as beyond the camera's capabilities, Shelley responded in kind:

The camera man ... can show the guns coming into action, record their unlimbering, depict the preparations for firing, and time a photograph at the actual moment of firing.

It is true that his picture will not show quite such a volume of smoke as the sketch of the man with the pencil. But why? *Because the smoke is not there* [original italics].<sup>138</sup>

Two quite different concepts of veracity were at play here, delineating the limits of both media as well as their potential. Artists knew no other way to show combat than their tried-and-tested depictions of war, refined during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. As a result, all military images of the war sensationalised the fighting in a form that made it accessible to the public.<sup>139</sup> On the other hand, photographers found a ready market for their images in the illustrated press and aroused public interest in seeing the hostilities from a different viewpoint. This battle of words between art and photography continued right up to the First World War and beyond. In the end, special artists ended up imitating their own photographs and the time had come for photojournalists to take on the job.<sup>140</sup> This artistic face-off between camera and pencil played out just as stereoscopic photography began contributing its three-dimensional version of war photography to the illustrated press. Though Underwood was keen to stress the inherent truthfulness of its photography, the stereographs it produced were a combination of visual styles. Informed by both

---

<sup>137</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 171.

<sup>138</sup> Ralph, *Brighter Side*, 456-61.

<sup>139</sup> Harrington, *British Artists*, 297.

<sup>140</sup> Hogarth, *Artist as Reporter*, 31.

art and photography, its photographs were soon on wider view in the pages of the British and American press.

Direct intervention by Lord Stanley as press censor and Mackern's persistence with the British military authorities resulted in a steady flow of his photographs reaching both London and New York. Amongst the leading American illustrated publications, *Leslie's Weekly* enthusiastically embraced this photographic supply. Its April 21, 1900 edition featured a total of eighteen images credited to Underwood "from stereoscopic photographs." Sub-titled "English Fighters in the War Against the Boers," twelve appeared in a layout across two full pages in the middle of the paper (figure 18).

Figure 18. "English Fighters in the War Against the Boers. From Stereoscopic Photographs by Underwood & Underwood, New York. Copyright 1900."  
*Leslie's Weekly*, April 21, 1900.

Though the scale was impressive, it was hardly a new development. *Leslie's Weekly* had featured pages of Underwood photographs in its editorial coverage since the Greco-Turkish War three years earlier. What was different here was the paper also devoted editorial space to highlighting what it perceived as the merits of Underwood's stereoscopic approach.

Under the headline "Value of Stereoscopic Photographs," the paper explained its decision to publish so many of the company's images from the South African War.

In addition to illustrations by our own artists, we publish several pages in this issue from stereoscopic photographs recently made by the enterprising firm of Messrs. Underwood & Underwood, of this city, who seem to be making much more out of stereoscopic photographs than has ever been thought possible before.

By way of background, it continued:

This firm for a number of years has been sending their stereoscopic artists, regardless of expense, to the very ends of the earth to obtain true impressions of every great event, and to bring home to the people of this and other countries the historical and picturesque from all lands.

The reference to the "historical and picturesque" could translate as news events being historical, and tourist views as picturesque. The evolving relationship between the two is a recognisable theme of this chapter. Use of the term "stereoscopic artists" was also revealing. It was how Underwood described its stereographers, marrying the idea that stereoscopy and art were integral to each other. The *Leslie's Weekly* article concluded by pointing out that stereoscopic photographs had previously thought of as a means of entertainment, but now:

... we hear of the pictures being rapidly introduced into university and private libraries, where they are made to serve an educational purpose."<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>141</sup> "Value of Stereoscopic Photographs," *Leslie's Weekly*, April 21, 1900, Accessible Archives.

The final sentence strongly echoed claims made by Underwood in the advertisement for its *Stereoscopic Tours* highlighted earlier linking stereoscopy with education. This reference may have formed part of the company's commercial arrangement with the paper to supply its photographs from South Africa. Even so, the greater significance of its editorial was that a prominent American illustrated weekly highlighted what it regarded as a new development in press photography. It was happy to let its readers know that Underwood's stereoscopic "true impressions of every great event" had a contribution to make to its editorial and illustrative coverage.

As to what this latest batch of Mackern's photographs portrayed, a majority were of the type highlighted by war artist William Wollen in his remarks about the camera for *The Friend*.

What it can do, and does, is scenes which are more or less peaceful, camp views, incidents in regimental life and also bits on the line of march.

In this case, the double-page *Leslie's Weekly* layout featured British regiments including the Warwickshire, Yorkshire, and Royal Artillery. Pictured in familiar military settings, soldiers were marching, on horseback, and posing with firearms and munitions. Evidence of stereoscopic technique was clear in the largest photograph, "A Bird's Eye View ...." in which Mackern placed a seated, helmeted soldier in the immediate foreground, setting off the location's background topography to best effect. Simultaneously, the qualities required of a tourist view were employed to illustrate the spectacular field location occupied by the "Twelfth Brigade of English Troops in South Africa."

By contrast, a further six photographs grouped together on a separate page portrayed groups of British soldiers above the headline "Tommy Atkins and His Bittah Beer." These included the irregular Remington Scouts seen "Toasting the Queen in a Wrecked Boer Farmhouse."<sup>142</sup> Such photographs can be viewed as

---

<sup>142</sup> "Tommy Atkins and His Bittah Beer," *Leslie's Weekly*, April 21, 1900.

For a report on the difficulties facing both British Army and the Boers in sourcing supplies of drinking water, see "Thirsty Soldiers in South Africa," *Leslie's Weekly*, May 5, 1900.



representations of imperial power in a reassuring context, that “our boys” were winning and had time to mark this feat with a celebratory drink. Visually, a degree of semi-formal posing was involved in shots organised for the benefit of the camera. One photograph though was of a different order. It further underlined difficulties faced by photographers working amid battlefield conditions and wanting to portray what was happening on the ground for their various audiences. Mackern’s “action” photograph, captioned “The Warwicks Charging a Kopje Under Deadly Fire,” displayed evidence of being staged for the camera. Soldiers were carrying rifles with fixed bayonets. Posed in standing and crouching positions, one had his arm raised above his head as if just hit by a sniper’s bullet (figure 19).

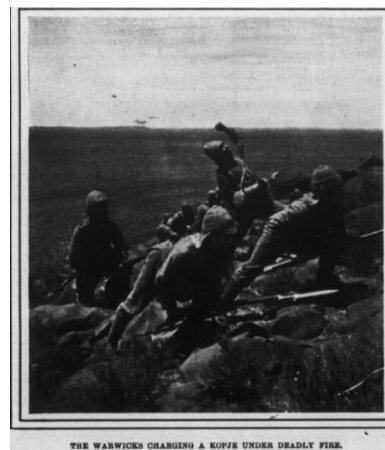


Figure 19. “The Warwicks Charging a Kopje Under Deadly Fire.”  
*Leslie’s Weekly*, April 21, 1900.

The difficulty in photographing battle scenes during the South African War prompted coverage elsewhere in the mainstream press. *Scribner’s Magazine*, Mackern’s other employer, carried an article in its March issue headlined “The Fighting with Methuen’s Division.” Its correspondent H.J. Whigham, also covering the conflict for the *Morning Post* and *The Standard*, encapsulated the issue as it manifested itself at Modder River:

A photograph of this battle would reveal nothing but a bare stretch of veldt with a line of willows and poplars in the background.

Not a Boer could be seen, and even our own men were almost invisible as they lay there in sand coloured khaki.”<sup>143</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> *Scribner’s Magazine*, March 1900, 271, cited in Harrington, *British Artists*, 275.

Another of his observations, that “many people have had ideas of photographing a battle,” distilled a dilemma facing those employed to illustrate the fighting. A willingness to publish an obviously staged photograph, like “The Warwicks Charging A Kopje Under Deadly Fire,” highlighted the mixed visual economy at the start of the twentieth century. What is more difficult to assess is how audiences viewed this style of image and its inherent untruthfulness. A readership familiar with drawings as self-evident constructions were now viewing posed photographs which were also constructions. The challenge of capturing scenes portraying action also applied to delivering a series of stereoscopic views. Given the commercial imperative of matching or exceeding audience expectations, it is no surprise that Underwood’s photographic approach willingly employed staged battlefield scenes. This was in part because Mackern as the company’s stereographer had not been in South Africa for key episodes such as the sieges of Kimberley, Ladysmith, and Mafeking. As a result, there were gaps in Underwood’s photographic coverage of the subject. This required relevant views, even if they were staged after the event.<sup>144</sup> A representative example of a staged scene, highlighted by other studies, was titled “The Dying Bugler’s Last Call – A Battlefield Incident, Gras Pan, South Africa” (figure 20).<sup>145</sup>



Figure 20. “The Dying Bugler’s Last Call - A Battlefield Incident, Gras Pan, South Africa.”  
National Museum of Science & Media / Science & Society Picture Library.

<sup>144</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 63.

<sup>145</sup> Warner, *Cultural History*, 218.

Another example is “The Worcesters Charging a Kopje and Facing Death near Norval’s Pont, South Africa,” cited in Emanoel Lee, *To the Bitter End: A Photographic History of the Boer War 1899-1902* (London: Viking Penguin, 1985), 4-5.

It showed the bugler, instrument in hand, cradled in the arms of a colleague. Draped around the rocky outcrop were other soldiers. Looking at their uniforms, this tableau may have been created by Mackern with help from “the good fellows of British Army” who he later thanked in his memoir “for the many courtesies extended to me.”<sup>146</sup> This genre of symbolic and sentimental photograph was popular with the Victorian public. Its presence in a set of stereocards was a commercial imperative. Looking at his photography prior to working for Underwood, Mackern used a similar staged approach in *Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest*, his 1897 book of military-themed photographs. One image titled “The Last Call” featured a lone soldier, knelt in the act of sounding a bugle. Again, the figures of several supine colleagues lay nearby, this time amidst a grove of trees. The body of a horse was also visible in the foreground beneath one of the soldiers (figure 21).<sup>147</sup>



Figure 21. “The Last Call.”  
*Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest* (Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897).

The photographic similarities between both scenes in terms of title, style, and mood were striking. “The Dying Bugler’s Last Call” was a far from isolated example of a staged view. Quoted in the *BJP* about his photography in South Africa, Mackern included the titles of what he described as “some of the most remarkable stereoscopic photographs ever seen.” These included “‘The Last Drop’ – A Scene on the Battlefield at Dordrecht.” Here the bugler figure was replaced by a uniformed

---

<sup>146</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, x.

<sup>147</sup> Mackern, *Fort Sheridan*, unnumbered.

soldier, evidently wounded and nearing his final breath, being given a drink from a canteen of water.<sup>148</sup> That this photograph was staged at a later date was confirmed by the caption for the resulting Underwood stereocard, dating the event to “Dec. 30th, 1899.” At that point, as highlighted earlier, Mackern was still in Cape Town trying to secure the necessary permissions to photograph at the front with the British army. This fact though would not have been known about or given any credence by audiences viewing the image stereoscopically or in the illustrated press.

Alongside staged battlefield scenes, Underwood made attempts to convey more realistically the horrors and consequences of warfare. Mackern took stereoscopic photographs at military hospitals and locations where the medical corps treated the wounded. These images later took their place in the company’s *British-Boer War* stereocard series, some published by the illustrated press (figure 22).<sup>149</sup>



Figure 22. “The Sad Side of the War in South Africa ... From Stereoscopic Photographs, Copyright, 1900, by Underwood & Underwood, New York.”  
*Leslie's Weekly*, June 9, 1900.

<sup>148</sup> See “The Last Drop ...,” Rijksmuseum Collection, accessed November 21, 2020, <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-F-F08911>

<sup>149</sup> For a discussion of this topic, see “The Injured” in Lee, *Bitter End*, 66-84.

Despite the camera's greater proximity to the blood-and-guts realities of warfare, the results still have a formal, posed quality. Above the crass headline "The Sad Side of the War in South Africa," *Leslie's Weekly* devoted a full page to six photographs taken in a variety of hospital and front-line locations. In one, captioned "In the Operating Room of the Wynberg Hospital, Cape Town," a small group gathered around a supine shirt-sleeved figure, his face shielded from the camera lens. In another, captioned "After the Operation - Taking the Patient from the Operating-Room," a stretcher bearer was stood to attention rather than in mid-stride as one might expect in a more naturalistic image. The photographs' press appearance suggested some effort editorially to show casualties' treatment.

As a genre, successful treatment thanks to the wonders of medical science is now a classic aspect of war propaganda. A relevant contemporary example is the reporting of military victims of roadside mines being able to resume their lives using prosthetic limbs.<sup>150</sup> These images contrasted with other photographs that emerged after the British military disaster at Spion Kop earlier in the South African War. Stretcher bearers were photographed carrying the corpses of hundreds of Scottish Highlanders. The high sales during 1900 of illustrated magazines like *Pearson's War Pictures* supported the belief there was a public appetite for such imagery.<sup>151</sup>

By mid-May 1900, Kroonstad as the temporary capital of the Orange Free State had surrendered to the British. Correspondents, special artists, and photographers were not the only media present to record the moment when Lord Roberts arrived at the head of the British forces. A silent two-minute film clip in the vaults of the British Film Institute shows Roberts on a distinctive white horse, crossing a river amidst a column of mounted troops.<sup>152</sup> Viewing this archive recording, the threat posed by moving pictures to static forms of illustration and even three-dimensional ones was

---

<sup>150</sup> In the *Cormoran Strike* series of detective novels by Robert Galbraith (aka J.K. Rowling). Strike lost half his leg in a bomb attack in Afghanistan and uses a prosthetic limb.

<sup>151</sup> Morgan, "The Boer War," 9.

<sup>152</sup> "The Surrender of Kroonstad to Lord Roberts," BFI Player, accessed October 29, 2020, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-the-surrender-of-kroonstad-to-lord-roberts-1900-online>



graphically illustrated. Mackern was present with his stereoscopic camera and described events at Kroonstad in his memoir:

Some four miles from the town, under the shade of a single gum-tree, Lord Roberts awaited the coming of the Landdrost [Chief Magistrate] to tender the formal surrender; grouped about nearby were his Staff and foreign attachés.

After some little wait a carriage came out from the town, conveying the city dignitaries. In a few moments the formality was over, and we all expected to march in immediately.

However, according to Mackern, there was a delay while the Guards Brigade arrived to lead the assembled troops into Kroonstad. It was this moment that *Black and White* featured in a double-page spread on June 23 titled “The Entry into Kroonstad - The Guards March Past Lord Roberts.” Rather than reproduce the photograph taken by Mackern and supplied to the paper by Underwood, *Black and White’s* artist Charles M. Sheldon used the “copyright stereo-photograph” as the basis for his drawing (figure 23).

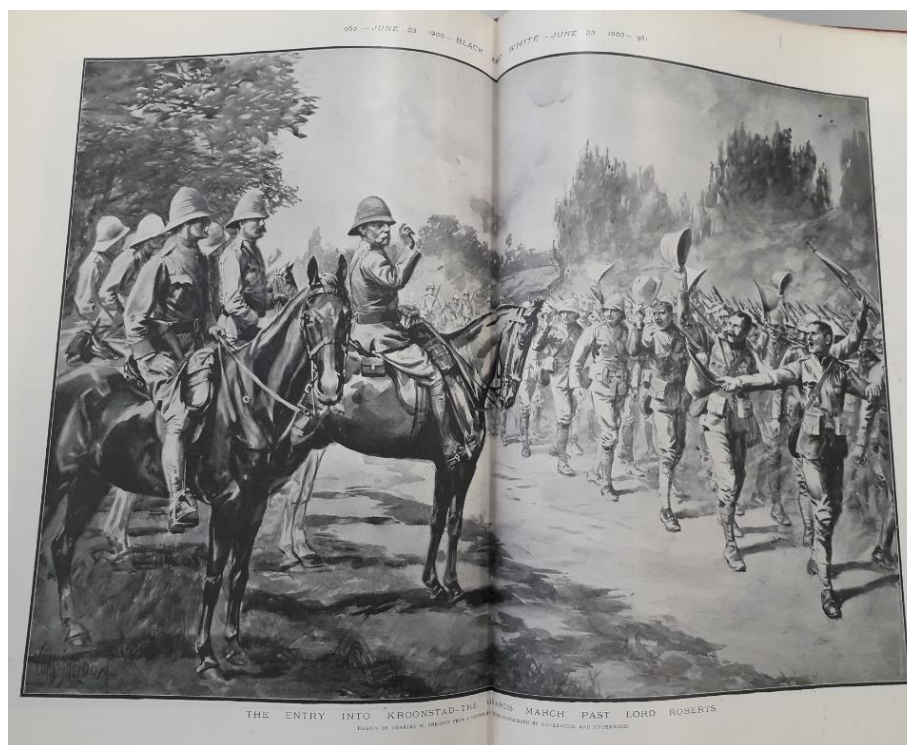


Figure 23. “The Entry into Kroonstad - The Guards March Past.”  
*Black and White*, June 23, 1900.

The point-of-view in Sheldon's drawing suggests that Mackern's original photograph offered a similar close-up perspective. But it was clearly one the paper's editors felt a war artist would convey more effectively. This decision illustrated the symbiotic relationship that stereoscopy had at this point with emerging visual norms of "news" and their representation in the press.

In early June, after several months of military activity, Lord Roberts' army march reached Pretoria, the captured capital of the Transvaal. In the words of Mackern, this signalled "the breaking up of the cable and picture brigade of the war."<sup>153</sup> At this point, the conflict was deemed to have effectively ended, even though it entered a "guerrilla" phase that lasted until peace was declared in May 1902. Among Mackern's photographs taken at this point was one published by *Black and White* in its edition of August 4, 1900 (figure 24).

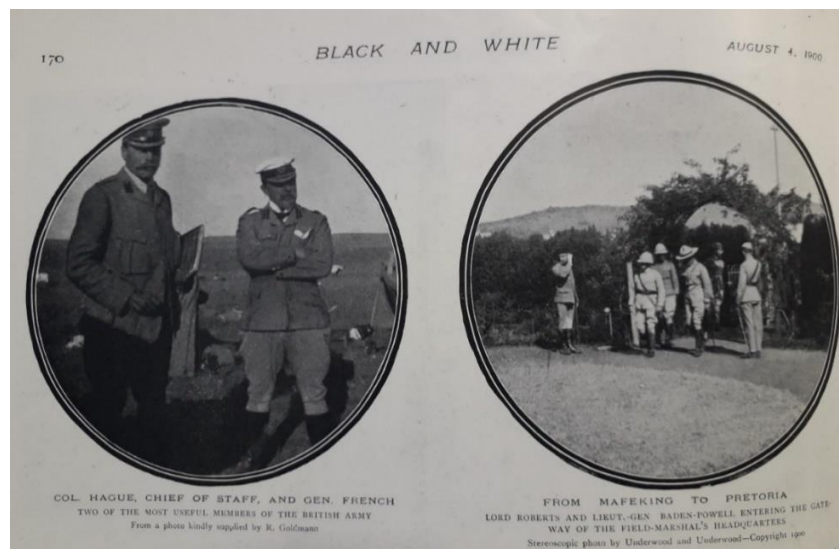


Figure 24. "From Mafeking to Pretoria ... Stereoscopic Photo by Underwood and Underwood" (right). *Black and White*, August 4, 1900.

Captioned "From Mafeking To Pretoria," Lord Roberts was pictured with Colonel Robert Baden-Powell, "entering the gateway of the Field Marshal's headquarters." Earlier in the campaign, Baden-Powell commanded British forces at the siege of Mafeking. On its relief, the British press treated him as a hero. As indicated by

<sup>153</sup> Mackern, *Side-Lights*, 238.

Roberts' initiative with *The Friend* newspaper, the army chief was a media-friendly figure, holding relaxed press conferences with reporters and allowing them to travel freely behind British lines.<sup>154</sup> Mackern's photograph of Roberts and Baden-Powell, wearing his distinctive bush hat, captured a possibly pre-planned moment arranged with the connivance of both military men. Like his General Cronje "scoop," the presence of Underwood's stereographer was a key factor in its creation.

In terms of the photograph's composition, Mackern noticed that the pair were walking through an archway, echoing the format of a stereocard. In terms of presentation by *Black and White*, his "stereoscopic photo" was in a roundel. Visually, the effect was to direct the viewer's gaze as if looking through a single lens telescope. The shot though had nothing in its foreground to help its three-dimensional impact, so its roundel framing seemed designed to highlight that shortcoming. Instead, the image's value as both stereo view and press photograph lay in portraying two prominent figures in the narrative of the South African War at close quarters. Here, Mackern's role as a stereographer was less significant than the fact he was present to record Roberts and Baden-Powell in a joint public appearance. As a plate-camera photograph, its technical quality was in marked contrast to another military portrait on the same page. "Col. Hague, Chief of Staff, and Gen. French" had the physical characteristics of a snapshot by a member of the military using a roll-film camera. In summary, a stereographer who was a member of the international press corps here employed a recognisable news photography style.

One further photograph taken by Mackern for Underwood reached the press around the same time. "Latest Portrait of Lord Roberts" was taken outside his headquarters in Pretoria but made no mention of the uniformed man in a turban on the steps behind him, armed with a sword. The *ILN* included the full-length portrait on a page featuring photographs headlined "Personal" (figure 25).

---

<sup>154</sup> Morgan, "The Boer War," 6.



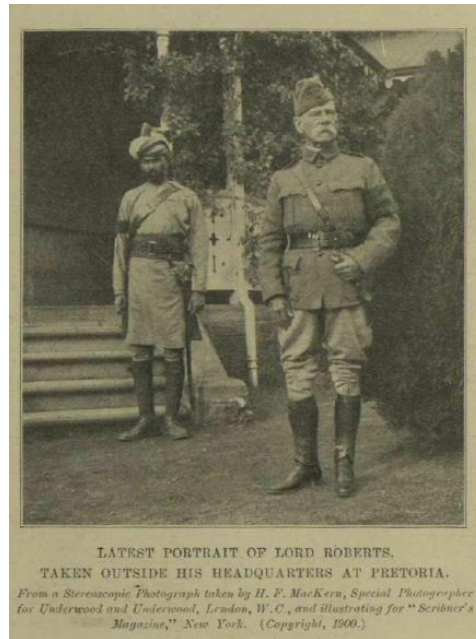


Figure 25. "Latest Portrait of Lord Roberts."  
*ILN*, August 11, 1900.

The caption's wording differentiated Mackern's various roles. "From a stereoscopic photograph taken by H.F. Mackern, Special Photographer for Underwood and Underwood, London, W.C., and illustrating for *Scribner's Magazine*, New York (Copyright 1900)." This encapsulated the argument made throughout this chapter. Mackern was working as a stereoscopic photographer for Underwood within the press corps and simultaneously servicing a range of media platforms.

Aside from its value to the company as a stereocard and a photograph for the press, it proved commercially valuable to John Murray as publishers of Mackern's memoir. The portrait appeared as the book's frontispiece captioned "Lord Roberts and his Indian servant." This description echoed a long-established orientalist narrative featuring subservient figures in imperial situations of power and prestige. When Underwood published a stereocard of the shot, it made no mention of the man accompanying Roberts. A similar shot, credited to a Johannesburg photographer, made the front page of *Black & White Budget*. The paper identified the figure as the commander-in-chief's "faithful orderly, Duafadar."<sup>155</sup> Once given agency, Duafadar's

<sup>155</sup> The National Portrait Gallery, London, attributes Mackern's photograph for Underwood to "possibly by Horace Walter Nicholls." Nicholls was a Johannesburg photographer, who supplied a

distinctive figure can be seen in the BFI clip highlighted earlier, riding alongside Roberts on the approach into Kroonstad.

### *“At the Seat of War”*

At this point, Mackern’s involvement in stereographing the South African War for Underwood ended. As a photographer, he highlighted three key factors necessary to success “at the seat of war.” As he discovered, exceptional credentials were necessary to obtain the necessary military permits. Secondly, the natural conditions experienced in South Africa were enough to discourage even the greatest photography enthusiast. In an example of the heroic war photographer, he described these as:

A sun that burns as through a magnifying glass, dust that compels one to wear glasses most of the time, and a hot wind sweeping over the bleak kopjes and barren *Karoo* [a semi-arid plateau region of southwest South Africa], blistering the face and cracking the lips, making life almost unbearable.

Lastly, he highlighted the considerable costs attached to an undertaking of this kind. His observations reported by the *BJP* prompted the periodical to note that the expense incurred had not hindered Mackern’s employer. It concluded:

... if the fates should favour his own personal efforts, Messrs. Underwood & Underwood will be able to place before the public a collection of views of the British-Boer War second to none of the best illustrated papers.<sup>156</sup>

Here, it seemed the writer was anxious to differentiate between a “collection of views” produced by a stereoscopic photography company and those similarly produced for and by “the best illustrated papers.” These included photographs from hand-held cameras issued to correspondents and special artists, and those taken to South Africa by members of the military. The implication of the *BJP*’s comments was clear. As photographs obtained from Underwood stereographs appeared regularly in

---

similar image of Lord Roberts and Duafadar to *Black & White Budget*. See NPG x26385 and x137824, National Portrait Gallery, London.

<sup>156</sup> “Stereoscopy,” *BJP*, May 4, 1900, Special Collections, De Montfort University, Leicester.

those “best illustrated papers,” the company’s images were of equal if not better quality. This was a significant statement in further understanding the impact of stereoscopy on early photography for the press.

For Mackern, the experience of working for Underwood seems to have raised a key question about his own professional status. What sort of photographer was he? This issue arose in an exchange of letters with his publisher about his memoir.<sup>157</sup> It was one that reflected wider tensions surrounding photography for the press. In March 1901, Mackern was still working for Underwood. A fluent Spanish speaker, he photographed King Alphonso and his mother, the Queen Regent, at the Royal Palace in Madrid.<sup>158</sup> Writing from the city, he strongly objected to an idea suggested by Murray for the memoir’s title as *Snapshots in War Time: The Experiences of an American Photographer in South Africa*. Despite his publisher’s stellar reputation, Mackern did not hold back in making his feelings known:

Dear Mr. Murray ... I must say it does not appeal to me ... The new title seems to me most commonplace, hackneyed and not one to arouse curiosity as to the contents of the book.

He then pinpointed the heart of his objection.

There are two terms relative to the work I pursue [sic] which I particularly detest and seem to jar on me. Snapshots and photographer.

These I admit may only be personal whines and should be cast aside if these terms are necessary to the success of the book. Am I wrong?<sup>159</sup>

His objection to the term “snapshots” may have been rooted in its associations with hand-held cameras and the untrained efforts of the Kodak amateur, reflecting badly on his status as a professional. As for the term “photographer,” his opinion had changed. As already highlighted, he listed his occupation as “photographer” during

---

<sup>157</sup> Thanks to Kirsty McHugh, Curator, John Murray Archives and Publishers’ Collections, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, for her help in accessing H.F. Mackern’s letters.

<sup>158</sup> “Snap Shots,” *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901, 21, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1elli/page/21/mode/1up>

<sup>159</sup> H.F. Mackern to John Murray, March 2, 1901, John Murray Archive & Publishers’ Collections, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

the journey from New York via London to Cape Town. Spending several months as part of the international press corps amidst seasoned war correspondents and artists may have influenced his perspective. To remedy the situation, Mackern made alternative title suggestions to Murray including *Behind the Camera in South Africa*, and *Views and Views: An American with his Camera in South Africa*. When the book appeared soon afterwards, both “snapshots” and “photographer” had gone. The new title incorporated another of Mackern’s suggestions, *Side-Lights on the March*, and “photographer” had been replaced with “journalist” in a new sub-title, *The Experiences of an American Journalist in South Africa* (figure 26).

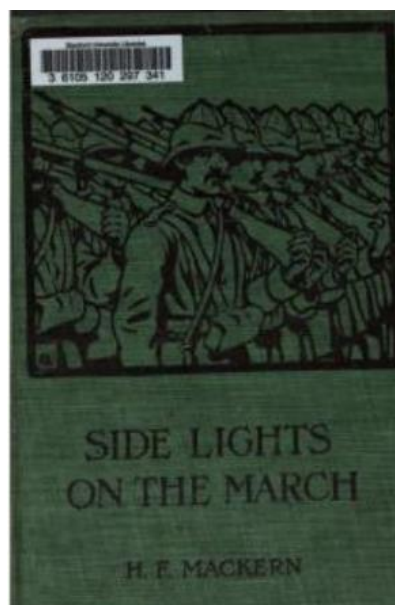


Figure 26. Front cover of *Side-Lights on the March* by H.F. Mackern. Published in 1901 by John Murray, London.

Mackern’s memoir entered a crowded market. More than a dozen war correspondents published books about their South Africa experiences. These included two by Winston Churchill, reporting for the *Morning Post*, and four by Julian Ralph, one of the editors of *The Friend*.<sup>160</sup> Along with its success placing South African War photographs with the illustrated press, Underwood was alive to other commercial sources of revenue from its stereoscopic project. Several months later,

---

<sup>160</sup> McCrachen, “*British War Correspondents*,” 116.

Mackern wrote to his publishers from Cologne, Germany. He reported an exchange with Norman V. Cornish, an Underwood manager in London:

His agents seem to be very enthusiastic about taking up the sale of my book in conjunction with the series of war views."<sup>161</sup>

Mackern's reference to "war views" again underlined his role as a stereographer working within that photographic frame of reference. But as analysis has shown, his membership of the international press corps informed and influenced the photographs that he produced. This factor helped shape their stereoscopic "look" and visual appearance in the pages of the illustrated press.

The photographer's career with Underwood was short-lived. In April 1902, he took ill with peritonitis while working for the company in Mexico City and died in the American Hospital there aged thirty-eight (figure 27).<sup>162</sup>



Figure 27. Mr. H. F. Mackern, Underwood stereographer.  
*Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1902.

---

<sup>161</sup> Mackern to Murray, August 28, 1901.

<sup>162</sup> I am grateful to Dr. Michael Thompson of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, Durham University, and Kate Teesdale of Yes'n'You España, Barcelona, Spain for their help in translating H.F. Mackern's death certificate. Dated April 12, 1902, it was issued by Doctor R. Reygadas y Vertes at the American Hospital, Mexico City, My Ancestry.

An article published shortly afterwards in the company's quarterly magazine described how "his adventures in South Africa were more thrilling than those of any war correspondent." Daniel J. Ellison, the magazine's editor, paid tribute to him as:

... an ideal operator, having courtesy, culture, persistence, a man who valued not his own life in pursuit of his calling.<sup>163</sup>

The commercial value of Mackern's work in South Africa continued after his death. In December 1902, Underwood in London registered the copyright of more than thirty of his war photographs, their titles providing further links to the stereos that he took.<sup>164</sup> The stated facts about the medical condition that ended Mackern's life contrasted with various heroic myths that attached themselves to his name in the years that followed. By 1907, a syndicated article in the American press appeared with the sensational headline "Soldiers of the Camera Brave Many Deaths to Illustrate the News." It featured several stereoscopic photographers employed by Underwood and described their exploits on the company's behalf in terms of derring-do. Highlighting Mackern's work during the South African War, it attributed the photographer's death to "jungle fever in the interior of Mexico where he was making an astonishing series of photographs."<sup>165</sup>

By 1934, a more fantastical story took flight when James Barnes, his "chum on the march," published an autobiography, *From Then till Now*. Recalling his time in South Africa, Barnes singled out "my friend Mackern, accredited to *Scribner's Magazine*, and the best photographer with the British Army." He claimed Mackern:

...went alone on a photographic expedition to Central America and disappeared; nothing was ever heard from him again.

Given these and other blatant falsehoods, this chapter has attempted to set the record straight on the stereoscopic contribution of H.F. "Harry" Mackern and

---

<sup>163</sup> Daniel J. Ellison, "Stereoscopic Photographers in the Field," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1902, 24, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicpho2elli/page/22/mode/2up>

<sup>164</sup> See COPY 1/458/407-38, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 18, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C9416912/next/C9416911>

<sup>165</sup> "Soldiers of the Camera...", *Washington Times Magazine*, December 15, 1907, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1907-12-15/ed-1/seq-47/>

Underwood as his employer to the evolution of early press photography.<sup>166</sup>

## *Conclusion*

This examination of Underwood's operations as a stereoscopic company, primarily during the South African War, shows how 1900 was truly a time of transition for the press in terms of photography. At this point, readers had to switch between visual styles, not only from page-to-page but within individual pages. The heady illustrative mix on offer included the imaginative works of special artists, some informed by photography. Photographs produced by staff working for individual publications joined snapshots taken by the public and members of the military with access to the battlefield. Now, stereoscopic photographers can be added to further complicate the picture.

Their primary aim was to create views, shown to best effect in a stereoscope or hand-held viewer. But as this chapter has proved, Underwood's extensive role in stereographing the South African War of 1899-1902 had several dimensions. In terms of early press photography, its photographer armed with a high-quality glass-plate camera was present as part of the international press corps to both witness and help create newsworthy events. This added to the supply of topical photographs that looked visually appealing in the pages of the illustrated press as it refined its use of halftone printing technology. Stereoscopy's contribution continued to appear in the pages of the press during the first decade of the twentieth century. This was a trend that continued even as new, lighter cameras like the *Speed Graphic* made by Graflex became the go-to gadget for press photographers.<sup>167</sup>

Despite difficulties it faced in stereographing the conflict in South Africa, Underwood's ability to access influential and powerful networks helped it to reach the people and places it wanted to portray photographically. This was in part due to the

---

<sup>166</sup> James Barnes, *From Then till Now: Anecdotal Portraits and Transcript Pages from Memory's Tablets* (New York and London: D. Appleton-Century, 1934), 317.

<sup>167</sup> Pritchard, *50 Cameras*, 73.

role played by key figures it engaged with such as Colonel James Stowe, the American consul-general, Sir Alfred Milner, the British high commissioner, and Lord Roberts as head of the British army. In the next chapter, this study analyses this networking aspect of Underwood's photographic business. It traces how the company successfully negotiated a way into the heart of the establishment in Britain. This culminated in the taking of a stereoscopic photograph of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra at Buckingham Palace after their coronation in 1902. The role played by photographic connections made by Underwood in America during the 1890s helps in understanding how it was able to supply this image to the world's press. In turn, the spotlight turns for the first time on another unheralded member of Underwood's photographic network who helped the company achieve its commercial ambitions.





## 2. The Business of Networking

### *Introduction*

On the afternoon of August 9, 1902, a small and select group of photographers took up their positions at Buckingham Palace in London to await King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. After returning from their coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey, the couple took a few moments to pose in their robes and crowns for the assembled cameras. As well as historic, this occasion was seminal for two reasons. Firstly, one of the photographers given access to Buckingham Palace produced a three-dimensional stereograph of the moment (figure 28).



Figure 28. "The Crowned King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Coronation Robes..."  
Copyright 1902 by Underwood & Underwood. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Secondly, a photograph taken from that stereograph circulated to the world's press. However, when it appeared in print, it did not feature the name of a favoured court photographer or photographic company granted a royal warrant. Instead, it was credited to Underwood, the American stereoscopic photography company that is the focus of this study.

In an interview in 1937 to mark the coronation of King George VI, Bert Underwood reminisced about its equivalent occasion more than three decades earlier. In so doing, the company's founding partner created a misleading impression of its photography of the royal family in Britain at the turn of the twentieth century. As the front-page headline in the *Arizona Daily Star* put it:

Bert Underwood Remembers How He Took Only Photographs Which Showed Edward VII Coronation.<sup>168</sup>

Despite the headline's implication, neither still nor moving picture cameras were inside Westminster Abbey during Edward VII's coronation ceremony. However, Charles Urban, an entrepreneurial filmmaker, used a camera within the abbey precincts and filmed the King and Queen on their arrival and departure. His footage was then used in a "studio version" of the service made by the French film-maker Georges Méliès that employed stage props, actors, and a good deal of imagination.<sup>169</sup>

Also entrepreneurial in ambition, Underwood's stereoscopic photography project built around this landmark event was far from being a one-man show. Rather, it was a true company effort, employing a team of managers and stereoscopic photographers as well as utilising a complex network of worldwide contacts. To trace the origins of Underwood's successful photography of the royal family in Britain, a grasp of contemporaneous events across the Atlantic is crucial. Indeed, it was experience gained during earlier decades and connections made in the United States that proved invaluable in servicing the world's press with photographs derived from its royal stereos.

This chapter takes an approach to considering such networks suggested by the

---

<sup>168</sup> "Bert Underwood Remembers....," *Arizona Daily Star*, May 12, 1937, Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum, Box 1, Folder 8.

My thanks to Ross Knapper and Stephanie Hofner for their assistance with the Underwood & Underwood Collection during my research visit to the George Eastman Museum, Rochester, New York.

<sup>169</sup> Frances Dimond, *Developing the Picture. Queen Alexandra and the Art of Photography* (London: Royal Collection Publications, 2004), 88-90.

business historians Philip Scranton and Patrick Fridensen. It was one they described as “a thick soup of intentions, arrangements and connections that facilitated business activity.”<sup>170</sup> Utilising this perspective helps analyse how a company with its roots in America used domestic and international networks made up of business and personal contacts to secure access to the heart of the British establishment.<sup>171</sup> In so doing, it executed and circulated not one, but a series of stereoscopic portraits featuring the royal family to a global audience via the pages of the world’s press. The roots of this achievement date to America in the 1890s and Underwood’s photographic relationship with US President William McKinley and his White House advisers. It was this relationship that laid the foundations for the company’s photographic coverage of Edward VII’s coronation in 1902.

As is often the case with founders’ accounts, a long-established company narrative painted a highly selective and incomplete picture of this process. Instead, an alternative version of these events not only reveals the identity of a stereographer integral to Underwood’s portrayal of the royal family. It also confirms his wider involvement in the company’s activities as an entrepreneurial supplier of photographs to the press. The events of this chapter portray an evolving media landscape, and illuminate the role played by a regional network of photographers in Britain who supplied commercial images to London’s Fleet Street as a centre of newspaper printing and publishing. It was an industry that increasingly featured and employed stereoscopic photography to illustrate and tell news stories as well as creating headlines around images that were stories in themselves.

### *Underwood and the White House*

In America, the election of William McKinley in 1896 led to the creation of an organised press strategy built around the new president. Though his inauguration

---

<sup>170</sup> Philip Scranton and Patrick Fridensen, *Reimagining Business History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2013), 182.

<sup>171</sup> My consideration of networks was informed by James R. Ryan’s article “Placing Early Photography: The Work of Robert Hunt in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain,” *History of Photography* 41, no. 4 (2017): 343-361.

was the first such ceremony captured on film, aspects of the print media were in a state of disarray.<sup>172</sup> At this point, there was no organised relationship between the White House and correspondents in Washington, DC, who represented the major newspapers and wire services. While the chief executive had always been a source of news, the organisation surrounding his activities now took on more structured form. During McKinley's four-and-a-half years in office, correspondents gained working space within the White House itself and the president's staff set up routine procedures. This approach enabled the press to be both checked and controlled. Statements and speeches were available in advance, and the corps of journalists, assembled to report on events co-ordinated by the White House, was managed as a group. Among the most successful of these new practices was one that took advantage of frequent train excursions by McKinley around the country. Their simple aim was to create news and generate headlines.<sup>173</sup> A key figure in implementing this strategy was George B. Cortelyou, the president's assistant secretary. In the longer term, Cortelyou became a significant figure on the American political scene serving under McKinley's predecessor, Grover Cleveland, and occupying three cabinet posts under McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt (figure 29).<sup>174</sup>



Figure 29. George Bruce Cortelyou (1862-1940) at his desk.  
Courtesy of National McKinley Birthplace Museum.

---

<sup>172</sup> Joseph W. Campbell, *The Year That Defined American Journalism: 1897 and the Clash of Paradigms* (London: Routledge, 2006), xiv.

<sup>173</sup> Stephen Ponder, "The President Makes News: William McKinley and the First Presidential Press Corps, 1897-1901," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1994): 823.

<sup>174</sup> "Geo. B. Cortelyou, Financier, 78, Dies," *New York Times*, October 24, 1940, <https://nyti.ms/2Vo1s2h>

How Cortelyou went about changing McKinley's relationship with the press brought him into contact with Underwood as a stereoscopic photography company. In October 1898, a ten-day trip to the Midwest was organised. Aboard the presidential train, Cortelyou spent considerable time chatting with correspondents, devising ways to make it more convenient for them to report favourably on McKinley's public appearances. At each stop, a stenographer recorded the president's remarks to the assembled crowd. This was certainly a step forward from the position a few months earlier. At the formal signing of a peace protocol ending the Spanish-American War, McKinley refused to let reporters and photographers attend the ceremony on the grounds that the press might mar the dignity of the occasion.<sup>175</sup> This new media strategy also proved beneficial to photography companies. Instrumental in Underwood's working relationship with the White House was an experienced stereographer with whom the company had worked since the 1880s. Knowledge of his background further informs understanding of this photographic ecosystem.

By his early twenties, Henry A. Strohmeyer worked in a "photograph office" in Brooklyn in his native New York.<sup>176</sup> It was a role that led to his business partnership with N. Dwight Wyman, who was also working in the city, in his case as a "salesman."<sup>177</sup> Operating from Montclair, New Jersey, the firm of Strohmeyer & Wyman specialised in stereoscopic views. It was a line of business that brought it into the orbit of the Underwood brothers. The four men were contemporaries, born in the late 1850s and early 1860s as stereoscopy first gripped the global public imagination. The collaboration between Underwood and Strohmeyer & Wyman resulted in what one commentator has described as "a close working relationship."<sup>178</sup> In 1887, as Underwood moved its head office from Ottawa, Kansas to Baltimore, Maryland, it "secured control of all the fine stereoscopic work" bearing the Strohmeyer & Wyman imprint.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>175</sup> Ponder, "President Makes News," 828-30.

<sup>176</sup> 1880 US Census, 268 Summit Street, Brooklyn, Kings, New York, line 23, My Ancestry.

<sup>177</sup> "Wyman, Dwight N," *Brooklyn Trade Directory 1883*, (New York, unknown), 1359.

<sup>178</sup> Terry Bennett, *Photography in Japan 1853-1912* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 2006), 246.

<sup>179</sup> "Stereoscopic Views," *Wilson's Photographic Magazine*, February 1, 1894, British Library.

Fifteen years later, the photographic role played by Henry Strohmeyer for Underwood with the White House was well established. Its nature was captured in May 1902 when *The Times* in Washington, DC, reported the “Latest News and Gossip in Capital Camera Circles.”<sup>180</sup> The column described a lantern slide evening hosted by George B. Cortelyou at his home. However, this was no ordinary lantern slide show. President McKinley had died six months before when shot and fatally wounded at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. Succeeded by his vice president, Theodore Roosevelt, Cortelyou became his secretary at the White House.

Among the guests at this lantern slide evening were Roosevelt himself and “some of the attachees [sic] of the executive mansion who had accompanied President McKinley on different trips around the country.” If a company like Underwood was looking for a more influential audience in front of which to demonstrate its photographic prowess, it would be hard to think of one. The article went on to describe what the audience saw, and who staged the evening’s entertainment:

The lantern slides, 125 in number, all of high technical merit and attractively coloured, are the work of Mr. J. H. [sic] Strohmeyer, vice-president of the Underwood & Underwood Co., one of the largest firms engaged in the publication of stereoscopic views in the country.<sup>181</sup>

Like Cortelyou’s relationship with Roosevelt, that of Strohmeyer’s with Underwood had recently undergone change. In 1901, Underwood became an incorporated company with the new enterprise buying out Strohmeyer & Wyman.<sup>182</sup> In the process, Strohmeyer joined the Underwood board as vice president whilst his business partner became company secretary. This left the Underwood brothers, Bert and Elmer, to take on the roles of president and treasurer respectively.<sup>183</sup>

---

<sup>180</sup> “Latest News and Gossip in Capital Camera Circles,” *Times*, Washington, DC, May 18, 1902, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87062245/1902-05-18/ed-1/seq-18/>

<sup>181</sup> The correct reporting of Henry Strohmeyer’s initials eluded many publications during his photographic career. Here it is ‘J.H.’ rather than the correct ‘H.A.’

<sup>182</sup> Douglas Heil, *The Art of Stereography: Rediscovering Vintage Three-Dimensional Images* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2016), 276.

<sup>183</sup> H. A. Strohmeyer to George B. Cortelyou [sic], February 15, 1902, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, accessed October 30, 2020, [https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-308\\_0208\\_1157/?sp=206](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-308_0208_1157/?sp=206)

Given Cortelyou's part in organising the press corps under McKinley, this lantern slide evening may have involved a degree of political strategy. Arranged for the benefit of Roosevelt as Cortelyou's new boss, it can be viewed as proactively demonstrating the White House secretary's belief in the power of stereoscopic photography, in particular that of Henry Strohmeyer and Underwood. As the report in the *Washington Times* went on to explain, the negatives used to produce the lantern slides "were collected during various trips made by President McKinley about the country, on which occasion Mr. Strohmeyer acted as official photographer." Here, the epithet "official photographer" is one that bears closer examination.

The kudos attached to photographing the president of the United States meant that individual photographers or companies enjoyed a special relationship. From the late 1880s to the 1910s, the celebrated photojournalist Frances Benjamin Johnston:

.... captured remarkable images of the White House that document the lifestyles of the first families, workers, and visitors as well as its architectural design in that period."<sup>184</sup>

In Strohmeyer's case, use of the term "official photographer" in connection with McKinley truly reflected his role. Accompanying him on several regional tours, the photographer took thousands of stereoscopic pictures whilst criss-crossing the country from state-to-state.<sup>185</sup>

These photographs were then issued as stereocards by Underwood, many using the Strohmeyer & Wyman imprint. Simultaneously, the same photographs appeared with company credits for either Underwood or Strohmeyer & Wyman alongside press reports of McKinley's activities (figure 30).

---

<sup>184</sup> "Frances Benjamin Johnston," *White House Historical Association*, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/galleries/frances-benjamin-johnston>

See Frances Benjamin Johnston, "What a Woman Can Do with a Camera," *Ladies Home Journal*, September 1897, 6-7.

<sup>185</sup> Bert Underwood, *A Stereograph Record of William McKinley as President of the United States* (New York: Underwood & Underwood, 1902), 9.



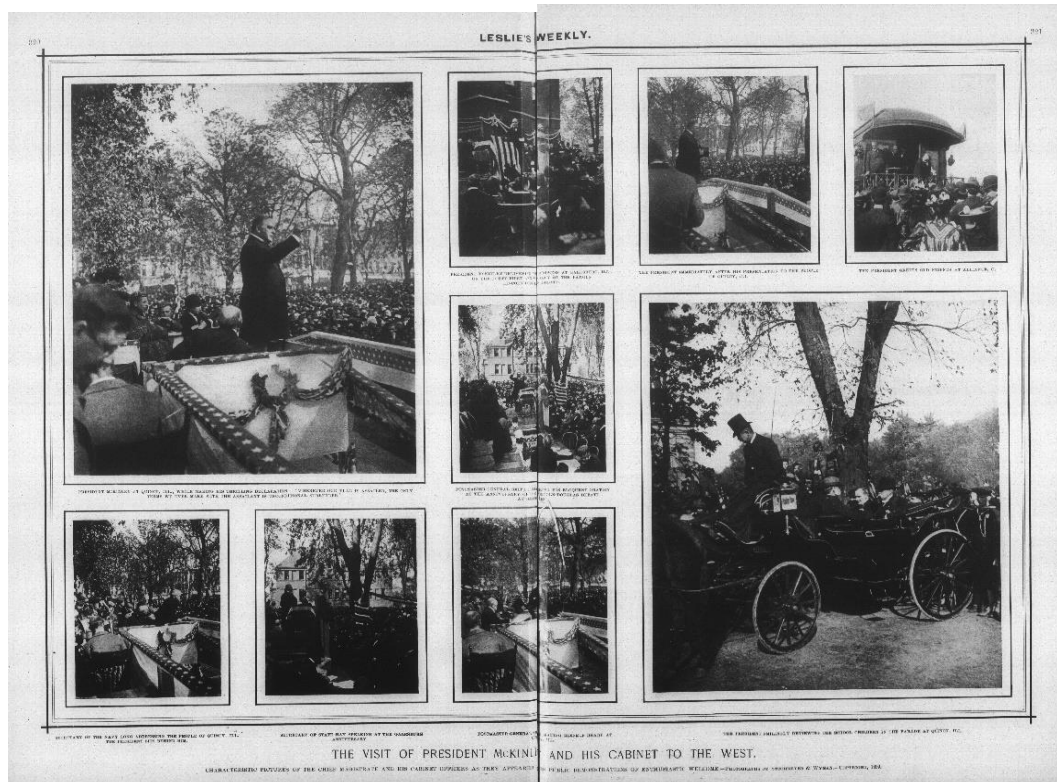


Figure 30. "The Visit of President McKinley and His Cabinet to the West."  
*Leslie's Weekly*, October 21, 1899.

These further cemented memorable photographic images of their leader in the nation's psyche. In this way, McKinley was immortalised making speeches from podia, stages, and the rear of stationary trains, attracting large and enthusiastic crowds wherever he went. The effect of spectatorship as a form of visual representation was to underline the popular standing of the subject of the photographs. In this case, it confirmed in the public mind that McKinley was willing to travel the country meeting his fellow citizens. As a strategy, it encouraged the notion that he was "one of us" and not a distant and remote figurehead. Admittedly, these presidential visits tended to follow a predictable pattern, so the photographs of them were similar in tone and content. However, it was far from the staged formality of the portrait studio. In contrast, images of McKinley "on the road" appeared far more natural and honest. It was an important distinction.

The audiences who saw these photographs in the form of stereoscopic views and through the pages of the press grew exponentially. As a vertically integrated

company, Underwood produced both stereocards and manufactured hand-held stereo viewers through which to see them. By the end of 1890s, it claimed monthly sales figures of six million stereocards and an annual production figure of more than 250,000 stereoscopes.<sup>186</sup> This commercial imperative was mirrored by the illustrated press in America that it serviced with photographs. At this point, *Leslie's Weekly* had an estimated circulation of 65,000.<sup>187</sup> But as was the case whenever a major event or disaster took place, this could double, treble, or even quadruple in size. *Collier's Weekly* coverage of the Spanish-American War featuring the photography of James H. "Jimmy" Hare boosted its circulation from 50,000 to 250,000 copies by 1900.<sup>188</sup> These large and growing audiences were not only attractive to advertisers but also to politicians and their advisers. Using photography, a persona like the president of the United States was impressed on the mind of the public, particularly those entitled to vote. As well as regularly capturing McKinley in mid-speech and mid-handshake, an experienced and talented stereoscopic photographer like Strohmeyer had an eye for the unusual human interest shot. One he included in his lantern slide presentation for Roosevelt at Cortelyou's home featured a young girl with her own "toy" camera in Arizona. The girl, "a miners [sic] little daughter," encouraged McKinley to pose for her camera which he duly did (figure 31).<sup>189</sup>



Figure 31. "A miners [sic] little daughter photographing the President."  
Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.

<sup>186</sup> Untitled, *BJP*, September 1, 1899; and "Stereoscopy in the States," *Photographic News*, October 28, 1898, Special Collections, De Montfort University, Leicester.

<sup>187</sup> "Frank Leslie's Weekly," accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.accessible-archives.com/collections/frank-leslies-weekly/>

<sup>188</sup> Gould and Greffe, *Jimmy Hare*, 23.

<sup>189</sup> For a stereocard version of "A miner's little daughter photographing the President," see Library of Congress, Washington, DC, accessed October 29, 2020, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c16509/>

Strohmeyer branded this photograph as “the most valuable in the whole collection,” presumably a reference to its commercial value in terms of popularity with the public.<sup>190</sup> It also had value for McKinley’s strategists and media advisers, portraying him as someone who could relate to small children in a style reminiscent of baby kissing. Photographic access to the White House, though hard won, had started at a propitious moment. According to Underwood, Strohmeyer first stereographed McKinley in his private office on February 11, 1898. As events would dictate, the photographer’s first official assignment took place hours before the American battleship USS *Maine* was attacked and sunk in Havana harbour, Cuba, precipitating the Spanish-American War.<sup>191</sup> Immediately, the importance of such privileged access to the twenty-fifth president of the United States became evident. *The Graphic* in London illustrated its coverage of rising political tensions between America and Spain by using Strohmeyer’s new portrait of McKinley, seated statesman-like at his desk (figure 32).

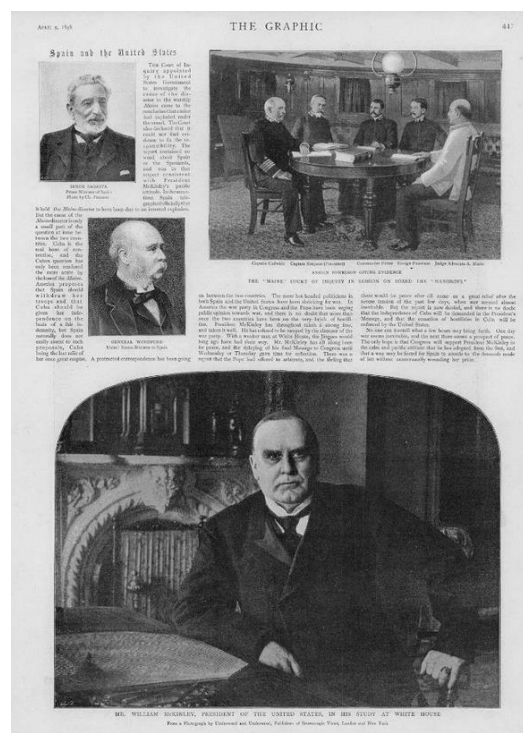


Figure 32. “Mr. William McKinley, President of The United States, in His Study at White House.” *The Graphic*, April 9, 1898.

<sup>190</sup> “Latest News and Gossip in Capital Camera Circles,” *Times*, Washington, DC, May 18, 1902, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87062245/1902-05-18/ed-1/seq-18/>

<sup>191</sup> Underwood, *McKinley*, 14.

Rather than ascribed to Strohmeyer & Wyman though, the photograph credited “Underwood and Underwood, publishers of Stereoscopic Views, London and New York.” Bearing its stereoscopic curved arch and filling the bottom half of a page, the image contrasted sharply with other illustrations on the page. A week later, the Paris-based weekly *L’Illustration* devoted its front cover to an engraving of the same Strohmeyer photograph. Captioned “M. Mac-Kinley, Président des États-Unis,” it was again credited to Underwood.<sup>192</sup> These varied uses in Britain and France, either as a photograph or the basis of an engraving, reflected the mixed-image economy of the time. The growing international scope of Underwood’s photography for the press was apparent at this early stage in its genesis. Simultaneously, stereocard versions were issued featuring further shots of McKinley taken in the same White House location. Marked “Strohmeyer & Wyman, Publishers, New York, N.Y.,” and “sold only by Underwood & Underwood,” these further underlined the close working relationship between the two companies highlighted earlier (figure 33).

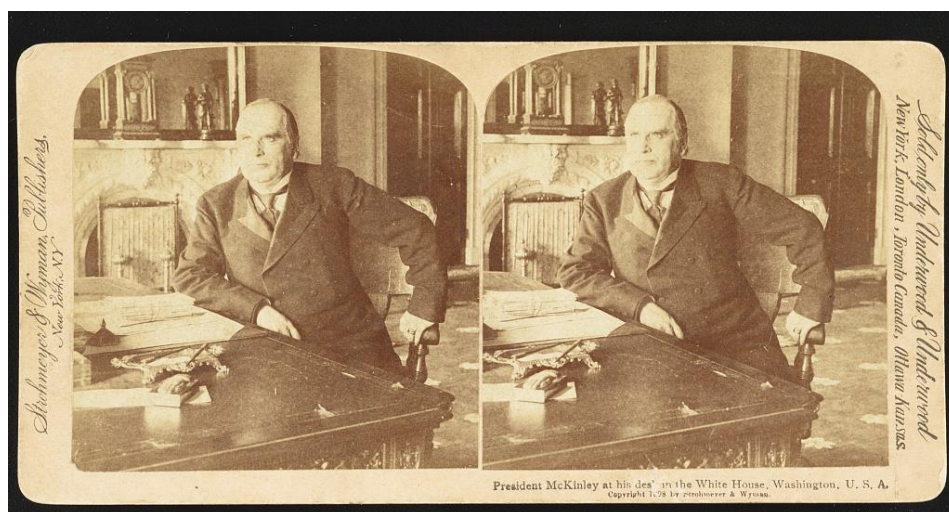


Figure 33. “President McKinley at his desk in the White House, Washington, U.S.A., copyright 1898 Strohmeyer & Wyman. Sold only by Underwood & Underwood.”

By using its original stereoscopic negatives, Underwood was able to simultaneously supply the markets for stereocards, lantern slides, as well as press photographs. This created an efficient and commercially attractive business proposition as it tried to expand its presence in all these media formats. As to how Underwood’s

<sup>192</sup> “M. Mac-Kinley, Président des États-Unis,” *L’Illustration*, April 16, 1898, British Library.

photography integrated with the White House press corps, this evolved during McKinley's time in office. The question of who Strohmeyer worked for and whether the White House exercised editorial control over his photographic output is difficult to unravel, never mind fully fathom. However, further understanding of this complex issue can be gained from analysis of references to the stereographer in official White House itineraries and press reports.

A presidential tour to Georgia and Alabama in December 1898 featuring "press correspondents" from nine newspapers and a single news agency included "H. A. Strohmeyer, photographer."<sup>193</sup> A few days into the tour, the presidential party reached Savannah, Georgia. There, the *Morning News* carried further details of those occupying carriages in a procession through the city. "Carriage no. 16" included "Mr. H. A. Strohmeyer, official photographer" while accredited members of the press occupied the four carriages ahead of him. This arrangement suggested a perceivable difference in status.<sup>194</sup> By the spring of 1901, a change in this relationship had occurred.

When the president visited the Pacific coast, Strohmeyer as McKinley's "official photographer" was an integral member of the press corps. As before, representatives of the press including agencies such as Associated Press, Scripps-McRae Newsgathering Association, and named newspapers and illustrated weeklies joined the presidential party. On this occasion though, Strohmeyer was not the only photographer in attendance. Three were associated with illustrated publications. John C. Hemment of *Harper's Weekly*, Robert L. Dunn of *Leslie's Weekly*, and James H. "Jimmy" Hare of *Collier's Weekly* were familiar names in the fast-developing world of press photography.<sup>195</sup> Together with respected correspondents

---

<sup>193</sup> "Gone to the South," *Evening Star*, Washington, DC, December 13, 1898, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1898-12-13/ed-1/seq-1/>

<sup>194</sup> "Coming of M'Kinley," *Morning News*, Savannah, Georgia, December 17, 1898, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063034/1898-12-17/ed-1/seq-8/>

<sup>195</sup> "At the White House," *Evening Star*, Washington, DC, April 27, 1901, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1901-04-27/ed-1/seq-1/>

For a photographer's perspective of the US Presidency during this period, see Robert Lee Dunn, "Making Presidents by Photography," *Appleton's Magazine*, September 1907, 259-68, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015024219217&view=1up&seq=277&q1=Dunn>



from New York and Washington, DC, this gathering was newsworthy enough to merit being photographed. The picture, heavily retouched to enable publication, appeared in *The Call*, San Francisco above the headline “Newspaper Men Who Accompany President on Tour of Country (figure 34).”



Figure 34. Strohmeyer is next to Hare (back row, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> left) with Hemment and Dunn (back row, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> right). *The Call*, San Francisco, May 14, 1901.

In the accompanying article, Henry Strohmeyer was described as “connected with... a photo-stereopticon company.”<sup>196</sup> Whether this unnamed company was an oblique reference to Underwood or even Strohmeyer & Wyman, it accurately reflected the web of connections at this point between those operating in photography, politics, and the press. Indeed, the framing of the photograph, surrounded by an engraving of a couple waving stars ‘n stripes handkerchiefs and wearing rosettes, further supported the idea that the press helped embed McKinley as a figure in the popular imagination. Dressed in their Sunday-best, the woman in fitted blouse, long skirt and bonnet and the man in a suit with trilby-style hat were just the sort of aspirational and patriotic lower middle-class voters with whom McKinley would wish to be associated.

The photographic marriage between Underwood and Strohmeyer & Wyman proved an astute commercial move for all parties. Following McKinley’s assassination, the newly incorporated company commercially exploited the stereoscopic photography

<sup>196</sup> Henry Strohmeyer is again erroneously captioned, this time as “H.H. Strohmeyer” rather than “H.A. Strohmeyer.”

carried out by Strohmeyer during the late president's time in office. Within months of his death, Underwood published *A Stereograph Record of William McKinley as President of the United States*. Featuring sixty stereos credited to "Henry A. Strohmeyer," the set came with a descriptive booklet written by Bert Underwood. A company advertisement created to promote its McKinley set utilised both photography and art. This helped visually capture the varied scope of his presidency and sell a new product brought to fruition by its official connections (figure 35).



Figure 35. Advertisement for "A Series of Sixty Stereographs of the Late President William McKinley." *Stereoscopic Photograph*, March 1902.

The series included a stereo of McKinley's funeral casket, bedecked with floral tributes, lying in state in the East Room at the White House, whilst other views captured scenes in Canton, Ohio where his funeral took place. McKinley's quotes in the advertisement included his last words: "It Is God's Way. His Will Not Ours Be Done." All these elements powerfully combined to create a visual and emotional

experience that ran in parallel to many of the same images' appearance in the American press. Using stereoscopy, its effect was to instantly memorialise the late president as a figure who lived and breathed in three dimensions even though he was now dead.

It is also interesting to note that in *A Stereograph Record of William McKinley*, the posthumous use of photography had a dual character. On the one hand, a shocking news event prompted its publication, that of an assassination. On the other, the set's commercial fortunes were dependent on another genre. Anniversary journalism came into being to mark those occasions that happened "on this day in history." In McKinley's case, Underwood could count on an undeniable fact. Like their fellow citizens after the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, and John F. Kennedy, millions of Americans would always remember where they were when they heard about the president's death. That moment of commemoration would always require photographs taken annually from the company archive.

Reciprocally, the press generated positive notices for Underwood's commemorative McKinley set. According to the *New York Daily Tribune*:

The pictures are well taken and the stereoscopic effect, as is well known, heightens the effect of reality in the photographic transcript.<sup>197</sup>

*The Times* in Washington, DC, added:

The pictures are very realistic and will form a very valuable addition to any collection of souvenirs of the late President.<sup>198</sup>

With Henry Strohmeyer established at the heart of its relationship with the White House, Underwood possessed the calling card it needed to enter the uncharted world of photography involving the royal family in Britain, or so it believed. The reality

---

<sup>197</sup> "Literary Notes," *New York Daily Tribune*, June 2, 1902, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1902-06-02/ed-1/seq-8/>

<sup>198</sup> "Views of President M'Kinley's Trips," *The Times*, Washington, May 7, 1902, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87062245/1902-05-07/ed-1/seq-7/>



proved to be different. Negotiating its way to the heart of the establishment proved a significant test of the company's persistence, ingenuity, and entrepreneurship.

### *Underwood and the Royal Family*

In patriotic times, stereocards featuring regal subjects proved to be good sellers. To boost this part of its business, Underwood actively sought out opportunities that featured the royal family in Britain. It first fully embraced this strategy during 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, through a business relationship with a long-serving court photographer. Alexander Lamont Henderson had been granted a royal warrant as "Photographic Enameller to Her Majesty" in 1884, permitting him to depict moments from the royal family's everyday life.<sup>199</sup> He was also responsible for printing portraits of members of the British court on porcelain plaques, destined to be mounted on jewellery.<sup>200</sup> Photographed by Henderson, it was one such moment that Underwood published and marketed as a stereocard in the weeks prior to the diamond jubilee celebrations (figure 36) .

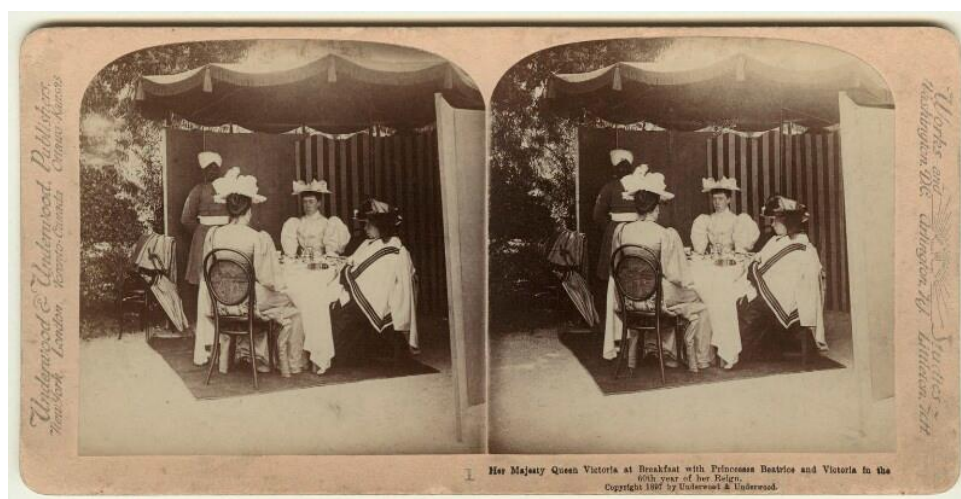


Figure 36. "Her Majesty Queen Victoria at Breakfast ... in the 60<sup>th</sup> year of her Reign." Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.

<sup>199</sup> Frances Dimond and Roger Taylor, *Crown and Camera: The Royal Family and Photography 1842-1910* (London: Penguin, 1987), 213.

<sup>200</sup> Dr. Michael Pritchard, "Exhibition: A L Henderson's 1904 Holiday Snaps from Athens," *British Photographic History*, accessed November 22, 2020, <http://britishphotohistory.ning.com/profiles/blogs/exhibition-a-l-henderson-s-1904-holiday-snaps-from-athens-athens->

Featuring Queen Victoria “at breakfast” with Princesses Beatrice and Victoria, the stereo has the air of a candid, behind-the-scenes, paparazzi-like shot. Underwood’s caption named the monarch and the two princesses but not the Indian servant in the background. Again, as with Lord Roberts and Duafadar in Chapter 1, a subservient figure in an imperialist portrait went unrecognised. The caption was misleading in another way. Its wording, “in the 60<sup>th</sup> year of her reign,” implied the image was new or very recent. In fact, it dated from two years before. Evidence for this attribution comes from the Royal Collection. “Group, including Queen Victoria, Nice 1895” featured in an album, *Portraits of Royal Children, Volume 42*, taken when the monarch was staying at a hotel at Cimiez.<sup>201</sup>

In total, 150 journalists were present to report on one of the Queen’s annual spring visits to the French Riviera. Whilst the international press corps gathered outside her hotel, Henderson’s privileged photographic access was in marked contrast.<sup>202</sup> Silver gelatin prints featured in the *Portraits of Royal Children* album captured the same group posed in an identical location as that featured in the Underwood stereocard. Details of both stereo and print formats confirm the images came from the same shoot and sequence. These include the striped background behind Queen Victoria, her distinctively patterned shawl, the folds in the tablecloth, and the leaning parasols to the left of frame (figure 37).

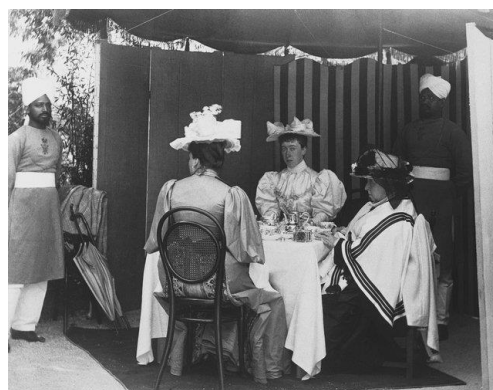


Figure 37. “Group, Including Queen Victoria, Nice, April 1895,” *Portraits of Royal Children Vol.42 1894-1895*. Royal Collection Trust.

---

<sup>201</sup> “Group, including Queen Victoria, Nice 1895,” *Portraits of Royal Children Vol.42 1894-1895*, Royal Collection Trust, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.rct.uk/collection/2905284/group-including-queen-victoria-nice-1895-in-portraits-of-royal-children-vol-42>

<sup>202</sup> Michael Nelson, *Queen Victoria and the Discovery of the Riviera* (London/New York: IB Tauris, 2001), 79.

A month before the diamond jubilee celebrations climaxed, Henderson completed a copyright registration form as the author of the “at breakfast” stereo.<sup>203</sup> Its publication was timed to feed a public appetite for such royal material. This commercial exploitation of what was effectively a stock shot from a court photographer’s archive was shrewd business practice. It was one Underwood as a stereoscopic company successfully emulated and exploited in servicing the press. This strategy is analysed in later chapters.

For a company with ambitions to enter a world occupied by royal warrant photographers like A.L. Henderson, this collaboration was not Underwood’s only diamond jubilee success. The focus of press and public attention was jubilee day, Tuesday June 22, 1897. A thanksgiving service at St. Paul’s Cathedral followed a procession through London. Because Queen Victoria would have difficulty mounting the cathedral steps, it was decided to hold the service outside the building with the monarch remaining in her carriage.<sup>204</sup> It was from this location that Underwood secured a photograph that it placed with *The Graphic* for its “Diamond Jubilee Celebration Number.”

Before considering the provenance of this photograph, how was media coverage organised for such a royal occasion? Competition to photograph both thanksgiving service and procession was intense amongst professionals and amateurs. Such was the level of interest that the Metropolitan Police in London issued 600 press passes to enable coverage of the day’s events.<sup>205</sup> A “special” report carried by the *Daily Mail*, headlined “Jubilee Snapshooters: Thousands To ‘Take’ The Procession,” lauded it as “the greatest day the science of photography has ever had.”<sup>206</sup> In the article, some of Underwood’s competitors and suppliers provided insights into the photography of the events to come. An unnamed manager at the London

---

<sup>203</sup> COPY 1/430/285, National Archives, Kew, accessed October 30, 2020, <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C11640955>

<sup>204</sup> Dimond and Taylor, *Crown and Camera*, 184.

<sup>205</sup> MEPO 5/81/877, Public Record Office, Kew, cited in Wright, “British Press Photography,” 80.

<sup>206</sup> “Jubilee Snapshooters,” *Daily Mail*, June 18, 1897, Gale Primary Sources.

Stereoscopic Company, Regent Street estimated around 500 professional photographers would be present and thousands of amateurs “working off plates and films to the dozen.” The Eastman Photographic Materials Company claimed it had been selling “cartridges for snapshots” at a rate of 25,000 per week. Much of this film would go to waste “through amateurs not knowing the best position to place themselves in.”

The *Daily Mail* report also revealed details of how professionals were covering jubilee day. London Stereoscopic was positioning its “artists” at Westminster, London Bridge and two or three city locations. But its coverage went beyond stills photography. A year earlier, cinema arrived in Britain as an entertainment medium, just as the empire was reaching the zenith of its power and splendour. Film cameras were present to record the great ceremonial milestones of the era in short flickering films beginning with Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee.<sup>207</sup> An *Animatographe*, an early form of motion-picture projector, carried 140 feet of film, took sixty impressions per minute, and registered 2,000 pictures “as a panoramic representation of the passing pageant.”<sup>208</sup> A group of French photographers, also operating an *Animatographe* supplied by Eastman with 11,000 feet of film, paid “a big price for their pitch.”<sup>209</sup> Other examples of money changing hands to enable photographers to secure the best vantage points were cited in the *Mail* report. Collaborations with property owners and even local authorities were commonplace. Eastman’s manager reported:

One professional has paid £100 [£11,430 today] for half a balcony to hold ten persons. His apparatus will take up the room of three, and he will partly recoup himself by the sale of the remaining seven seats.<sup>210</sup>

---

<sup>207</sup> Jeffrey Richards, “The Monarchy and Film, 1900-2006,” in *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, ed. Andrej Olechnowicz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 260.

<sup>208</sup> See “1897 Victoria, Diamond,” St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, film clip accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.stpauls.co.uk/history-collections/history/history-highlights/jubilee/1897-victoria-diamond>

<sup>209</sup> For an overview, see Ian Christie, “‘A Very Wonderful Process:’ Queen Victoria, Photography and Film at the Fin de Siècle,” in *The British Monarchy on Screen*, ed. Mandy Merck (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 31-36.

<sup>210</sup> “Jubilee Snapshooters,” *Daily Mail*, June 18, 1897.

In another quoted example, a provincial artist paid £75 for a pitch in the Strand in addition to travelling and other expenses. "Should the day be wet and dull," concluded the paper, "the loss to the professionals will be heavy." Though informative in terms of useful detail for this study, the *Daily Mail's* article was also a classic example of a non-story about the production of ubiquitous images.

By selling its views from the Greco-Turkish War as outlined in Chapter 1, Underwood had only recently entered a new photographic market that was already competitive. A survey of leading illustrated weeklies for the period covering jubilee day revealed published photographs credited to companies with royal warrants, or other established suppliers. In the *ILN*, "Russell & Sons of Baker Street" provided several photographs.<sup>211</sup> Although Russell's royal warrant was only granted a few weeks earlier, the company had taken photographs featuring the British royal family since the 1860s.<sup>212</sup> Because of this, prime locations to which its photographers gained access included Windsor Castle to witness procession rehearsals. On jubilee day itself, this access extended to Buckingham Palace, Westminster Bridge, and Horse Guards Parade. "Argent Archer of Kensington," another established firm, was credited in the *ILN* for a photograph that showed the Queen's open carriage during the thanksgiving service opposite the steps to St. Paul's. From the same location, a photographer from "Lascelles of Fitzroy Square" witnessed the Queen "receiving the congratulations of the Prince of Wales at the conclusion of the service."<sup>213</sup>

For the *Graphic*, "Reinhold Thiele, of Chancery Lane" photographed events outside the cathedral.<sup>214</sup> German-born, Thiele had worked for London Stereoscopic, first as a water colourist and then as an operator before establishing "Symmons and Thiele" in 1894. In terms of photographic history, Thiele is often described as "the founder of

---

<sup>211</sup> "The Grand Military Tattoo Rehearsed ...," *ILN*, June 19, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>212</sup> J.L. Russell, A.H. Russell & E.G. Russell, trading as Russell & Sons, were granted a royal warrant as "Photographers to Her Majesty" on May 3, 1897. See "James Russell and Sons," *Sussex PhotoHistory*, accessed November 8, 2020, <http://www.photohistory-sussex.co.uk/ChichesterRussell.htm>

<sup>213</sup> "The Queen Receiving the Congratulations...", *ILN*, June 26, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>214</sup> "The Service at St. Paul's...", "Diamond Jubilee Celebration Number," *Graphic*, June 28, 1897, British Newspaper Archive.



photojournalism” and “one of the first press photographers.”<sup>215</sup> The fact that Underwood’s photograph appeared in *The Graphic*’s “Diamond Jubilee Celebration Number” on an adjoining page to Thiele’s emphasised the fast-growing credibility attached to its press-related activities. Captioned as “An Impression of the Service at St. Paul’s,” it was sub-titled “an Instantaneous Photograph by Underwood and Underwood, Publishers of Stereoscopic Views” (figure 38).



Figure 38. “An Impression of the Service at St. Paul’s.”  
*The Graphic*, “Diamond Jubilee Celebration Number,” June 28, 1897.

For the company, this single “instantaneous” photograph, using an exposure of less than a second, was to have greater significance.<sup>216</sup> It marked its collaboration with a photographer involved in its stereograph project built around Edward VII’s coronation in 1902 and a similar set featuring Pope Pius X following his election the following year. As revealed by the original copyright form, Underwood reached an “agreement or assignment” for its diamond jubilee photograph with “James Edward Ellam of Dunmow, Essex.” This wording suggested he was working as a freelance and that

---

<sup>215</sup> Nick Yapp, *100 Days in Photographs* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2007) 60; and “(Karl Anton) Reinhold Thiele,” National Portrait Gallery, London, accessed November 8, 2020, <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp09665/karl-anton-reinhold-thiele?search=sas&sText=Reinhold+Thiele>

<sup>216</sup> Bernard E. Jones, ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Early Photography* (London: Bishopsgate Press, 1981), 303.

the company effectively bought the rights to use his photograph. The image was described on the copyright form as “Ambassadors and Royalties witnessing the Thanksgiving Service in front of St. Paul’s Cathedral, Jubilee Day, London 1897.” Dated June 30, Underwood submitted the paperwork just two days after the photograph appeared in *The Graphic*, moving quickly to secure its legal rights.<sup>217</sup> Attached to the form was a print, establishing a tangible link between the copyright claimant and the relevant photograph. For this study, it acts as a means of confirming its provenance (figure 39).



Figure 39. Print of “Ambassadors and Royalties Witnessing the Thanksgiving Service.” Taken by James Edward Ellam. Submitted for copyright registration, June 30, 1897.

Its identifying features included a woman in a light-coloured dress carrying a parasol. She was standing in a horse-drawn carriage close to the statue of Queen Anne outside St. Paul’s. Also, the white pith helmet of a guardsman in the immediate foreground appeared to be catching the sunlight. These details confirm the photograph registered for copyright by Underwood and published by *The Graphic* were the same. As to the company’s supplier, his social and professional background revealed by this study sheds light on the emergence of a new breed of photographer originating saleable press images. He also represented part of

---

<sup>217</sup> COPY 1/431/772, National Archives, Kew, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C11642253>

Underwood's photographic and business network that ranged far beyond that analysed so far in this chapter.

### *“J.E. Ellam of Yarm”*

James Edward Ellam was born in 1857 at Lindley, near Huddersfield. Part of a large family with several siblings, his father was a “woollen cloth dresser” with a workforce numbering ten men and a dozen children. The family also farmed sixteen acres of land.<sup>218</sup> Little is known about Ellam's childhood and formative years, however, by the 1890s, he was working as a “chemist's assistant” in the town of Yarm, near Stockton-on-Tees in the then North Riding of Yorkshire.<sup>219</sup> His employer, Strickland and Holt established in 1854, was principally a wine merchant, but its pharmacy provided a service processing films and negatives for customers. In addition, a yard behind the shop premises doubled as an outdoor portrait studio (figure 40).<sup>220</sup>



Figure 40. Strickland & Holt's outdoor portrait studio, Yarm, 1890s.  
Stereocard courtesy of Holt Family Collection.

Photography was Ellam's pastime. Newspaper reports reveal he was honorary

---

<sup>218</sup> 1861 UK Census, Lindley cum Quarmby, Huddersfield, Yorkshire, 15, Schedule 84; and 1871 UK Census, Croft House, Lindley, Huddersfield, Yorkshire, 15, Schedule 73, My Ancestry.

<sup>219</sup> 1891 UK Census, High Street, Yarm, Stokesley, Cleveland, Schedule 100, My Ancestry.

<sup>220</sup> My thanks to Stephanie Richardson, great niece of John Holt who co-founded Strickland & Holt, for access to her collection of family photographs.



secretary of the Stockton Photographic Society.<sup>221</sup> Despite the Kodak revolution of “You Press the Button, We Do the Rest,” handling chemicals was still integral to glass-plate photography, so skills from his day job may have proved useful in his hobby. As to his press photography, examples of his stereographs, taken in the surrounding district and stamped “J.E. Ellam of Yarm” on the verso, survive in local archives and private collections.<sup>222</sup> Typical of events he covered was the flooding of Yarm, a regular occurrence whenever the nearby River Tees burst its banks. In 1894, his photography reached a national audience. Photographs taken from his stereos captured the aftermath of a major rail accident involving the “Scotch Express” at Northallerton. Travelling from Edinburgh to London, the train collided with coke-wagons in thick fog. Ellam’s work at the crash scene appeared in London papers including *Black & White*, and *St. James’s Budget*, securing “Ellam of Yarm” credits.<sup>223</sup> Like A.L. Henderson, he too protected his commercial interests by registering the copyright of his photographs. These included “Second Engine and Tender” used by the *ILN* in its crash coverage (figure 41).<sup>224</sup>



Figure 41. “The Second Engine and Tender” by James Edward Ellam, October 1894. Print submitted with copyright registration form. National Archives, Kew.

<sup>221</sup> “Stockton Photographic Society’s Conversazione,” *Yorkshire Herald*, February 4, 1891, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>222</sup> Preston Park Museum, near Yarm has a collection of around twenty Ellam stereocards. My thanks to Nicole Diccico, Collections Access Assistant, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, for her assistance with this material.

<sup>223</sup> Wright, “British Press Photography,” 75.

Wright cited the credit “Ellam of Yarm” in his study. This reference prompted my research into who “Ellam of Yarm” might be and uncovered his working relationship with Underwood.

<sup>224</sup> COPY 1/418/366, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 11, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C9455569>

For analysis of press coverage of the “Scotch Express” rail crash, see Paul Fyfe, “Illustrating the Accident: Railways and the Catastrophic Picturesque in the *Illustrated London News*,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 46, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 81-84.

The conclusion that Ellam had his sights set on a career change comes from a *Northern Echo* report in 1896. Under the heading “Stockton Photographic Society,” the paper reported:

The members met at the Royal Hotel on Tuesday night to present to their secretary (Mr. J.E. Ellam, Yarm), who is leaving the district, with a silver cigarette case and silver-mounted walking stick, in recognition of his valuable services for six years.

Mr. Ellan [sic] being an expert photographer will be missed very much by the members, many of whom expressed their indebtedness to him. Mr. Fothergill, president, presided and in graceful terms made the presentation.<sup>225</sup>

Within twelve months, as described earlier, Mr. J.E. Ellam was supplying Underwood with photographs taken outside St. Paul’s in London during the thanksgiving service for Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee. This transition from regional amateur to national professional reflected a trend by which enterprising photographers met demand from the illustrated press for photographs of news events.<sup>226</sup>

In Ellam’s case, “leaving the district” meant leaving Yorkshire. Together with tailor Henry Bradley and his family, with whom he lodged in Yarm, he moved 200 miles south to the Essex village of Great Dunmow. The Bradleys took over an outfitters’ shop whilst Ellam was able to pursue the next stage in his photographic career. For an aspiring press photographer, proximity to London about thirty miles distant was crucial. It meant he could work in the capital during the week and return to the village at weekends, a routine captured by the 1901 UK Census. Listed as a “photographer,” Ellam was recorded as a “visitor” staying overnight with the Bradleys when the census data was recorded.<sup>227</sup> As part of a new breed, he might also have recognised echoes of himself in an observation made in the 1930s by the influential journalist and art editor Hannen Swaffer:

---

<sup>225</sup> “Stockton Photographic Society,” *Northern Echo*, Darlington, July 22, 1896, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>226</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 164-5.

<sup>227</sup> 1901 UK Census, 73 High Street, Great Dunmow, Epping, Essex, Schedule 73, My Ancestry.

In those days, the press photographer was regarded as an animal almost beneath contempt. Where he had come from, nobody knew.

Often, he had owned a small business as a photographer somewhere in the suburbs, one he had thrown up for the high adventure of Fleet Street.<sup>228</sup>

Indeed, it was the press that now offered photographers, used to earning money by selling portraits, stereoscopic views, and picture postcards, a potentially lucrative new outlet for their work.<sup>229</sup> Ellam has further significance for this study and the canon usually associated with photographic history. Examination of various sources reveal he played a significant role in Underwood's stereography of news events as it simultaneously produced stereocards, lantern slides, and press photographs. How Underwood married its UK photographic connections with its American business network to reach the heart of the British establishment is analysed in the remainder of this chapter.

### *King Edward VII's Coronation*

The challenge facing Underwood as a company hoping to photograph the royal family in Britain centred on overturning the status quo. As was the case with her diamond jubilee, Queen Victoria's death in 1901 prompted another avalanche of press coverage, both in the daily newspapers and illustrated weeklies. Credits for photographs supplied by many of the same British companies and royal warrant holders were again in evidence. Alongside the extensive work of its "special artists," the *ILN* used photographs credited to Russell & Sons, London Stereoscopic, Argent Archer, and Illustrated Press Bureau amongst others.<sup>230</sup> Enthused by the success of its *Stereograph Record* devoted to the late President McKinley, Underwood set about repeating the formula for the coronation of King Edward VII arranged for June 26, 1902.

---

<sup>228</sup> James Jarché, *People I Have Shot: Reminiscences of a Press Photographer* (London: Methuen, 1934), introduction.

<sup>229</sup> Ken Baynes, *Scoop, Scandal and Strife: A Study of Photography in Newspapers* (London: Lund Humphries, 1971), 26.

<sup>230</sup> "Our Illustrations," *ILN*, February 9, 1901, British Newspaper Archive.

For accounts of the company's activities in Britain during this period, two sources created by its co-founders offer useful pointers. The first is an unpublished memoir by Bert Underwood, written after he and his brother retired from active involvement in the company in the mid-1920s. Despite personal success in business and as a photographer, the younger Underwood was unable to find a publisher willing to take on the book he had written. Bert said at the time: "I've had lots of adventures, but I guess that I don't write enough like Richard Halliburton."<sup>231</sup> Halliburton, an American adventure writer, had set the bar high. His first book, *The Royal Road to Romance* published in 1925, was a chronicle of his adventures during his travels in the early part of that decade. A best-seller for three years, the book was translated into fifteen languages.<sup>232</sup>

Surviving extracts of Bert Underwood's manuscript bear evidence of hand-written corrections and amendments, reflecting their author's response to criticism of its style and content by potential publishers. The most extensive of these is a twenty-one-page section titled "A Photographer's Experience during the Coronation of Edward VII."<sup>233</sup> The other relevant source is Elmer Underwood's brief company history, highlighted in Chapter 1, and used by Robert Taft for his *Photography and the American Scene* published in 1938. Elmer's twelve-page document briefly referred to Underwood's coverage of Edward VII's coronation.<sup>234</sup> Accepting that the brothers may have inflated their own role in the company's activities, analysis of a variety of other sources proves that, as with its presidential work, a more complex and nuanced set of relationships contributed to Underwood's royal photography.

For its Edward VII project, Bert Underwood's memoir recorded that he travelled from New York to London in the spring of 1902.<sup>235</sup> Following its incorporation the previous

---

<sup>231</sup> Untitled, *New York Telegram*, August 18, 1930, Underwood, Eastman, Box 1, Folder 8.

<sup>232</sup> "Richard Halliburton," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Halliburton#ref68369>

<sup>233</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience during the Coronation of Edward VII (expanded version)," Underwood and Underwood Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, 1-21, George Eastman Museum.

<sup>234</sup> "Copy of an Outline," Robert Taft Photography Papers, accessed November 8, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/700>

<sup>235</sup> For an account of Underwood's stereoscopic activities at this point, see "Methods and Benefits of the American Invasion," *Review of Reviews*, April 1902, 433-35.

year, Underwood re-located its London office from Red Lion Square in Holborn to 3 Heddon Street, off Regent Street in the capital's west end. He described his task there as being:

...to supervise the photographing of a stereoscopic record of the Coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra and the functions attending the occasion.

Though an accomplished stereoscopic photographer himself, this description of his supervisory role confirmed the photography involved other people. Given the implicit aim of securing entry to the British establishment, he carried with him "one rather unusual letter of introduction." Outlining its contents, he recalled:

It was from the State Department in Washington in which it was stated that the letter was written at the request of the Secretary to the President.

If a correct attribution, the letter's initiator was George B. Cortelyou. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it was Cortelyou who a few months before hosted a lantern slide evening staged by Underwood for President Roosevelt and White House staff. The state department's letter of introduction also pointed out, according to Bert's memoir, that:

... Underwood & Underwood were the special photographers who accompanied President Roosevelt on his trips about the country.<sup>236</sup>

Given this claim and the importance attached to it, its accuracy is worth closer scrutiny. Here, use of the term "special" in relation to Roosevelt appeared deliberately chosen. It contrasted with that of "official" used by the White House to describe Henry Strohmeyer's photography of McKinley. Why might this be? By the spring of 1902, Roosevelt had only been in office a matter of months. However, there is a subtle change to Underwood's photographic status vis-à-vis the White House in surviving documents from the period. In the same month as the lantern slide evening, Strohmeyer used Underwood company notepaper to write to Cortelyou in Washington, DC. The photographer enquired about arrangements for forthcoming

---

<sup>236</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience," Box 1, Folder 1, 1-2.

visits to the United States which he wished to cover by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and his younger brother, Prince Heinrich of Prussia. Rather than reading as a formal exchange with a senior government official, the letter's overall tone was more in keeping with a favour asked of a valued contact. Strohmeyer wrote to Cortelyou:

I believe it is the purpose of President Roosevelt to attend the launching of the Emperor's yacht on the 25<sup>th</sup> inst.

If it is practicable, I would like to join the party and go to the yards with them in the same capacity as I went to Charleston.

I feel sure that if this can be arranged you would be willing to do it for me.<sup>237</sup>

The reference here to "the same capacity" suggested one that had changed since McKinley's time. Further evidence to support this argument comes from a printed itinerary for a *Tour of the President through the New England States* in August and September 1902.<sup>238</sup> Among "members of the party," Strohmeyer was described by the epithet "photographer," but there was no mention anywhere of the term "official." The term "photographer" was though given to another member of the party listed on the itinerary, Robert L. Dunn. As noted earlier, Dunn represented *Leslie's Weekly* as a photographer on McKinley's tour to the Pacific coast in 1901. For this New England tour with Roosevelt, the illustrated paper replaced Dunn with another photographer, George B. Luckey. If Dunn as a "photographer" was present as a freelance, it would place him on a par with Strohmeyer and reflect Underwood's stereoscopic interests. Whatever their exact status, those on the tour were able to report a major news story involving Roosevelt. On its final day, the president, Cortelyou, and the Massachusetts governor had a lucky escape when a trolley car crashed headlong into their open carriage, throwing clear all three men. Roosevelt injured his leg, but a secret service agent, William Craig, was killed in the accident.<sup>239</sup>

---

<sup>237</sup> H.A. Strohmeyer to George. B. Cortelyou, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC, accessed November 26, 2020, [https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-308\\_0208\\_1157/?sp=206](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-308_0208_1157/?sp=206)

<sup>238</sup> "Tour of the President through the New England States," Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, ND, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o284004>

<sup>239</sup> Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Bully Pit: Theodore Roosevelt and the Golden Age of Journalism* (London: Viking/Penguin, 2013), 307-08.

Despite this change in relationship from “official” to “special,” the considerable influence wielded by Underwood’s White House connections was still in evidence. In London, protracted negotiations followed as Underwood endeavoured to gain photographic access to the monarch and his consort. Armed with its “unusual letter of introduction,” the company worked its way through the layers of officialdom in charge of arrangements for the coronation. The approach taken was reminiscent of H.F. Mackern as Underwood’s stereographer of the South African War described in Chapter 1. On that occasion, following his arrival in Cape Town, Mackern accompanied the American consul-general, Colonel James G. Stowe, to see the British high commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner. According to his memoir, Bert Underwood also used high-level contacts within the United States administration to further the company’s cause.

On arrival in London, he arranged an interview with Joseph H. Chaote, ambassador to Great Britain appointed by McKinley in 1899. Chaote though was unimpressed with Underwood’s “desires at such a time.” Much more helpful, Bert recalled, was Henry White, first secretary of the American Legation. Later an ambassador to Italy and France, White was a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles that ended the First World War. White supplied letters of introduction including ones to the lord mayor of London and to “Lord Esher, one of the most important men in England.”<sup>240</sup> This description was only a slight exaggeration. Reginald Baliol Brett, 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Esher, was a courtier, public servant, and key figure in all royal matters. A former member of Parliament, he became permanent secretary in 1895, overseeing the upkeep of royal palaces. He was also instrumental in organising both the diamond jubilee and state funeral of Queen Victoria, and coronation of Edward VII.<sup>241</sup> In Esher, Underwood could not have been directed to a better figure through which to channel its commercial aspirations.

---

<sup>240</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 2-3.

<sup>241</sup> “Brett, Reginald Baliol,” *Cambridge Alumni database*, University of Cambridge, accessed October 30, 2020, <http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/2018/search-2018.html>

However, an American company was not alone in seeking photographic access to the monarch. According to Bert Underwood, Lord Esher told him “over 100 requests from prominent English and colonial photographers” were received to photograph the King and Queen in their robes and crowns on the day of the coronation. As a result, two British court photographers, W. & D. Downey, and Russell & Sons, were granted “this privilege.” If correct, this was hardly surprising. Both Downey and Russell were royal warrant holders with established track records of photographing royalty. In recounting this episode, Bert referred to “Sir Downey, the only titled photographer in England” as being “quite elderly.” He was referring to William Downey, a founder of W.& D. Downey, who by this point was in his seventies, though he was, and remained, untitled.<sup>242</sup>

On the other hand, “Mr. Russel [sic]” was “much younger” and “had a most pleasing personality.” Faced by this duopoly, Bert was told that “if I was unable to gain permission, he [Russell] would take me into Buckingham Palace on the day of the Coronation as his assistant and I could use my stereo-camera.” As neither Downey nor Russell would be using stereoscopic equipment, Bert felt he was not really competing with the court photographers. Reflecting on the offer, he wrote later:

This was exceedingly kind of Mr. Russel [sic] and I was not above accepting, although it was a little humiliating to be obliged to obtain my most important picture in this way...

He continued:

I only feared that the King might be displeased at Mr. Russel [sic] if he learned that the ‘assistant’ was an independent American photographer.”<sup>243</sup>

Whatever the veracity of this anecdote, Underwood’s rapport with Russell & Sons appeared genuine. Their photographic relationship was nurtured during that

---

<sup>242</sup> 1901 UK Census, 10 Nevern Square, Earl’s Court, Kensington, London, schedule 100, My Ancestry.

For a brief history of W. & D. Downey, see “Morning Calls: Mr W. Downey, the Queen’s Photographer,” *English Illustrated Magazine*, March 1896, 642-52, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31210021152820&view=1up&seq=655&q1=Downey>

<sup>243</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 8.



coronation summer and captured in a series of photographs.<sup>244</sup> These featured Bert Underwood in professional proximity with John Lemmon Russell as head of Russell & Sons, a family photography firm from Sussex dating back to the 1860s.<sup>245</sup> In one, Russell was pictured leading the politician Joseph Chamberlain across a courtyard at an official function. Looking on, Bert Underwood surveyed the scene from atop an extended stepladder, a large equipment bag visible at its foot (figure 42).



Figure 42. Bert Underwood (extreme right) using an extended stepladder to stereograph the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain MP (2<sup>nd</sup> left) in London, summer 1902.  
Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.

Another photograph featured Hampton Court where 1,000 Indian troops camped before the coronation procession through London. Standing alongside an unnamed man in traditional dress, both photographers were in relaxed poses, leant against an oak tree with tents visible in the background (figure 43).



Figure 43. John Lemmon Russell (centre) and Bert Underwood (right) with unknown man.  
Hampton Court, London, summer 1902.  
Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.

<sup>244</sup> Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum, Rochester, New York, 1988.0202.001-20. These photographs were donated in 1988 by Mrs E. Roy Underwood, widow of Bert's eldest son.

<sup>245</sup> Dimond and Taylor, *Crown and Camera*, 218.

This Underwood-Russell relationship was immortalised in a studio portrait of the two photographers taken by Russell & Sons dated “London 1902” (figure 44).



Figure 44. Bert Underwood and John Lemmon Russell, London, 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.

Presented on a formal cardboard mount complete with royal coat of arms, the text proclaimed: “By Special Appointment to Her Late Majesty, Queen Victoria.” Russell signed the photograph “Yours Truly.” This relationship informed the photographing of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on the day of the coronation.

Despite the gates to Buckingham Palace remaining firmly closed, the company pressed on with its coronation stereograph project. Primarily, it endeavoured to secure access to key individuals involved in the ceremony, finding out about occasions on which they might appear. To this end, a “distant shot” of the King was secured at a military review held at Aldershot on June 13.<sup>246</sup> According to Bert’s memoir, the company’s permit was obtained from Lord Roberts as head of the British army. As outlined in Chapter 1, the company met Roberts while stereographing the

---

<sup>246</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 6.

South African War of 1899-1902. If correct, this was a vivid demonstration of the company's international network in action.

As preparations for the coronation intensified, the company laid plans to cover the festivities. Bert Underwood recollected:

As the great day drew near, I had my positions for my corps of camera men arranged in advantageous positions along the route of the parade. Some of the best places were given; others I paid for liberally."<sup>247</sup>

This reminiscence echoed what the *Daily Mail* reported about photographers covering the diamond jubilee in 1897. "Corps of camera men" may have been an exaggeration, but as evident from previous press coverage, multiple photographers strategically placed along the route were needed to successfully cover such royal events. However, shortly before "the great day," Edward VII was taken suddenly and dangerously ill with perityphlitis, a condition akin to appendicitis.<sup>248</sup> To allow the King time to recuperate from the operation that saved his life, the ceremony was rescheduled from June 26 to August 9. It was during this hiatus that Underwood finally gained the permission it needed to photograph the monarch and his consort in their coronation robes and crowns. The company regarded this as the crucial shot necessary to complete its stereograph project. It would also create a photograph for the press that was both newsworthy and recorded a significant historical event. But agreement only came after a tortuous game of cat and mouse with the royal authorities.

If it was correct that "more than a hundred applications from English and colonial photographers" had been rejected, Underwood reasoned a new strategy was called for. No doubt the company's London managers, with experience of successfully supplying photographs to Fleet Street and beyond since 1897, would have been involved in discussions about what to do next. In his memoir, Bert remembered consulting an un-named "head of the largest photographic supply house in England"

---

<sup>247</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience," Box 1, Folder 1, 8.

<sup>248</sup> Dimond, *Developing the Picture*, 28, citing a report in *The Lancet*, July 5, 1902.

about the idea of writing a personal letter to the King. Having been advised by his “English friend” that this would be seen as an insult, Bert decided there was nothing to lose and wrote anyway to the King’s private secretary, Lord Knollys. In terms of networking within the court, this act revealed a new level of ambition. Following Queen Victoria’s reign of sixty-three years, the monarchy in Britain had an opportunity to portray itself afresh for a new era. In this context, the idea of a stereoscopic portrait of the King and Queen created by an entrepreneurial American company might have appealed to the new monarch and his advisers. By his own account, Bert did not have long to wait to hear reaction to his “long letter.” He later recalled:

Really expecting nothing, I was surprised a few days later to receive the following letter from Lord Knollys.

In his memoir manuscript, Bert then reproduced the contents of that reply as follows:

(Crest). H.M. Yacht Victoria and Albert, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1902.

Sir. I have had the pleasure of submitting your letter of July 31<sup>st</sup> ultimo., to the King.

If you like to take your chance on the morning of the Coronation, just before the King gets into his carriage, to take a photograph of him, His Majesty will be happy to offer you facilities for doing so.

I am, Sir, Your Obedient Servant, (signed) Knollys.

Enclosed with the letter was what Bert called a “command,” permitting him to go to Buckingham Palace on the day of the coronation.<sup>249</sup> As to the provenance of this letter and story surrounding it, authenticating either has proved impossible. An inquiry to the royal archives at Windsor Castle revealed that:

...relatively few official papers of Edward VII have survived and therefore I am afraid I am not able to supply copies of any correspondence with this firm.<sup>250</sup>

---

<sup>249</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 12-13.

<sup>250</sup> Julie Crocker, Senior Archivist (Access), Windsor Castle, email to author, July 20, 2018.

At face value, Lord Knollys reported reply, “If you like to take your chance ...,” appears at odds with language that might be expected of a court official responding on the King’s behalf. Of course, Bert’s version of the text may have approximated to the letter he received when trying to recall its wording decades later for his memoir. However, the fact was that when coronation day arrived, Underwood and its stereoscopic camera gained access to Buckingham Palace.

### *Buckingham Palace: Saturday August 9, 1902*

Analysis of the day’s events offers insight into who was involved in securing Underwood’s stereoscopic portrait of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra and its appearance in the press. The day before the coronation, the company successfully stereographed two of the ceremony’s principal architects, the archbishops of Canterbury and York, at Lambeth Palace.<sup>251</sup> However, taking up the photographic invitation issued by Lord Knollys on the King’s behalf proved more problematic. As Bert Underwood recalled in his 1937 interview with the *Arizona Daily Star*:

As their majesties left, the King allowed photographers a hasty pose, but it was under a great covered porch and so dark that I knew it was impossible to make a successful picture without a flashlight, so I didn’t make an exposure.<sup>252</sup>

The coronation ceremony was shorter so as not to tire the King after his recent illness. By the time the couple returned, the portents for enough light to execute a successful photograph were little better.<sup>253</sup> Bert’s memoir recalled “the afternoon was dark - it was even raining,” an account supported by contemporary press reports.

According to the *Daily Telegraph*:

‘Ere their Majesties returned the weather, which had been more less threatening for some time, began to show unpleasant symptoms, and later the rain came down rather smartly.”<sup>254</sup>

---

<sup>251</sup> “The Crowning of the King,” *Stereoscopic Photograph*, Autumn 1902, 76, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto2ellia/page/74/mode/2up>

<sup>252</sup> “Bert Underwood Remembers ...,” *Arizona Daily Star*, May 12, 1937, Underwood, Eastman, Box 1, Folder 8.

<sup>253</sup> Dimond, *Developing the Picture*, 87.

<sup>254</sup> “Return to the Palace,” *Daily Telegraph*, August 11, 1902, British Newspaper Archive.

When the royal procession finally drove into Buckingham Palace, it was “after three o’clock,” a timing that again coincides with the *Daily Telegraph* report that “the return to Buckingham Palace was commenced at ten minutes past two.” At the palace, Bert then recalled:

Mr Russel [sic] and I were standing within ten feet of where the golden and glass chariot stopped. The King’s face was white and worn. Mr. Russel [sic] turned to me and said: ‘We have waited all day for nothing.’<sup>255</sup>

This prediction turned out be incorrect. The location agreed upon for the “coronation robes” portrait featured a suitable background where the light was acceptable. After some discussion, the King and Queen briefly paused to have their photographs taken in full coronation regalia. According to Bert’s memoir, it was a moment that involved a degree of melodrama.

As well as needing a longer exposure time, the Queen swayed at key moments posing difficulties for all three companies. Despite this, Underwood obtained what its company president described as “three under-exposed, but fair, negatives.” By contrast, Downey and Russell were only able to execute single negatives because their larger plate cameras required longer exposure times. However, Queen Alexandra moving made these unusable.

According to Bert’s memoir, Downey then followed her inside and requested another photograph of her alone. With this shot, the court photographer replaced her half of the negative and positioned it alongside that of the King, who had remained still. In Bert’s view, the resulting composite looked “stiff and unnatural.”<sup>256</sup> A surviving photograph in the Royal Collection corroborates this scenario. Attributed to W. & D. Downey and captioned “King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Coronation

---

<sup>255</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 15.

<sup>256</sup> Bert Underwood, “A Photographer’s Experience,” Box 1, Folder 1, 17.

Robes, 9 August 1902,” it is accompanied by a note stating that “the photograph is slightly out of focus” (figure 45).<sup>257</sup>



Figure 45. “King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Coronation Robes, 9 August 1902.”  
W. & D. Downey, Royal Collection Trust.

If the Queen’s movement caused it to be “slightly out of focus,” this photograph may be the unusable negative referred to by Bert Underwood. This provenance is confirmed by comparing Downey’s photograph with Underwood’s own stereoscopic version. In both, Queen Alexandra’s hands hold exactly the same pose. Copyright records also reveal that William Downey senior may not have taken this photograph. The “author of work” was recorded as his son, “William Edward Downey of 61 Ebury Street, London SW,” the company’s long-established address in the capital.<sup>258</sup> The presence alongside his ageing father of the company’s managing director indicated that such an important occasion required more than one experienced pair of hands on-duty. Given the considerable trouble that Underwood had taken to reach this point, this may well have been the approach it also decided to take.

---

<sup>257</sup> “RCIN 2933174,” Royal Collection Trust, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.rct.uk/collection/2933174/king-edward-vii-and-queen-alexandra-in-coronation-rob-9-august-1902>

<sup>258</sup> COPY 1/457/73, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C13393057>

As for Russell & Sons, Bert Underwood recalled how the firm's head, John Lemmon Russell, called on him at his London office on the morning after the coronation "feeling extremely disconsolate." Unable to use the spoiled plate or secure another sitting with Queen Alexandra, Bert claimed he offered Russell use of one of Underwood's three Buckingham Palace negatives:

He generously admitted that this would save the day for him. He made a fine enlargement and etched in a beautiful background.

Again, this account is corroborated by "A National Portrait: The King and Queen on Coronation Day" that appeared in the illustrated weekly *Black & White* the following month (figure 46).



Figure 46. "A National Portrait: The King and Queen on Coronation Day."  
*Black & White*, September 20, 1902.

In the image, the King and Queen posed in the same positions and at the same angle as in Underwood's stereo. Additionally, the caption credit used by *Black and White*, "From a portrait, now first published, by Russell and Sons," hinted at the image's complicated birth. Looking at all the images, they confirm that the photographers were arranged in a semi-circle facing the royal couple with Underwood's stereoscopic camera located on the left, Downey's large-plate camera on the right, leaving Russell in a more central position. Given that the negative used by Russell was supplied by Underwood, its appearance in *Black and White* was a



further success for the company in terms of servicing the press with a commercially valuable royal photograph.

Underwood, Downey, and Russell were not the only photographers at Buckingham Palace on coronation day. In a memoir published in 1923, the society portrait photographer Alice Hughes recalled being present with her artist father, Edward, who was starting work on a new portrait of Queen Alexandra. Alice too was working, furthering a photographic relationship with the royal family dating back several years. In advance of the coronation, she identified a suitable location for photographing the Queen, described as “a covered balcony leading out of one of the drawing rooms with a good light.” In the memoir *My Father and I*, Alice briefly detailed her memories of August 9, 1902:

We arrived at the Palace in time to see the Queen and the Royal party set out for the Abbey.

After they had gone, my father and I lunched and wandered about the Palace till the Queen returned. She came to the balcony at once, wearing her crown. She looked very tired, but very lovely.

This account described what was clearly a pre-arranged photographic appointment. If, as Hughes claimed, “she [the Queen] came to the balcony at once,” this might explain why the royal couple posed only briefly in front of Underwood, Downey, and Russell. Hughes’ memoir also added other details that captured the opulence of the regalia worn by the monarch and his consort that Bert Underwood had been so keen to capture in three dimensions.

She [Queen Alexandra] let us examine the crown and pointed out the Koh-i-noor [sic], the most precious of all the royal gems. As she was showing it to us, a small diamond fell from her dress.

My father at once began to make a first sketch, and I took several photographs, but King Edward sent an impatient message that lunch was ready.<sup>259</sup>

Like Alice Hughes, it would appear W. & D. Downey was also involved in formally photographing members of the wider royal family once the coronation procession

---

<sup>259</sup> Alice Hughes, *My Father and I* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1923), 84.

returned to Buckingham Palace. In her memoir, Hughes recounted an anecdote involving “Prince George of Greece, who had come to be photographed.”<sup>260</sup> As copyright records confirm, the crown prince was amongst members of European royalty that Downey photographed.<sup>261</sup> Given this complex web of regal and courtly relationships informed by custom, practice, and official protocol, Underwood’s success in securing a photographic role at the very heart of the British court and executing the resulting opportunity was all the more notable.

At the time, Underwood was not shy about publicising what it had secured photographically at Buckingham Palace. The verso of a stereocard of the “King and Queen in their Coronation Robes” proclaimed: “Stereographed by Special Command to Mr. B. Underwood, August 9, 1902,” and concluded:

This stereograph was made by special permit from Lord Knollys, His Majesty’s Private Secretary, by direction of the King, and is the only stereoscopic portrait, in Coronation robes, of Their Majesties in existence.

Therefore, as an accurate historical record, it is invaluable.

This text echoed previous statements highlighted by this study about the emphasis placed by stereoscopy firms on the medium’s superiority compared with other forms of photography and illustration, in particular its knowledge-bearing properties. The stereocard narrative reappeared in Elmer Underwood’s company history written more than twenty years later. Whilst his account omitted to mention Lord Knollys, he was clear about who should get the credit for masterminding the company’s photographic coup:

It was Mr. Bert Underwood who successfully solicited the honor of photographing their Majesties King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in their Coronation robes on their return to Buckingham Palace on Coronation Day.<sup>262</sup>

---

<sup>260</sup> Hughes, *My Father*, 85.

<sup>261</sup> COPY 1/456/301-03, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 9, 2020, <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C14225725>

<sup>262</sup> “Copy of an Outline,” Robert Taft Photography Papers, accessed November 8, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/700>

This generous portrayal of his younger brother's role reflected self-attributed levels of persistence and ingenuity. However, it would be unwise and unfair to underestimate or undervalue the part played by others in helping achieve this accolade, particularly the company's London managers and stereoscopic photographers. In the final part of this chapter, their roles in these events are explored to better understand the dynamics at play in this complex photographic network.

### *Royal Family Photographs for the Press*

Immediately after the coronation, Underwood turned its attention to selling its stereoscopic "exclusive" to the press. Competition was intense just it had been for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. Illustrated weeklies in Britain such as *The Graphic* and *ILN* made extensive use of work by their own special artists, particularly in their special coronation numbers.<sup>263</sup> Though the cloudy and wet weather on the day was far from conducive, photography's contribution to illustrating events was more evident in their regular weekly editions. Among the credits on view was Underwood's collaborator, "J. Russell and Sons, Baker Street." In America, the company successfully placed its "coronation robes" photograph with *Collier's Weekly* in New York. Three weeks after the ceremony, the paper featured it prominently within a full-page article headlined "Gossip of the Coronation" (figure 47).<sup>264</sup>



Figure 47. "Gossip of the Coronation."  
*Collier's Weekly*, August 30, 1902.

---

<sup>263</sup> See "Coronation and Procession," *ILN*, August 14, 1902; and "Special Coronation Number," *Graphic*, August 13, 1902, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>264</sup> "Gossip of the Coronation," *Collier's Weekly*, August 30, 1902, British Library.

The photograph's origins and provenance featured in the accompanying caption as "from copyrighted stereoscopic photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York, 1902." The firm did not though have the stage to itself. It shared the page with a photograph of the King and Queen's crowns carried into Westminster Abbey supplied by London Stereoscopic, one of its long-established competitors. Given the portrayal of pomp and ceremony and large circulation of *Collier's Weekly*, the photograph's press appearance implicitly promoted the availability of an Underwood stereocard version of the photograph.

This intense period of networking, utilising the influence of both courtiers and court photographers, was one Underwood further exploited commercially in the weeks that followed. It produced several new stereographs featuring the royal family for use by the press. Just two days after the coronation, Underwood was at Devonshire House, London to photograph Queen Alexandra presenting medals to servicemen who fought in the recently concluded South African War.<sup>265</sup> The following Saturday, August 16, a naval review at Spithead, off Portsmouth merited significant photographic attention. In his memoir, Bert Underwood described the forces still being deployed by the company for its Edward VII stereograph project:

I had operators on different ships and I myself was on the English Admiral's flagship *The Royal Sovereign* and as the King's yacht passed, I obtained quite an illustrative picture.

At this point, the King's yacht, *Victoria & Albert III*, was playing host to visiting members of royal families from around Europe as well as other dignitaries.<sup>266</sup> A few days after the Spithead review, it was the location for an Underwood photograph that generated controversy in America about credits and breach of copyright. As at Buckingham Palace, the shoot was an assignment undertaken with Russell & Sons. As Bert recalled:

---

<sup>265</sup> "The Crowning of the King," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1902, 76, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto2ellia/page/74/mode/2up>

<sup>266</sup> "History," *Royal Yacht Britannia*, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk/about/history/>

... by kind permission of Lord Knollys, the King's Secretary, Mr. Russel [sic] and I were permitted to go aboard where we each made a photograph of His Majesty with his royal and distinguished guests on deck.<sup>267</sup>

Further mention here of Lord Knollys highlighted the private secretary's continuing involvement in realising the company's ambitions. The resulting photograph appeared in another American periodical, *Harper's Weekly*, on September 20, captioned "one of the most remarkable gatherings of distinguished soldiers, sailors, and members of royal families ever gotten together." Amongst the forty or so figures portrayed, individual captions identified Queen Alexandra, Empress Eugénie as wife of Napoleon III, Princess Victoria and Princess Henry of Battenberg as well as Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, the Crown Prince of Denmark, King Edward VII and the Prince of Wales (figure 48).



Figure 48. "The Party on the King's Yacht during the Coronation Manoeuvres."  
*Harper's Weekly*, September 20, 1902.

The photograph went uncredited, which at this point in press history was a usual occurrence. As a result, it might have eluded this study as an Underwood example were it not for a brief article that *Harper's Weekly* published several weeks later. In an unobtrusive position on an inside page, the paper pointed to the group

---

<sup>267</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience," Box 1, Folder 1, 18.

photograph taken on the royal yacht as one fully registered and copyrighted by Underwood. It then admitted: "It was an error in not stating that the picture was from a stereoscopic photograph made by this well-known firm," highlighting that Underwood had:

...recently obtained some very unusual privileges in England, having, by special permission made a stereoscopic photograph of the King and Queen at Buckingham Palace in their Coronation Robes immediately on their Majesties return from Westminster Abbey.

This is the only stereoscopic photograph in existence of this historic occasion.<sup>268</sup>

Whether this clarification made up for the earlier omission, it made a wider audience aware that Underwood's "coronation robes" stereoscopic photograph was unique and, by implication, was still on sale. However, by late-October when the correction appeared, the company had secured a further series of royal stereographs. They happened during a post-coronation stay at Balmoral Castle, using the royal family's Scottish home as a backdrop.

According to Bert Underwood's memoir, the photo shoot followed a tip-off from Lord Knollys. Edward VII, recuperating from serious illness and the rigours of his coronation ceremony, travelled to Balmoral "for a more complete rest." Bert recounted how he too travelled to Scotland and then waited. A week later, just as he was about give up and leave, the royal party finally arrived. Bert's memoir continued:

It seemed for a time that I was not to be rewarded for my patience and trouble; that the King was not inclined towards more pictures, but at last, I was allowed a 'quick' opportunity and obtained a picture of his Majesty in his Scottish costume ...

I also photographed the King with four of his grandchildren grouped around him (figure 49).<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>268</sup> "The Millionaire and the P.D.O.," *Harper's Weekly*, October 25, 1902, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015030326303&view=1up&seq=655&q1=Underwood>

<sup>269</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience," Box 1, Folder 1, 20-21.





contention that Ellam, as representative of a worldwide network of stereoscopic photographers employed by Underwood, helped the company successfully supply the international press with newsworthy photographs taken from its stereographs?

In fact, Underwood's Edward VII stereograph project was partly enabled by a connection supplied by Ellam himself. Residing each weekend at Great Dunmow in Essex, the photographer was a near neighbour of the Countess of Warwick. A former mistress to King Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales, Frances Evelyn Maynard, or "Daisy" as she was known, inherited her family estate at Easton Lodge near Dunmow when aged twenty-one. In the 1880s and 1890s, the estate was the scene of extravagant weekend house parties, attended by society figures including the future King.<sup>271</sup> Daisy's largesse may have aided Ellam's weekly travel to and from London in pursuit of his work as a photographer. To enable visitors to reach Easton Lodge more easily, she arranged for the building of a train halt at nearby Little Canfield.<sup>272</sup>

Photographically, there was a strong link between Ellam and the Countess of Warwick. During that coronation summer of 1902, she hosted society events at Warwick Castle, her husband's family seat. Because of the ceremony's postponement, further festivities were organised to entertain visitors from the British Empire who remained in London for several extra weeks. In his memoir, Bert Underwood referred to attending what he described as "a lavish fete" at Warwick Castle.<sup>273</sup> Press reports suggest that this was a gathering of "Indian Princes and Colonial Premiers" held on Saturday August 2. Guests who travelled to Warwick by special train from Paddington station included the Maharaja of Bikanar, the Maharaja and Maharani of Cooch Behar, and the Aga Kahn.<sup>274</sup> Given Ellam's connections in Dunmow and his work on Underwood's Edward VII stereograph project, there is a

---

<sup>271</sup> For a biographical account, see Sushila Anand, *Daisy: The Life and Loves of the Countess of Warwick* (London: Piatkus, 2008).

<sup>272</sup> "History," *The Forgotten Gardens of Easton Lodge*, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.eastonlodge.co.uk/the-gardens/history/>

<sup>273</sup> Bert Underwood, "A Photographer's Experience," Box 1, Folder 1, 9.

<sup>274</sup> "Indian and Colonial Guests at Warwick Castle," *Reading Mercury*, August 8, 1902, British Newspaper Archive.



likelihood that he accompanied his boss to Warwick Castle, helping secure the resulting photograph of the countess with her cosmopolitan visitors (figure 50).<sup>275</sup>



Figure 50. The Countess of Warwick (front row, middle, cradling her son) with Indian Princes and Colonial Premiers, Warwick Castle, August 2, 1902. Underwood & Underwood Collection, George Eastman Museum.

Circumstantial evidence aside, the presence of Ellam's name on copyright records for Underwood's royal stereographs confirms his position as a photographer trusted by the company with prestigious assignments. It is more difficult to pinpoint the exact nature of his employment status with Underwood, whether as a staff member or more likely as a freelance. But it was not his only significant contribution as the firm built on its growing reputation as a supplier of press photographs. Following up its success with an American president and a British monarch, Underwood created a similar stereograph project around the new pope.

This undertaking came to fruition in 1903 following the election of Cardinal Giuseppe Sarto of Venice. As Pope Pius X, his staunch political and religious conservatism dominated the Roman Catholic Church in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>276</sup> Within a few months of his election, an Underwood team led by Eldon R. Ross, its

---

<sup>275</sup> Underwood, Eastman, 1988.0202.0005.

My thanks to Pamela Bromley, Archivist, Warwick Castle for her help in confirming the provenance of this photograph.

<sup>276</sup> "St. Pius X," accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Pius-X>

London manager, travelled to the Vatican. As was its practice, the company moved quickly to copyright its work. Again, these records named “James Edward Ellam” as the author of photographs of the new pontiff including one on his throne chair.<sup>277</sup> Worldwide interest within the Catholic community, estimated in 1900 at around 266 million, meant such photographs had huge commercial potential.<sup>278</sup> Underwood’s stereoscopic project at the Vatican appeared as *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father through the Stereoscope*, published in 1904. Together with thirty-six stereos, a guidebook with maps shepherded the “pilgrim” from location to location. Taking in various “positions,” the series featured the pope together with members of his household. Whilst sets of stereographs with their accompanying paraphernalia took longer to compile and publish, the demand from the press for fresh photographs of a newsworthy figure like the pope was far more urgent. Underwood responded quickly by offering shots portraying Pius X within the Vatican precincts. By mid-November, *Collier’s* in America was able to devote its front page to what the paper labelled “the first picture of the Pope in his pontifical robes in the Throne Room of the Vatican” (figure 51).



Figure 51. “Pope Pius X: First Picture Taken of the Pope in His Pontifical Robes.”  
*Collier’s*, November 14, 1903.

<sup>277</sup> COPY 1/467/107-15 and 1/468/52, National Archives, Kew,  
<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C14123462>

<sup>278</sup> Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds. *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020).

Use of “first picture” emphasised a degree of originality and exclusivity that became deeply ingrained in the culture of newspapers and magazine publishing. In time, “exclusive” and other terms like it became devalued by over-use. At this point though, it is striking how *Collier’s* highlighted access to the new pope secured by Underwood and made commercial capital from what was a conventionally posed portrait. However, as it had at Buckingham Palace, the company preferred to overlook the role played at the Vatican by one of its stereoscopic photographers. As the opening sentence of *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father* revealed:

Preparations for this pilgrimage were made by various members of the publishers’ staff, but the completion of the undertaking – the admission to the presence of His Holiness Pope Pius X – was mainly the work of Mr. E. R. Ross, the London manager for the house.”<sup>279</sup>

As to who wrote or authorised this company narrative, it may have been “Mr. E.R. Ross” himself. A travelling salesman prior to joining Underwood, Ross arrived in London from America in the summer of 1902 just as the company’s Edward VII stereograph project was concluding.<sup>280</sup> An author of Underwood publications including *A Specimen Canvass*, and *The Underwood Travel System and How to Sell It*, he became integral to its further development as a photographic company. Running its London operation until 1912, he returned to New York and later joined the board as company secretary, before joining its rivals Keystone during the 1920s.<sup>281</sup>

As to how Underwood obtained such privileged access to the Vatican, networking and connections made during the 1890s played a significant part. The company first had official dealings with the Catholic hierarchy during a photographic trip to Rome in 1892. In another surviving fragment of Bert Underwood’s unpublished memoir, “My First Efforts with a Camera, Monte Carlo, St. Peters [sic] and the Vatican,” he recalled visiting the eternal city in time for Easter. During what was one of his early forays as a stereoscopic photographer, Bert obtained permits to visit the Forum,

---

<sup>279</sup> John Talbot Smith, *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father Through the Stereoscope* (London: Underwood & Underwood, 1904), 5.

<sup>280</sup> “Eldon R. Ross,” passport no. 1853, US Embassy, London, October 6, 1904, My Ancestry.

<sup>281</sup> 1930 US Census, 587 Edinburgh Road, Hamilton Township, New Jersey, My Ancestry.

Coliseum, and other ancient sites. But it was the American College in Rome, where Catholic clergy from the United States trained, that proved the most helpful. Aided by a “Father O’Connell,” Bert received permission to photograph inside St. Peter’s and the Vatican.<sup>282</sup> In his memoir, he claimed Father O’Connell later became “Cardinal O’Connell of Boston, the Dean of our American Cardinals,” a seeming reference to Cardinal William Henry O’Connell, archbishop of Boston from 1907 until his death. However, a stronger candidate is the Most Rev. Dennis Joseph O’Connell, rector of the American College in Rome from 1884 to 1895.<sup>283</sup> Even if mistaken, Bert was still busily making connections well into his sixties.

Given an ability seen elsewhere in this chapter to both create and utilise networks, both Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee and King Edward VII’s coronation provided opportunities to re-connect with the Vatican and its officials. At both events, the archbishop of Nicosia, Merry del Val, represented Pope Leo XIII. With the election of Pius X, Merry del Val became a cardinal and then the new papal secretary. Given his considerable power and influence, it was revealing that Underwood photographed him in his Vatican office for inclusion in *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father*.<sup>284</sup> In 1905, the relationship between Underwood and the papacy was cemented when Merry del Val wrote to Eldon R. Ross at the company’s office in London.

Sir, His Holiness Pope Pius X wishes me to tell you how much he has admired the stereoscopic views which Messrs. Underwood & Underwood have kindly presented to Him.

As a token of his special appreciation of these very interesting photographs His Holiness bids me send you in His name a silver medal together with His thanks.

Yours Faithfully, Cardinal Merry del Val.<sup>285</sup>

A facsimile appeared in editions of its stereoscopic “pilgrimage” among several pages devoted to “official commendations.” Endorsement by the pope was an

---

<sup>282</sup> Bert Underwood, “My First Efforts with a Camera: Monte Carlo, St. Peters [sic], and the Vatican,” Underwood and Underwood Collection, Box 1, Folder 4, 3-4, George Eastman Museum.

<sup>283</sup> See James M. O’Toole, *Militant and Triumphant: William Henry O’Connell and the Catholic Church in Boston* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); and Robert F. McNamara, *The American College in Rome* (Rochester, New York: The Christopher Press, 1956).

<sup>284</sup> Smith, *Holy Father*, 94-99.

<sup>285</sup> Smith, *Holy Father*, 14.

imprimatur that Underwood actively used as a marketing tool. As a photographer, Ellam also regarded this papal project as a high point in his own career. At the time of his death in 1920, he was working on the staff of a Fleet Street photo agency.<sup>286</sup> A newspaper account of Ellam's funeral in Dunmow reported:

On one occasion he photographed the Pope in the Vatican at Rome and received from his holiness [sic] a medal to commemorate the event.<sup>287</sup>

This evidence further supports an argument made in this chapter that he was amongst those Underwood stereographers who made a measurable contribution to the development of early press photography. Despite this conclusion, his career only merited a "news in brief" story when the *Times* reported his death:

Mr. James Edward Ellam, who had been associated with the London News Agency Photos Limited, for many years, died after being knocked down and killed by an omnibus in Fleet-street on Saturday morning.<sup>288</sup>

What is clear from evidence presented in this chapter is that Ellam and his pioneering contemporaries from the earliest days of press photography are absent from existing histories. This is mostly because their stories have not been eulogised in memoirs and ghosted autobiographies like a self-selecting or well-connected few such as, for example, James H. "Jimmy" Hare or Frances Benjamin Johnston. The importance of reclaiming figures like "J.E. Ellam of Yarm" from the margins of photographic history is to understand their contribution, and also their part in the extensive business network of a stereoscopic company like Underwood. The skill and acumen they demonstrated in stereographing newsworthy events such as Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, the coronation of King Edward VII and election of Pope Pius X provided the press with images through which the telling of mass market news stories could be visualised.

---

<sup>286</sup> "London News Agency Photos Ltd," *Press Photo History Project*, accessed November 2, 2020, <https://www.pressphotohistory.com/alfred-james-robinson-56-years-staff-at-london-news-agency-photos-ltd-1908-1964/>

<sup>287</sup> "Dunmow Man Killed in London," *Essex Chronicle*, January 30, 1920, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>288</sup> "News in Brief," *Times* (UK), January 26, 1920, Gale Primary Sources.

## *Conclusion*

In a few short years, Underwood succeeded in securing co-operation from and photographic access to occupants of the White House, Buckingham Palace, and the Vatican. This achievement offers further evidence of the power of stereography to communicate with a mass audience whether by stereocard or in the columns of the press.

Those representatives of power and influence who recognised the value of this dual approach included George B. Cortelyou in Washington, DC, Lord Knollys in London, and Cardinal Merry del Val in Rome amongst many others. All became key members of Underwood's worldwide network of contacts as the company expanded its press operation. Underwood's relationship continued with the royal family in Britain, enabled by figures like Lord Knollys, as it stereographed a range of regal events at home and abroad. These included the Delhi Durbar of 1903 and state funeral of King Edward VII in 1910.

Also, many of the photographs highlighted in this chapter became stock shots that could be retrieved from the company's archive whenever a newspaper or magazine needed a suitable image to illustrate a news or feature story. For a new shot, valuable contacts were already in place to help create it. In 1910, Underwood supplied a new photograph of Cardinal Merry del Val to *Goodwin's Weekly*. As the paper noted, he "has been very much in the public eye in the past few months" (figure 52).



Figure 52. "Cardinal Merry Del Val, Papal Secretary of State to Pope Pius X."  
*Goodwin's Weekly*, September 13, 1910.

But it was George B. Cortelyou who was the pre-eminent figure in helping Underwood realise its goal of supplying photographs to the world's press. His pivotal role in events bookends this chapter.

When the company made its first tentative steps into the field in the late 1890s, Cortelyou was McKinley's assistant secretary. After serving as secretary to Theodore Roosevelt, he became chairman of the Republican National Committee, responsible for seeking the president's re-election in 1904. In that campaigning role, Cortelyou wrote to William Loeb, his successor as White House secretary, on behalf of an old contact at Underwood, one Henry Strohmeyer. Cortelyou had a favour to ask of Loeb:

Mr. H. A. Strohmeyer, whom you know and about whom I have already written you, has made another request of you, concerning his photographs of the President and Senator Fairbanks [his vice-presidential running mate] on the occasion of the latter's visit to Oyster Bay [Roosevelt's summer home].

Strohmeyer's firm circulates many thousands of these pictures and they are very effective. He is as you know a good fellow, and I hope you will afford every facility.

Of course, I understand what a burden this is to the President, but I am sure he will be a willing victim for the good of the cause.

Very sincerely yours, Geo. B. Cortelyou.<sup>289</sup>

A word in the right ear had the desired effect. A few weeks later, Strohmeyer stereographed Roosevelt together with Fairbanks. When the resulting image appeared in the press, Underwood received its standard company credit and the wording “from a stereograph.”

This simultaneously satisfied the requirements of the company as a supplier of stereoscopic views that doubled as press photographs and met the strategic needs of a key figure and important contact on the American political scene. In this one photograph, the symbiotic nature of stereoscopic photography and the press in the first decade of the twentieth century revealed itself (figure 53).



Figure 53. “President Roosevelt and Senator Fairbanks.”  
New York Public Libraries Digital Collection.

---

<sup>289</sup> George B. Cortelyou to William Loeb, July 7, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Dickinson State University, ND, <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o45940>



The next chapter examines stereoscopy's contribution to the visual look of early press photography. Were stereoscopic photographers, employed by a company like Underwood, trained in pursuit of achieving a house style? To that end, did an approach principally designed to create a three-dimensional viewing experience also result in multi-layered photographs with a recognisable "look" that influenced the visual culture of newspapers and magazines?

### 3. The Training of Photographers

#### *Introduction*

The training of photographers helped shape the visual appearance of photographs for use by the press in the early years of the twentieth century. This aspect of photographic history has received less attention, largely because of a widespread belief that press photography was shaped by canonical figures whose memoirs record their personal contributions to the genre and its emergence.<sup>290</sup> However, hard-to-find evidence analysed by this study proves that training was a crucial factor and one that merits further consideration and study. This was because professional photography firms in this market needed a more strategic approach to their production of images for the press. Delivering a quality saleable product was essential.

Among firms involved in this trade were those in the stereoscopic field whose criteria for a successful stereograph were integral to the wider commercial success of their photographs. The importance of training was related to the fact that these images were destined for sale in multiple markets as demand grew from publishers wishing to exploit illustrative opportunities offered by halftone printing. This thesis argues that training played a key role in successfully servicing customers from the domestic and international press. In turn, training also directly influenced the appearance and content of press photographs more extensively than has been previously recognised.

In the mid-1890s, new institutions began work whose sole purpose was to provide the press with photographs. Sources disagree about both the chronology of these events and who the pioneering participants were. According to Beegan, the first specialist photographic agencies in Britain and America respectively were the Illustrated Journals Photographic Supply Company, founded in London in 1894, and

---

<sup>290</sup> Examples of the genre include James Jarché, *People I Have Shot: Reminiscences of a Press Photographer* (London: Methuen, 1934); and Bert Garai, *I Get My Picture* (London: Bles, 1938).

the Bain News Picture Agency, which emerged in New York the following year.<sup>291</sup> Carlebach, however, cited 1898 as the year when the George Bain News Service began life as “the first commercial organisation in the United States to collect and distribute news photographs.”<sup>292</sup> Richard Lacayo and George Russell agreed with both Beegan and Carlebach that Illustrated Journals in Ludgate Hill, London, was “the world’s first press agency.” It offered a twenty-four-hour service for the delivery of any photograph in stock. But their study credited Underwood rather than Bain as the “first American photographic agency to follow suit,” locating this development in 1896 rather than 1897 as this study has concluded.<sup>293</sup> It is debateable though whether Underwood was a “photographic agency” in the same sense as can be understood of Bain or Illustrated Journals. The exact details of who and when was first into the field and the nature of their business model may remain unresolved. But the bigger picture is that by 1900, various players servicing the press had entered this market. In summary, the resulting business environment was decidedly competitive.

Establishing a reliable supply of good-quality images for newspapers and magazines required a consistent and considered approach to the task at hand. The focus of a business strategy to address this challenge centred on a new generation of managers and photographers, part of an emerging professional society.<sup>294</sup> Born in the 1870s and 1880s, these men and women, aged in their twenties and thirties, were attracted to employment in the new field of press photography and its related trades. Those working in-house for a particular publication were schooled to meet its individual requirements and expectations. In contrast, those employed by the new photographic agencies and suppliers needed to create and offer saleable images to customers with a wide range of requirements. This saleability was both desirable and essential. These companies’ commercial fortunes were dependent on delivering visually engaging photographs that would repeatedly sell. Indeed, a pattern is

---

<sup>291</sup> Beegan, *Mass Image*, 164.

<sup>292</sup> Carlebach, *Bain’s New York*, vii.

<sup>293</sup> Richard Lacayo and George Russell, *Eyewitness: 150 Years of Photojournalism* (New York: Time, 1990), 34.

<sup>294</sup> Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 18.

recognisable in the business approach taken by the most influential and successful of the new photographic agencies and suppliers during this period.

This chapter explores the role played by training and the working methods instilled into stereoscopic photographers employed by Underwood, supplying images to the press as part of its business activities. Its corporate vision of what a commercial photograph should look like was manifest in a training academy at its works and studio in Arlington, New Jersey. The visual qualities Underwood stereographers needed to reproduce are revealed by analysing company photographs as they appeared in the pages of the press. In turn, previously unstudied company records help connect these stereoscopic press photographs to individual camera operators exposed to this training regime. An analysis of Underwood's contribution not only sheds new light on figures previously undetected by studies of early news photography and photojournalism. It also informs a re-evaluation of the part played by trained stereoscopic photographers as key contributors to the successful creation of press images. The qualities integral to a successfully executed stereograph recognisably affected the visual appearance of the photographs these Underwood employees trained to produce.

### *Wanted: Photographers*

One of the challenges facing companies wishing to meet growing demand for press photographs either side of 1900 was ensuring such images were of sufficient quality. This applied to matching technical specifications with the variable reproductive opportunities afforded by halftone printing. Also, each photograph needed the requisite commercial appeal. A common theme of existing histories of the first specialist photographic agencies was recruitment and training of suitable photographers. In America, George Grantham Bain's established role in this narrative is reflected in a collection of 40,000 glass negatives held by the Library of

Congress, Washington, DC.<sup>295</sup> The photographic organisation that bore his name, the George Bain News Service, later titled Bain's News Service, took the form of a syndicate. Each day, apart from Sundays and holidays, it used mail or messenger to deliver around eight photographs to clients accompanied by explanatory written material. In return, newspapers sent Bain a similar number of their own photographs. The monthly fee ranged from \$30 to \$60 [\$750 to \$1500 today] and was higher for an exclusive contract in a city. To provide this service, Bain augmented his files with pictures bought from professional photographers and studios across America and abroad.<sup>296</sup> On occasion, he also hired freelancers. Amongst them was Frances Benjamin Johnston, featured earlier in this study, for whom Bain occasionally acted as agent and adviser. When Bain grew dissatisfied with the work produced for him by studio photographers, he decided to hire and train his own photographic staff.

During the years prior to the First World War, New York was home to a vibrant press. At one point, according to the New York Press Photographers Association, the city had eleven daily newspapers. Competing with Bain were wire services and other syndicates. These included Brown Brothers, Acme, Gideon Service, and Central News, all trying to out scoop each other.<sup>297</sup> One of Bain's early hires was J. Hal Steffen whose long and successful press career exemplified the importance of talent-spotting and investment in training that such pioneering photographic agencies were prepared to make. Born in New York, Steffen was still in his teens when he served a two-year apprenticeship with Bain's News Service before joining the staff of the *New York Tribune* in 1906. During a career in news photography and journalism lasting more than three decades, he worked for the *New York Times*, for Underwood's photographic competitor Keystone as a news editor, and as a freelance photographer, returning at various points to the *New York Tribune*.<sup>298</sup> What Steffen's apprenticeship with Bain entailed by way of day-to-day activities is not recorded. However, the key point to note here was the importance attached by

---

<sup>295</sup> Of these, around 1600 photographic prints are digitised. See <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ggbain/>

<sup>296</sup> Carlebach, *Bain's New York*, xviii.

<sup>297</sup> "Our History," *New York Press Photographers Association*, accessed November 10, 2020, <https://nyppa.org/our-history>

<sup>298</sup> "J. Hal Steffen, A Camera Expert: Newspaper Photographer in City For 35 Years," *New York Times*, April 14, 1937, <https://nyti.ms/33yhPO6>

emerging press photography enterprises to hiring the right staff and training them to produce saleable photographs (figure 54).



Figure 54. J. Hal Steffen, photographer with Bain's News Service.  
From *New York Times* obituary, 1937.

Like Bain, Underwood placed similar emphasis on the importance of recruitment and training. Fresh insights into how and why the company set about producing a business strategy to address this come from Bert Underwood's unpublished memoir, cited throughout this study. In the section titled "My First Efforts with a Camera: Monte Carlo, St. Peters [sic], and the Vatican," he wrote about how the company first set about engaging its own photographers. This decision followed a decade of acting as sales agents for other American stereoscopic firms. The decisive moment came in 1890 when Bert, together with his wife Susie and a sales team, arrived in Liverpool from New York to set up an Underwood office in Britain.<sup>299</sup> Operating as a "Wholesaler of Photographs," he recalled in his memoir:

We were in great need of good European scenes, especially for our English trade.

We had tried to get good photographers to make these for us, but while they would make excellent negatives, they nearly always lacked that something which goes to make a picture salable [sic].

---

<sup>299</sup> 1891 UK Census, 18 Seymour Street, St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Liverpool, Schedule no. 39, My Ancestry.

During my nine years' experience at the selling end of the business, I had developed a knowledge of why certain pictures proved good sellers and others, perhaps of the same subject, did not.

It was position, foreground, perspective, lighting, life.<sup>300</sup>

This photographic philosophy, distilled into a pithy phrase, was perfected by the time Bert wrote his memoir at the twilight of his business career in the 1920s. What was significant about its five-step method was that its components were already in place in 1901 when Underwood became an incorporated company. In an article published in the inaugural edition of its quarterly magazine, *The Stereoscopic Photograph*, Underwood directly addressed the question of what qualities it looked for in the photographers it hired and trained, and how those qualities became manifest in its photographs (figure 55).<sup>301</sup>



Figure 55. *The Stereoscopic Photograph*.  
First published by Underwood in June 1901.

The article was intended to impress an audience actively engaged with stereoscopy. Amongst them were students attending academic institutions listed on the front cover

<sup>300</sup> Bert Underwood, "My First Efforts," Box 1, Folder 4, 1, George Eastman Museum.

<sup>301</sup> "Stereograph Making," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901, 24-25,  
<https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1elli/page/24/mode/2up>

who doubled as door-to-door sales agents for its products. The article, “Stereograph Making,” illustrated the care taken by the company in producing its core product. The text crystallised its approach to stereoscopy at a crucial moment. Like Bain’s News Service and other fledgling agencies, Underwood was taking initial steps towards embracing press photography as a media platform. Unlike Bain and its acolytes though, Underwood’s starting point was stereoscopic. How this differentiated the company’s photographic approach is answered in the next section of this chapter.

### *“Stereograph Making”*

Underwood’s article began with a statement of the obvious, though one it felt it needed to make plain for the lay person. It described how the “complicated and protracted” process of making stereographs began with the photographer, who “secures the exposures upon the plates by means of a binocular camera.” Its operators needed several key qualities when on location. It noted:

For field work it is essential that the photographers should be not only skilled in their work but should possess a keen artistic taste in order to select their subjects and the best stand-points from which to photograph them.”

By highlighting the importance of photographic skill, experience in using a stereoscopic camera was essential. Accepting this background as a pre-requisite, the company then had a firm foundation upon which to build any training. The first two qualities, highlighted as “artistic taste” in selecting suitable subjects and choosing “the best stand-points” from which to photograph them, merit further consideration to fully understand what impact they had on the resulting photographs.

Firstly, notions of “artistic taste” were highly conventionalised and so relatively easy to learn. To provide training in this area, it would seem reasonable to conclude that Underwood shared what it perceived to be artistically tasteful examples of its stereoscopic craft with photographers new to the company. By 1901, the company had accumulated a decade of experience and knowledge from its own photography of subjects around the world for its *Stereoscopic Tours* business, later branded its



*Travel System*. Its own library and archive offered myriad examples from which to choose. Secondly, the concept of “best stand-points” placed emphasis on the choices made by an individual photographer. Crary’s observation that pronounced stereoscopic effects depended upon the presence of objects or obtrusive forms in the near or middle ground of the stereograph was integral to securing this outcome.<sup>302</sup> Given this, Underwood understandably emphasised the importance of the physical placing of the camera, whether on a tripod or in hand. What was in the viewfinder had a significant effect on the three-dimensional qualities achieved in any given shot.

This notion of “best stand-points” also mirrored the first three components of the photographic philosophy encapsulated by Bert Underwood, namely “position, foreground, perspective.” Indeed, one dictionary definition of “perspective” goes to the heart of what the company had in mind when its photographers went to work. It defined the term as:

... the theory or art of suggesting three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface, in order to recreate the appearance and spatial relationships that objects or a scene in recession present to the eye.<sup>303</sup>

Given the stereoscopic context in which Underwood was working, this perfectly described the visual effect its trained photographers were striving to achieve. As a visual hallmark, it becomes clear when analysing the company’s photographs. In the context of this study, it is particularly relevant when considering how those images taken “from stereographs” appeared in the press and contributed to the evolution of what constituted an illustrative photograph.

The next stage of the process offered further insights into Underwood’s training regime, namely the developing of the photographic plate. In this process, company stereographers played a key role. Before addressing this in detail, Underwood pointed out “the finest quality of plates should be utilised.” The strong implication was, in trying to achieve the best photographic results, it was worth spending money.

---

<sup>302</sup> Crary, *Techniques*, 124.

<sup>303</sup> “Perspective,” *Collins Dictionary*, accessed November 10, 2020, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/perspective>

Clues as to where the company sourced its plates come from trade advertisements of the time. The inaugural issue of *Stereoscopic Photograph* promoted the “G. Cramer Dry Plate Company of St Louis, Missouri.” In terms of high-quality photographic plates, Cramer was a key competitor in the United States to the Eastman Kodak Company.<sup>304</sup> The advert also stated that “all photographic illustrations in this magazine are from Cramer Dry Plates.” As the magazine featured examples of Underwood’s own stereocards as photographic illustrations, this suggested that its photographers used plates from a single and prominent supplier. As to cameras used in conjunction with “Cramer Dry Plates,” an advert on the page opposite endorsed the Folmer and Schwing Manufacturing Company of 404 Broadway, New York (figure 56).

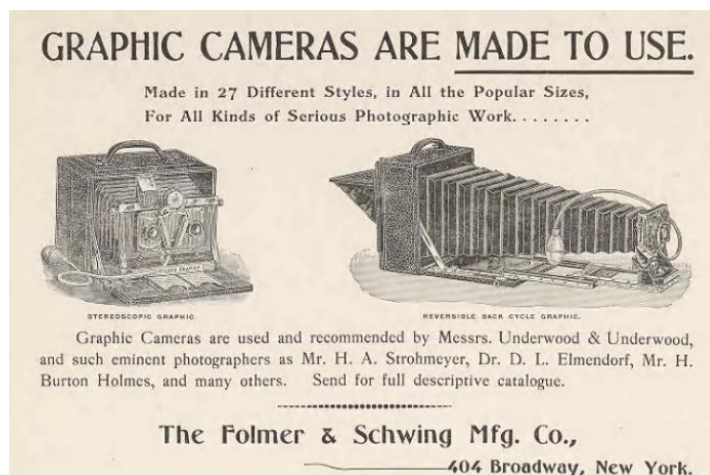


Figure 56. “Graphic Cameras are Made to Use.”  
*Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901.

The ad proclaimed its “*Graphic Cameras* were used and recommended by Messrs. Underwood & Underwood” and cited “Mr. H.A. Strohmeyer” among those photographers who used its products. As Henry Strohmeyer joined the Underwood board as company vice president in 1901, the advert implicitly underlined that connection as well as promoting his personal reputation as an accomplished stereographer. Promising “27 Different Styles, in All the Popular Sizes,” it featured a line drawing of a stereoscopic *Graphic* camera. In terms of the latest equipment,

<sup>304</sup> “Glass Plates - G. Cramer Dry Plate Co., Double Coated Photo Dry Plates, circa 1900-1919,” Museums Victoria Collections, Melbourne, Australia, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/items/2078532>

Underwood's choice of the *Graphic* brand placed it at the forefront of camera technology. What later became known as the *Graflex* camera was hugely influential. After Folmer & Schwing succumbed to the all-conquering Eastman Kodak Company in 1905, it produced the *Speed Graphic*. This model became the go-to gadget for press photographers after its launch in 1912, later used most famously by the New York photographer Arthur Fellig, known as "Weegee."<sup>305</sup>

Having armed its photographers with the latest equipment, Underwood turned its attention to developing the exposed plate. Again, the company had specific requirements that combined technique and judgement. The article text continued:

It next devolves upon a man of the highest technical ability as a photographic chemist, and one who has the best judgement, to develop the plate, and to bring out all that there is on it.

Just as photographic skill was a given criterion, Underwood looked to the background of new recruits for experience of developing their own photographic plates. A photographer usually had these skills if they ran their own photography business or processed customers' photographs. If this was not the case, Underwood may have offered opportunities to learn these skills by way of supervised assignments.

The importance of this stage in the photographic process is writ large in company records. The Underwood memoranda book examined for this study details the company's photography during the period from 1906 until the First World War. This handwritten document features assignment titles and negative numbers alongside named photographers. Additionally, the data reveals the company developed its glass plate negatives in locations around the world. Multiple entries refer to "dev. here" at Underwood facilities in the United States, or "dev. abroad" in company offices overseas and in the field. Because its photographers travelled the globe, negatives sent by mail arrived at Underwood offices for processing, primarily those in New York and London. The inherent fragility of glass plate negatives meant the

---

<sup>305</sup> Pritchard, *50 Cameras*, 73.

company made copy negatives to protect themselves against breakages. Rather than use the original negatives, prints came from these copies. This was in line with the practice of other publishers and photographic firms at the time.<sup>306</sup>

In some cases, photographers named in Underwood's memoranda book were identified as developing their own negatives or those of a colleague.<sup>307</sup> These arrangements reveal a degree of trust and a shared corporate set of values as to what was required during this process. This evidence also supports the stated company requirement for each photographer to be "of the highest technical ability as a photographic chemist" in order "to bring out all there is on it [the plate]." The company's prescribed combination of both "artistic taste" and "best judgement" leads to the conclusion that a corporate culture was integral to knowing what these qualities looked like photographically and how they were realised in a print. This question is answered later in this chapter by examining photographs executed by named stereoscopic photographers working for Underwood.

After capturing the shot and developing the exposed plate, it was at this point in the photographic process that its photographers needed to exercise "the greatest care." In considering the correct choice of paper for its prints, the article picked up a theme recorded in Bert Underwood's unpublished memoir involving "why certain pictures proved good sellers and others, perhaps of the same subject, did not." The article continued:

It is these finished pictures that arrest the attention of the purchasers, influencing them either favourably or otherwise in their criticism of the stereographs.

In 1901, drawing on two decades of experience in the views business, double-coated albumen paper was Underwood's choice as the most satisfactory for obtaining the finest stereographs. It had reached this conclusion after continued experiments:

---

<sup>306</sup> Kempler, "James Ricalton's Travels," 124-25.

<sup>307</sup> Information from Underwood memoranda book courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

A finished albumen stereograph possesses a degree of brilliancy, richness, distinctness of detail, and faithful gradation of the delicate tones, such as is not yielded by any other so-called high-class papers, which are invariably deficient in those salient characteristics essential to the successful stereograph.

This statement found support from other influential voices in contemporary photography. Amongst them was Thomas Bedding, FRPS, editor of the *British Journal of Photography*. Founded in 1854, the *BJP*'s editorial brief was "to record the scientific development of a fledgling medium." As editor from 1895, Bedding was an enthusiastic supporter of stereoscopy and Underwood's various enterprises. The company's relationship with Bedding is likely to have developed during the mid-to-late 1890s when Elmer and Bert Underwood lived in London, and company managers and staff began to be active in the capital's wider photographic community. As one of the running themes explored in this study, nurturing a business relationship or friendship with such a well-connected photographic figure would have been in keeping with the company's approach to networking.

An article with Bedding's byline appeared in the March 1902 issue of *The Stereoscopic Photograph*. Titled "Leaves from a Stereoscopist's Note Book," it was informed by his involvement in photography dating back a quarter of a century and contained personal reflections on the ideal printing process:

As one who learned photographic printing on albumen paper, I always look with a loving eye upon this process and especially the rich images it yields for stereoscopic examination.

Agreeing with Underwood's conclusion about the superiority of printing stereos on albumen paper, Bedding added:

Experimentally, I have worked with other prints and developing paper for the purpose, but these latter sometimes evince a tendency towards greenness of deposit which is most objectionable.

He concluded by citing examples from his own collection of paper slides produced by

the first-generation of British stereoscopic companies in the 1850s and 1860s. These included George Washington Wilson, Valentine Blanchard, and William England.

With few exceptions, they are as fresh and beautiful to-day as ever they could have been; and what is more ... the pleasure of examining them increases with time ...

It is surely remarkable that after a lapse of fifty years the most admired process in stereography should be the one that was originally resorted to in the day when paper slides first came into vogue.<sup>308</sup>

This analysis of Underwood's article "Stereograph Making" suggests the care it took in producing stereographs would have been replicated to produce a photographic print from a stereo negative for use by the press (figure 57).



Figure 57. "Stereograph Making," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901.

In this context, art departments and picture editors employed by magazines and newspapers to secure the best illustrative material were the beneficiaries of a

---

<sup>308</sup> Thomas Bedding, "Leaves from a Stereoscopist's Note Book," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, March 1902, 180, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1ellic/page/178/mode/2up>

considered approach taken to photographic manufacture.

### *Underwood's Training Academy*

Having analysed what Underwood required to produce commercial stereographs, what evidence is there that the company instructed its photographers by way of formal training? There are clues about its practice in the brief company history written by Elmer Underwood in the 1920s. It described how the company's project to create its stereoscopic *Travel System* evolved:

This world-wide photographic undertaking required the expenditure of several hundreds of thousands of dollars and ten years or more of time.

Much of the photographing was done by the Messrs. Underwood personally, and much of it by stereoscopic photographers trained and employed by them.<sup>309</sup>

The "Messrs. Underwood" could read as meaning that Elmer and Bert personally trained the stereoscopic photographers the company employed. Initially, this may have been the case after the brothers took up stereoscopic photography in the first half of the 1890s. Far more likely, once the company expanded exponentially in response to worldwide commercial success, was that this became a corporate function. Contemporaneous evidence informs this analysis.

In May 1906, an illustrated feature article, headlined "Adventures and Perils of the News Photographer," appeared in the American monthly magazine *Woman's Home Companion*. In it, a writer by-lined as William G. Fitz-Gerald reported that "a kind of academy" had been set up in Arlington, New Jersey:

... where men are trained not only to take photographs under the most trying and perilous conditions, but are also shown how to shoot, to manage a caravan, to barter and exchange goods.<sup>310</sup>

---

<sup>309</sup> "Copy of an Outline," Robert Taft Photography Papers, accessed November 10, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/697>

<sup>310</sup> William G. Fitz-Gerald, "Adventures and Perils of the News Photographer," *Woman's Home Companion*, May 1906, 14-15, cited in Kempler, "James Ricalton's Travels," 124.

Underwood's name was not linked to the "academy." But various pointers within the article and its presentation verify this connection. Firstly, the illustrations used were Underwood copyrighted photographs captioned as "from stereographs." Secondly, the company did own what it described as "a works and photographic studio" in Arlington, New Jersey. In summary, this circumstantial evidence confirms the location of Underwood's training academy.

To understand more about the academy's role in company practice, access to any training manual Underwood produced would be of benefit. If extant, this study has been unable to trace a copy. However, given the forensic approach it employed corporately, such a document no doubt existed. From its earliest days, detailed instructions were issued to teams of canvassers engaged in selling its photographic goods. Eldon R. Ross, Underwood's European manager based in London, authored two such manuals. In 1904, *A Specimen Canvass and Other Helps to the Sale of Underwood & Underwood's Stereographic Tours* was produced.<sup>311</sup> Over the course of forty pages, key factors were listed to ensure successful sales of its products. The following year, the *Specimen Canvass* was superseded by *The Underwood Travel System and How to Sell It*.<sup>312</sup> Given these examples, it seems likely the company recorded on paper what was required of its photographers.

Despite the absence of a manual to consult, do photographs produced by Underwood reveal any evidence of training? To that end, this study has discovered two photographers who began work with the company in New York during the second half of 1905. Both Clarence L. Chester and Horace D. Ashton were actively engaged in photography for Underwood by the time the *Woman's Home Companion* feature appeared (figure 58).

---

A version of the same article appeared as "After the World's News...", *Harper's Weekly*, February 16, 1907, 230-32,

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015033848006&view=image&seq=234&q1=Underwood>

<sup>311</sup> E. R. Ross, *A Specimen Canvass and Other Helps to the Sale of Underwood & Underwood's Stereographic Tours* (London: Underwood & Underwood, 1904).

<sup>312</sup> E.R. Ross, *The Underwood Travel System and How to Sell It* (London: Underwood, 1905).





Figure 58. Clarence L. Chester (left) and Horace D. Ashton (right).  
 Courtesy of California Museum of Photography (left) and George R. Rinhart Collection (right).

Given this chronology, it seems reasonable to conclude that both men experienced company training at its academy in Arlington, New Jersey. Utilising the criteria for its photographers identified in the “Stereograph Making” article, what do we know of each man’s background in stereoscopic photography and their fieldwork experience before they joined Underwood?

### *Horace D. Ashton and Clarence L. Chester*

Horace Dade Ashton was born in King George County, Virginia in 1883. As a teenager, he worked as a railway clerk in Washington, DC.<sup>313</sup> As to photography, Ashton’s posthumously published memoir described how he answered an advert placed by the city’s Clinedinst studio seeking “an experienced snapshot and view photographer.”<sup>314</sup> The reference to “view photographer” suggested stereoscopy was one of its photographic formats. By his own account, Ashton’s experience amounted to little more than taking a few photographs with a friend’s camera. Despite this and given his ambition to be a photographer, he applied for the position. This led to test

<sup>313</sup> 1900 US Census, 1112 13<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington City, line 58, My Ancestry.

<sup>314</sup> Horace Dade Ashton, Marc Ashton, and Libby J. Atwater, *The Spirit of Villarosa: A Father’s Extraordinary Adventures; A Son’s Challenge* (Two Harbors Press: Minneapolis, 2016), 19.

assignments including photographing “senators and congressmen as they arrived” on Capitol Hill. The Clinedinst studio’s connections within Washington may well have come into play in arranging this audition. During a long and successful photographic career in the city, Barnett McFee Clinedinst took portraits of Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft.<sup>315</sup>

According to Ashton, his resulting Capitol Hill photographs, made using a “strange new-model Kodak,” were sold with syndication rights to *Collier’s Weekly* in New York and appeared in newspapers all over the United States.<sup>316</sup> Though his memoir does not date this episode, a full-page of photographs fitting this description appeared in the *New York Tribune* in February 1903, prominently credited to Clinedinst (figure 59).



Figure 59. “Some Snapshots at Statesmen and Politicians ...”  
*New York Tribune*, February 15, 1903.

<sup>315</sup> “B. M’F. Clinedinst, Photographer, 90, ... Succumbs in Florida Home,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1953, <https://nyti.ms/3qjYp9K>

<sup>316</sup> Ashton, Ashton and Atwater, *Spirit of Villarosa*, 21-22.

If a correct attribution, this photo spread filled the front page of the paper's "Illustrated Supplement" amid art nouveau curlicues. It was an auspicious beginning to Horace Ashton's photographic career. Even allowing for authorial embellishment, other evidence confirms his successful emergence into the field of press photography.

In April 1904, "H.D. Ashton" was listed as a photographer in the "war staff" sent by *Collier's* to cover the Russo-Japanese War. In an eye-catching graphic, a map of the region tethered to a clenched fist featured several eminent names alongside Ashton's.<sup>317</sup> Working in Korea with correspondent Richard Harding Davis, the twenty-year-old photographer was part of a team of established members of the international press corps. Many were familiar names mentioned earlier in this study from the Spanish-American War of 1898 and South African War of 1899-1902. Frederick Palmer was working with "J.H. Hare, photographer" in Korea, and J.F.J. Archibald with "M.I. Noudeau, photographer" at Port Arthur. Photographer "R.L. Dunn" was in Seoul while Victor Bulla, his colleague in Manchuria, joined correspondents Edwin Emerson and H.J. Whigham.

Competition with other illustrated weeklies and daily newspapers reporting on the conflict was intense. Underwood supplied *Collier's* rivals including *Harper's Weekly*, *ILN*, and the *Illustrated Daily Mirror*. As the first tabloid newspaper in Britain, the *Mirror* was relaunched in January 1904 after a disastrous debut as a publication aimed solely at women readers.<sup>318</sup> Russo-Japanese war pictures taken from stereoscopic negatives were produced by the company's long-serving photographer James Ricalton, operating with the Japanese Army. Newspaper rights for one of his most celebrated shots sold for \$5,000 [\$150,000 in today's values] (figure 60).<sup>319</sup>

---

<sup>317</sup> "Collier's War Staff in the East," *Collier's*, April 2, 1904, British Library.

<sup>318</sup> Taylor, *The Great Outsiders*, 81-3.

<sup>319</sup> Christopher J. Lucas, *James Ricalton's Photographs of China During the Boxer Rebellion: his Illustrated Travelogue of 1900* (Lewiston; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 50.



Figure 60. "Japanese 11 Inch Siege Gun Firing 500 Pound Shells into Port Arthur."  
*Daily Mirror*, March 29, 1905.

Ricalton's photography for Underwood during the conflict received acknowledgment from the Japanese military in the form of a badge and certificate. According to the citation, it was presented "for the attendance at the War Operations of the 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> year of the Meiji era."<sup>320</sup> Originally in Japanese, the company had the citation translated for promotional purposes, echoing the silver medal awarded to the company by Pope Pius X for its *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father*.<sup>321</sup>

Given Ricalton's pre-eminence within the photographic community that serviced the international press, word of Horace Ashton's growing reputation no doubt reached Underwood in New York. Professional involvement in such a high-profile episode early in his career marked him out as a photographer of interest to firms engaged in the news photography business, and so it proved. In July 1905 on his return to America, Ashton joined Underwood in New York bringing with him a wealth of recent

<sup>320</sup> Secretary to Consulate General of Japan, New York City to C. N. Thomas, Underwood, New York City, November 14, 1907, courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

<sup>321</sup> John Talbot Smith, *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father Through the Stereoscope* (New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1904), 14.

experience.<sup>322</sup> A celebrated photograph of the time seemed designed to show off the company's latest signing. He was portrayed together with his camera "photographing New York City, on a slender support eighteen stories [sic] above [the] pavement of Fifth Avenue."<sup>323</sup> In terms of publicity, the eye-catching image had the desired effect, appearing in the *Daily Mirror* in London. Credited to Underwood and published under the headline "The Perils of a New York Photographer," Ashton was unnamed in the caption, but readers were informed that he was "well-known" and "has frequently supplied the *Daily Mirror* with pictures" (figure 61).

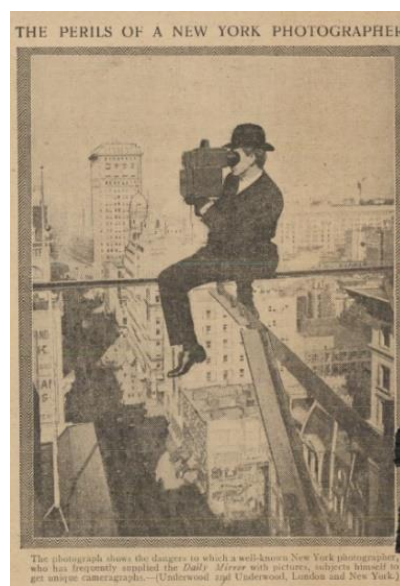


Figure 61. "The Perils of a New York Photographer."  
*Daily Mirror*, December 5, 1905.

As the rest of this study will show, Horace Ashton was a key figure in Underwood's evolution as a supplier of photographs to the press.

Only a few months after Ashton began work with Underwood, Chester followed suit. Born in Iowa in 1877, Clarence Lyon Chester was a photographer by his early twenties, first in Burlington, Des Moines, then in the twin city of Minneapolis St.

---

<sup>322</sup> Horace D. Ashton to Gilbert H. Grosvenor, June 5, 1909, *National Geographic Archives*, Washington, DC.

<sup>323</sup> COPY 1/528/136, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C14232968>

Paul.<sup>324</sup> The exact nature of Chester's photography during this period and whether it involved stereoscopy is not known. But his commercial profile meant he was an attractive proposition to companies in the market to hire photographic talent. By the time Chester applied for a US passport in November 1905, he was in New York City, reiterating his occupation as "photographer" on the application form. Evidence from this document confirms it involved work for Underwood, notably an ink stamp bearing the company name and address visible in the section stating where the passport should be sent.<sup>325</sup>

The motivation for Chester's passport application was soon clear. Within weeks, he travelled on assignment to the Panama Canal Zone where construction work to link the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific began in 1904. Chester spent five weeks on the isthmus taking stereoscopic photographs that also appeared in the American press. The following November, his company colleague Horace Ashton was with President Roosevelt during an official visit to inspect construction work. Given the *Woman's Home Companion* article reference to "a kind of academy," both Panama Canal Zone assignments during 1906 provide an opportunity to assess whether photographs produced by Ashton and Chester displayed any evidence of company training.

### *In the Panama Canal Zone*

In January 1906, the *New York Times* carried an article promoting Underwood's latest stereoscopic initiative. It involved the launch of more than one hundred "home travel lectures" compiled for the company by students. Replicating its *Travel System*, the lectures employed numbered stereoscopic pictures with their positions shown on maps using red lines. On cue, a stereopticon or magic lantern projected lantern slides of these images. Then, by looking at the highlighted picture as a stereocard

---

<sup>324</sup> 1900 US Census, 131 South 7, Burlington, Des Moines, Iowa, line 79; and "Clarence L. Chester," *R.L. Polk and Co's Trade Directory* (City of St. Paul, Minneapolis: R.L. Polk, 1901), 403, My Ancestry.

<sup>325</sup> "Clarence L. Chester," US passport no. 4098, November 25, 1905, Washington, DC, My Ancestry.



through a stereoscope, the individual viewer was able to see in front of them what they would observe if stood on the same spot. The *New York Times* concluded its report with an observation:

One reads the lecture, looks at his map and then at the pictures and comes as near to travelling by magic carpet as any one [sic] can outside of a fairy story.<sup>326</sup>

Underlining the nature of the multi-platform role played by the company's stereographers, the article also referred to "Underwood & Underwood, who supply American newspapers with pictures of events the world over." Its "home travel lectures" launched just as Clarence L. Chester was travelling in the Panama Canal Zone. This proved a simple point. Any training for Underwood stereographers needed to reflect and be responsive to the company's expanding media ambitions. Starting chronologically with Chester's assignment, four photographs individually credited to him and Underwood as a company appeared in the *New York Daily Tribune*. Captioned "From Stereographs, Copyright 1906 Underwood & Underwood, New-York," they appeared in an overlapping montage amidst an article covering two full broadsheet pages (figure 62).



Figure 62. "Photographs in the Panama Canal Zone...."  
*New York Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1906.

<sup>326</sup> "Stereoscopic Traveling," *New York Times*, January 6, 1906, <https://nyti.ms/36psqNq>

In terms of size, the prints were enlargements taken from the original stereo negatives. The results were visibly impressive. Editorially, the *New York Tribune* made great play of the images, devoting considerable space to showing them off and highlighting their editorial value to the paper. Before looking at the visual composition of the images more closely and whether they show the influence of training, it is worth examining the genesis of their creation as part of a rolling news story. This context offers instructive background to the work of a stereoscopic photographer, servicing both Underwood's stereoscopic *Travel System* and meeting the news values of a mass-market press. It also helps crystallise an argument of this thesis. As stereographs were three-dimensional, this visual technique had consequent implications for the way the company functioned in the marketplace for images. In addition, the size and scope of the company's operations as a press supplier affected how the wider publishing industry evolved.

Chester's assignment in the region for Underwood coincided with controversy surrounding America's presence in the Panama Canal Zone. Whether this synchronicity was accidental or opportunistic, it mirrored earlier occasions when a brief that involved stereoscopic travel metamorphosed into a press assignment. This was the case when Bert Underwood and James Ricalton were both in Greece as rising tensions over the status of Crete escalated into conflict with Turkey in 1897. A decade later, an article headlined "Mismanagement at Panama" by the American journalist Poultney Bigelow created a predictable furor. The son of a US diplomat, Bigelow's opinions as journalist, author, and traveller "occasionally stirred controversy" as his *New York Times* obituary later put it.<sup>327</sup> In the article, Bigelow strongly criticised what he claimed were insanitary conditions faced by native and immigrant workers constructing the Panama Canal. This of course reflected badly on what was a prestige American project overseas.<sup>328</sup> Amidst a welter of headlines, the government-supporting *New York Tribune* used Underwood's photographs to counter Bigelow's claims. Its double-page-layout, headlined "Photographs in the Panama Canal Zone Made Shortly After the Very Brief but Notorious Visit of Mr.

---

<sup>327</sup> "Poultney Bigelow is Dead at 98," *New York Times*, May 29, 1954, <https://nyti.ms/3fXBUmb>

<sup>328</sup> See "Criminal Neglect at Colon – Bigelow," *New York Times*, January 5, 1906, <https://nyti.ms/2HWPz0a>



Poultney Bigelow,” portrayed street scenes in the towns of Culebra and Colon. These Underwood photographs by Chester accompanied an article that made light of Bigelow’s criticism and painted a more positive picture.

Analysing the paper’s editorial treatment, the *New York Tribune* gave each photograph a title accompanied by a brief descriptive paragraph. This approach was tantamount to telling the reader not only what they were seeing, but also editorialising what it signified. A section relating to “View of Broadway in Culebra, Panama” read:

Standing at the right is a canal zone policeman wearing a helmet. Large cans for garbage are conspicuous.

The street appears to be well drained. It is not littered with refuse of any kind.

In another section, the paper described “View of Cass Street in Colon” as:

... reminding one forcibly of the condition in which Lennox-ave from Central Park to the Harlem River remained for many months after the subway there was completed.

Whatever its editorial bias, this reading of Underwood’s photographs involved a level of detail and interpretation far beyond the textual role usually associated with a photographic caption. Technical features enabled the adoption of this style. The photographs’ stereographic structure placed an emphasis on depth perspective whilst the use of deep focus allowed details to reveal themselves as the image receded into the background. A further effect of deep focus was to downplay the role of the individual photographer, suggesting no differentiation between what was significant and what was not. As a result, the whole scene was open to closer visual inspection.

Whether Underwood supplied the titles and descriptive information for its photographs is not known. Use of the term “view” in two of the four published captions confirmed a direct link to terminology commonly used by stereoscopic

companies. Also, this style of informative captioning was in keeping with that employed by Underwood on the verso of its stereocards using a distinctive editorial voice. Admittedly though, the tone used by the *New York Tribune* was not always sympathetic to the US authorities. Describing “Another Street Scene in Culebra,” the report referred to “open drains under the houses and along the sides of the street.”

More difficult to unravel was Chester’s photographic brief. Its starting point may have been photographing subjects in the Panama Canal Zone suitable for inclusion in Underwood’s stereoscopic *Travel System*. But the press’ use of its credited photographs indicate that it was responsive to the unfolding news story provoked by Bigelow’s article. At this stage in its history, Underwood visibly expanded its supply of photographs beyond the illustrated weekly press to the daily newspaper market. This trend was manifest in the creation of its Illustration Department headed by C. R. Abbott, one of its most experienced managers. Charles Richard Abbott was born in Welland, Ontario in 1872. He began working for Underwood in the late 1880s, first in Toronto, then Liverpool, and finally London. After re-locating to company headquarters in New York in 1902, Abbott was integral to its new venture, promising “150,000 Subjects Now Ready. More Continually Being Added. Photographs of National and International Events and Prominent People.”<sup>329</sup> According to a 1939 press report of Abbott’s death:

He [Abbott] was credited with [being] one of the first persons to realize that news stories could be told in pictures, and so impressed the firm of Underwood & Underwood, which had previously specialized in portraiture, that the news picture department was established with him at its head.<sup>330</sup>

Whilst the report presented an arguable claim, it does record that Underwood, a stereoscopic company, acknowledged the role photography could play in press reporting at an early stage. As its Panama Canal Zone photographs showed, the *New York Tribune* was just one of its regular customers in America and internationally.

---

<sup>329</sup> “Mary Ethel Abbott,” US Petition for Naturalization no. 52792, District Court, Newark, NJ, My Ancestry.

<sup>330</sup> “Charles Abbott Dies: News Photo Official,” *New York Times*, July 9, 1939, <https://nyti.ms/3fVbi5e>

Chester's photographs taken "from stereographs" have several characteristics that merit closer attention. The paper included two name-checks for him as the photographer, one for "C.L. Chester" and another for "Mr. Chester." Such credits were unusual and not widely emulated by other American publications. His own standing as a photographer may be a factor in their use, as well as the editorial weight the paper wanted to attach to his images. Attributing their creation to Underwood and naming Chester as a photographer it employed deflected criticism that a particular editorial agenda prompted the images. The newspaper could then confidently state:

The *Tribune* presents today for the instruction and entertainment of its readers a series of photographs made in the Panama Canal zone in the early part of last month by C. L. Chester, a photographer who was sent there by the firm of Underwood & Underwood, of this city.

The paper went on to describe Chester's brief in terms suggesting he was not a press photographer in the conventional sense. Instead, Underwood had sent him to the Panama Canal Zone "to make pictures for other purposes than newspaper illustration," a reference to its role in the stereoscopic views business. The *New York Tribune* then chose to further support the credibility of the photographs and their conception. It claimed Chester "knew nothing at all when he made them of the brief but now notorious visit of Mr. Poultney Bigelow, which recently resulted in so much amusement." It went on:

Mr. Chester, the photographer who took the pictures which *The Tribune* publishes today, did not make an 'investigation' for any political party or clique.

He was sent there to photograph the physical conditions as he found them, and without comment or deduction.

Setting aside the editorial's partial tone and a sense the newspaper "doth protest too much, methinks", readers may have taken this explanation and chronology at face value. However, as the company had a decade-long track-record of supplying photographs of news events to the press, the *New York Tribune's* description of

Underwood's work in the Panama Canal Zone appears at odds with its recognised *raison d'être* as a photography company.

### *Corporate Training: Clarence L. Chester*

Returning to Chester's photographs and whether they displayed signs of corporate training, there is compelling evidence that they bear the imprint of the company's requirements analysed earlier in this chapter. Principally, these were that Underwood stereoscopic photographers needed to demonstrate "a keen artistic taste in order to select their subjects," and to be able to choose "the best stand-points from which to photograph them." Relating these criteria to his Panama photographs, Chester demonstrably selected the "best stand-points from which to photograph them." Three of the four photographs featured the end of a street or street junction. As a result, each view unfolded, taking in the buildings and people visible along the length of each thoroughfare and leading the viewer's eye towards the distant horizon. Using this technique, Chester clearly choreographed "View of Broadway in Culebra, Panama" (figure 63).



Figure 63. "View of Broadway in Culebra, Panama."  
*New York Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1906.

The shot featured more than a dozen adults and children, each positioned with a clear line of sight, so they were visible to the viewer. Given the complexity of such staging and no evidence of blurring, it would suggest those appearing in shot were

willing participants in the photograph's creation, prepared to stay motionless while it was taken. More remarkable was that the deep focus used here was a function of small apertures, requiring correspondingly long exposures. In this case, the tropical sun may have been sufficiently hot to accommodate this.

This photograph also introduced two other qualities encapsulated in Bert Underwood's photographic philosophy, notably "lighting" and "life." Although not mentioned in the Underwood magazine article "Stereograph Making," both qualities were in evidence in Chester's sequence. Indeed, the presence of "life" in the form of people and effects created by "lighting" were recognisable characteristics of the company's stereoscopic work. As to "the best stand-point," Chester used the immediate foreground in "View of Broadway in Culebra, Panama" to introduce various visual elements, helping achieve the pronounced stereoscopic effect outlined by Crary. To this end, a young child featured in profile closest to the camera. The viewer's eye then alighted on a small group furthest away in the middle distance. By contrast, "View of Cass St. in Colon, Panama" used the presence of passers-by in a more naturalistic way (figure 64).

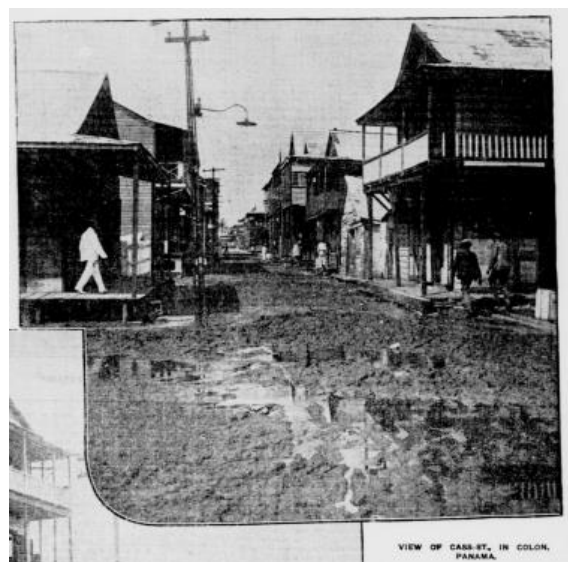


Figure 64. "View of Cass-St. in Colon, Panama."  
*New York Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1906.

The man on the left-hand side, dressed in a white suit, stood out against the

background of the building. By contrast, the foreground revealed evidence of “artistic taste” being employed. Pools of muddy water in the bottom third of the frame featured reflections of surrounding buildings, power lines, and telegraph poles, emphasising the importance of “lighting.” This multi-layered approach to visual interest enhanced the three-dimensional nature of the image and its chances of successful viewing in a stereoscope. Those same qualities also helped make it an effective press photograph, catching the eye of a reader who might be quickly scanning the page of a newspaper or magazine.

“Overlooking the Burned District in Colon, Panama” used a different combination of “artistic taste” and “the best stand-point” (figure 65).



Figure 65. “Overlooking the Burned District in Colon, Panama.”  
*New York Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1906.

Here, Chester positioned a young boy in the immediate foreground. This gave a sense of scale to the tenement building in the background and introduced a three-dimensional trigger. On a more practical note, the boy appears to have bags slung over each shoulder carrying Chester’s gear. Bulky stereoscopic camera equipment helped Underwood meet its photographic quality threshold and allowed delivery of its academy brief. As here, training its stereographers to “manage a caravan” was not an idle boast. For promotional purposes, the company regularly photographed porters or assistants involved in its overseas expeditions. Bags and boxes of

equipment and photographic plates were transported, not only by human carriers, but various animals including horses, mules, donkeys, elephants, camels, and dog sleds.

A fortnight after their appearance in the *New York Tribune*, two of Chester's Panama photographs for Underwood reappeared in the illustrated weekly press. *Harper's Weekly* in New York devoted a full page to what it billed "Latest Photographs of Scenes in Panama." Again, the three featured photographs were credited to the photographer and his employer, "From stereographs by C.L. Chester. Copyright, 1906, by Underwood & Underwood" (figure 66).

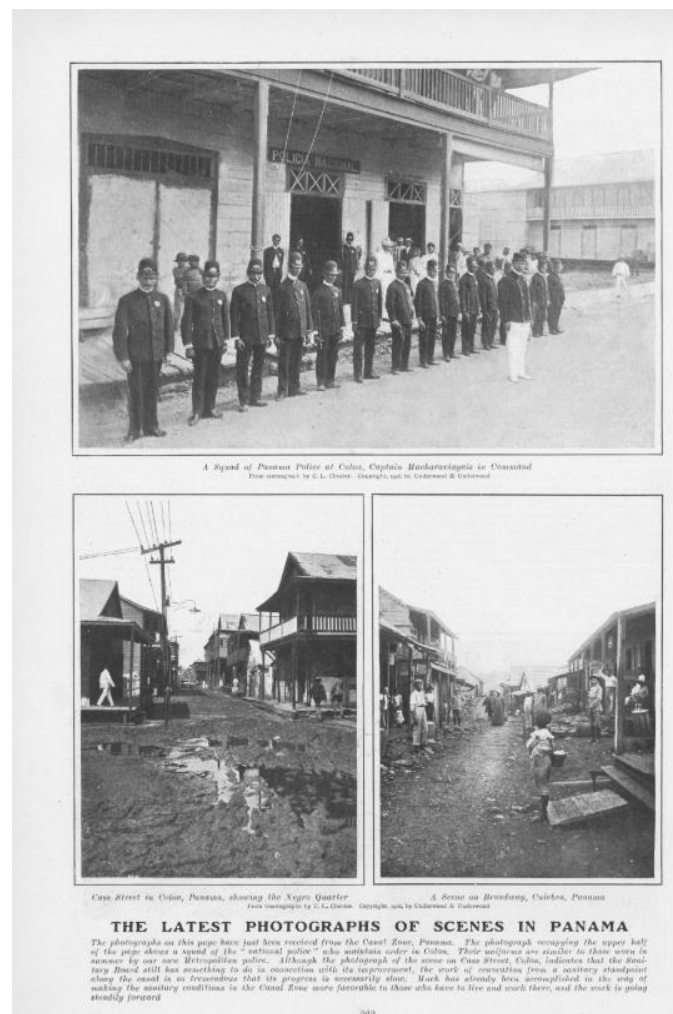


Figure 66. "The Latest Photographs of Scenes in Panama."  
*Harper's Weekly*, February 24, 1906.

As to its editorial treatment, *Harper's Weekly* highlighted significant challenges faced by the sanitary board in the Panama Canal Zone to improve conditions in the region. The paper also employed different wordings for some captions, signalling evidence of editorial involvement by the paper's staff. "A Squad of Panama Police at Colon, Captain Macharaviayais in Command" allowed Chester to bring his stereoscopic technique to bear on a line-up of uniformed officers. By placing them at an angle rather than face-on to the camera, depths of field enhanced the image's three-dimensional powers, even on a two-dimensional page.

Even allowing for digitisation processes that the newspaper pages analysed for this chapter and this study have undergone, one photograph was yet more striking in *Harper's Weekly* than its *New York Tribune* iteration. The reproduction of "Cass St. in Colon, Panama ..." brought out the tones of the puddles of muddy water as well as capturing a range of reflections. Whether this was due to company training, Chester's eye for a shot earmarked an ideal "stand-point" for his chosen subject. Indeed, all the published photographs showed that he could also apply "keen artistic taste." In terms of training, three other technical points characterise the work of Chester and other Underwood stereographers analysed for this study. These are moderately high but not excessive contrast; generally short focal length creating a foreground that comes out to meet you in some shots; and deep depth of field, allowing visual penetration of spatial depths. All these qualities were present in the Panama Canal Zone stereographs.

In summary of Chester's photography on the isthmus, Underwood's memoranda book recorded several entries entitled "Chester's Panama," totalling more than 350 negatives.<sup>331</sup> Other entries reveal the photographer undertook other company assignments during this period with references to "Chester's Jamaica" and "Chester's South America." Photographs he took for Underwood later featured in *Panama and the Canal* published in 1910 "aimed at younger readers." It was co-

---

<sup>331</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 29-30.



authored with Alfred B. Hall, an “instructor in history at the Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut” whilst Chester was credited as “Traveler and Explorer.”<sup>332</sup>

Detailed analysis of examples of Clarence L. Chester’s work shows evidence of corporate training. Of course, an academic argument can be made, such as the one outlined in this chapter, by choosing photographs that support it. But what is significant for this study is that analysis of work by Horace D. Ashton, another photographer first employed by Underwood during the same period, yields complementary results and adds further perspectives.

### *Corporate Training: Horace D. Ashton*

Whilst Chester worked as a photographer in Iowa and Minnesota before joining Underwood, Ashton’s photographic background was with the newspaper and magazine industry, first in Washington, DC, and later for *Collier’s* reporting on the Russo-Japanese War. This career path would suggest he arrived at Underwood with more than a modicum of relevant experience, able to work to a given brief and deliver it photographically. However, the influence of corporate training is recognisable in assignments Ashton undertook during the first eighteen months of the six years he spent with the company.<sup>333</sup>

In November 1906, Underwood returned to the rolling news story centred on the building of the Panama Canal. As president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt paid an official visit to the country, and company photographs of the trip appeared in the press. Though lacking a photographer by-line, the images received credits as “from stereograph, copyright 1906, Underwood & Underwood.” With the advent of its Illustration Department, this pro forma instruction appeared on the verso of each company photograph supplied to the press using a printed stamp. This marked out stereoscopy’s contribution to the evolution of photography for the press.

---

<sup>332</sup> See Alfred B. Hall and Clarence L. Chester, *Panama and the Canal* (New York: Newson, 1910).

<sup>333</sup> Ashton, Ashton and Atwater, *Spirit of Villarosa*, 131.

Such acknowledgements are on view in newspapers, magazines, and books throughout the period under analysis in this thesis (figure 67).

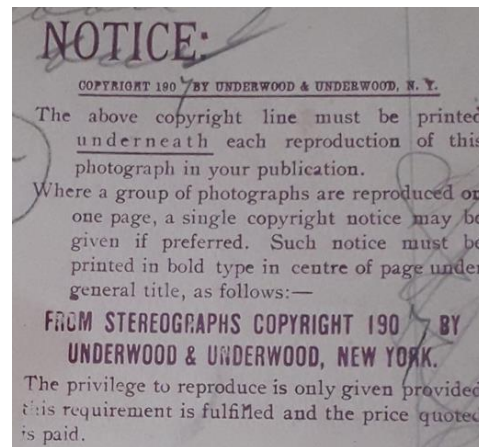


Figure 67. Underwood “From Stereographs” copyright notice, 1907.  
Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

Other corroborating evidence that these photographs of Roosevelt’s visit were by Horace Ashton comes from Underwood’s memoranda book which listed his work there as “Ashton’s Panama, 95845-903” (figure 68).<sup>334</sup>

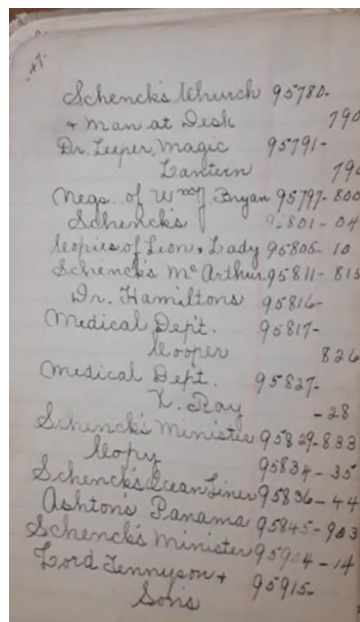


Figure 68. “Ashton’s Panama 95845-903” (3rd entry from bottom).  
Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

<sup>334</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 47.

Further evidence that Ashton covered this assignment for Underwood is supported by a personal letter he wrote in 1909 to Gilbert H. Grosvenor as editor of *National Geographic Magazine*.<sup>335</sup> Ashton was inquiring about employment opportunities for an in-house photographer with what was an increasingly popular publication. At the heart of its editorial offering, *National Geographic* was reliant on photographs from a variety of sources, a phenomenon analysed in the next chapter. Ashton's letter to Grosvenor detailed his experience as a photographer:

I have been with Underwood & Underwood since July 1905 and have made several extensive trips for them, not the least being my trip to Panama with [President] Roosevelt and from there into Colombia, S.A.

The letter was also instructive as to how Ashton viewed his own career to this point in terms of photography for the press. In another section, he pointed out:

I think also that my nine years training in this line of work would make me useful to you in other ways as my dealings with magazines has made me familiar with art dept. [department] work." <sup>336</sup>

The use here of the phrase "my nine years training in this line of work" is particularly relevant. It suggested Ashton regarded his time as a press photographer in terms reminiscent of a modern-day apprenticeship. This involved learning about and gaining experience of the various craft skills required of a news photographer. Also, familiarity with what he called "art dept. [department] work" encapsulated a significant overlap of professional practice at this point in press history. On one hand, artists were still using pen and ink or a paintbrush to illustrate the news. On the other, photographers, or "stereoscopic artists" as Underwood termed its staff, offered a complementary source of visual material. On a more macro level, this portrayal chimes with the industrialised world. At the turn of the twentieth century, the emerging professional society introduced growing levels of organisation that outstripped anything the Victorians could have imagined.<sup>337</sup> Admittedly, press

---

<sup>335</sup> From this point in the thesis, *National Geographic Magazine* is *National Geographic* unless context merits use of its full name.

<sup>336</sup> Horace D. Ashton to Gilbert H. Grosvenor, June 5, 1909, National Geographic Society Archives, Washington, DC.

<sup>337</sup> Perkin, *Professional Society*, 18-19.

photography was in its infancy, but it is significant that a figure like Ashton should mention “training” in relation to his own working life. As already described, companies like Underwood and Bain’s New Service were amongst those willing to invest in recruitment and training at a point when this youthful branch of photography was still finding its feet. There was a pioneering approach ahead of prevailing trends in press photography.

In New York, it was 1913 before the city’s press photographers first took collective form and a further two years before the New York Press Photographers Association came into existence. Beginning with a gathering of fifty-eight news photographers from various news organisations in the city, the NYPPA has long regarded itself as the oldest press organisation in the world.<sup>338</sup> Beyond photography, other branches of industry facilitating the press became organised at a much earlier stage.

London, a centre of printing and publishing in Britain, was home to trade unions who represented workers in and around Fleet Street. What started as the Printers Labourers’ Union had by 1904 become the National Society of Operative Printers’ Assistants, later NATSOPA. By 1911, its membership approached 5,000.<sup>339</sup> Though smaller, it was professional associations who were in many ways more successful in uniting the whole of each relevant occupation. These bodies together with employers, managers, and trades unions represented “the harbingers of the new society.”<sup>340</sup> Even in its embryonic form, press photography was recognisably part of this movement.

By the time of Roosevelt’s trip to Panama, Ashton had been with Underwood for more than a year. It was a period long enough to include spending time at the company training academy in Arlington, New Jersey. As part of learning the

---

<sup>338</sup> “Our History,” New York Press Photographers Association, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://nyppa.org/our-history>

<sup>339</sup> “NATSOPA,” Modern Records Centre, Warwick University, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://mrc-catalogue.warwick.ac.uk/records/NSP>

<sup>340</sup> Perkin, *Professional Society*, 20.

importance of “position, foreground, perspective, lighting, life,” he would have been instructed like Clarence L. Chester and others about the practicalities of taking high-quality stereoscopic photographs.

In addition to achieving “the best stand-points” and demonstrating “a keen artistic taste,” certain situations required the use of specialised equipment. Ashton’s posthumously published memoir recalled how his photography involved an item he carried all over the world while travelling for Underwood:

I packed a six-foot ladder with me that fit [sic] into a handy carrying case. It had a sliding extension on which I mounted the camera on a tripod.

As I climbed the ladder, I’d raise the slide before me so that the camera would be ten to twelve feet above the ground.

This was very practical for shooting in crowds, capturing parades, or photographing a speaker from the balcony of an auditorium.

One such occasion recalled by Ashton was when the first US admiral, John Paul Jones, was interred at Annapolis naval academy, Maryland in April 1906.<sup>341</sup> Following the re-discovery of Jones’ body in Paris and its return to America, a ceremony was held attended by the president of the United States and other dignitaries.

To photograph Roosevelt making his address, Ashton used a ladder to gain height for his shot. Its effect was clear in a photograph that appeared in *Harper’s Weekly*, filling a full page measuring fifteen and a half inches by eleven (figure 69).

---

<sup>341</sup> Ashton, Ashton and Atwater, *Spirit of Villarosa*, 100.

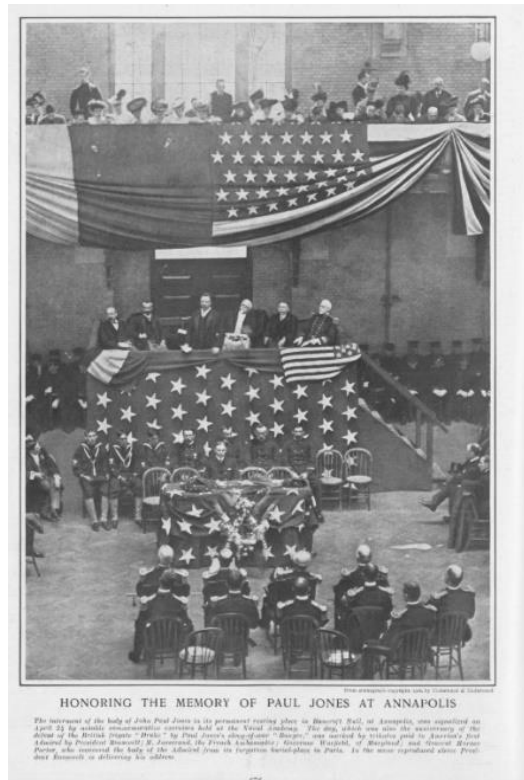


Figure 69. "Honouring the Memory of Paul Jones at Annapolis."  
*Harper's Weekly*, May 12, 1906.

Underwood's memoranda book confirms Ashton's role as the photographer responsible, listing "Ashton's Paul Jones" with its negative numbers of "90943-47."<sup>342</sup> Assisted by his ladder, Ashton found the "best stand-point" available. From his elevated physical position, he was able to give prominence to the flags on view, notably the stars and stripes, and tricolour. Photographically, the rows of people in uniform in the immediate foreground and tiers of visual interest throughout the shot were used to create both an effective stereograph and a demonstrably eye-catching photograph for press use.

On a purely practical level, taking effective shots while perched up a ladder several feet off the ground required not only training but a head for heights and sense of balance. It also added a level of complication to the photographic process, though Underwood must have thought the risks involved worthwhile. The technique of using an elevated position wherever possible was integral to the company's approach to

<sup>342</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 32.

achieving the “best stand-point.” At the same time, coverage of the story by one of its rivals highlighted the necessity of photographic training to keep ahead of the competition. In contrast, *Leslie’s Weekly* used a street-level photo taken outside the building where the Annapolis ceremony took place (figure 70).



Figure 70. “New Honors Paid to the Remains of John Paul Jones.”  
*Leslie’s Weekly*, May 17, 1906.

Featuring Roosevelt at the head of a group of dignitaries, it had little of the visual interest and impact of Ashton’s stereo shot. Admittedly, his position within the auditorium might have come via Underwood’s well-established White House connections. However, the important point here was the photograph used by *Leslie’s Weekly*, credited to a “Mrs. C.R. Miller,” was the work of a Maryland photographer rather than a member of the Washington or New York press corps.

Such credits were becoming part of press culture, reflecting an alternative source of illustrative material. These pictures were taken by those who pursued photography as a hobby or semi-professionally. Like other periodicals and newspapers, *Leslie’s Weekly* staged regular prize photo contests. This guaranteed exposure for the winners in a national publication and offered a stepping-stone to other photographic opportunities. That same May 17, 1906 edition, devoted to coverage of the recent San Francisco earthquake, still found space for a full page billed as “current events

of exceptional interest pictured by artists of keen reportorial instinct.” As well as featuring material sent in from across America, these contests offered a cheaper alternative supply of news photographs to those available from commercial companies like Underwood. Indeed, it would appear “Mrs. C.R. Miller” enjoyed success in an earlier photo contest organised by *Leslie’s Weekly* (figure 71).

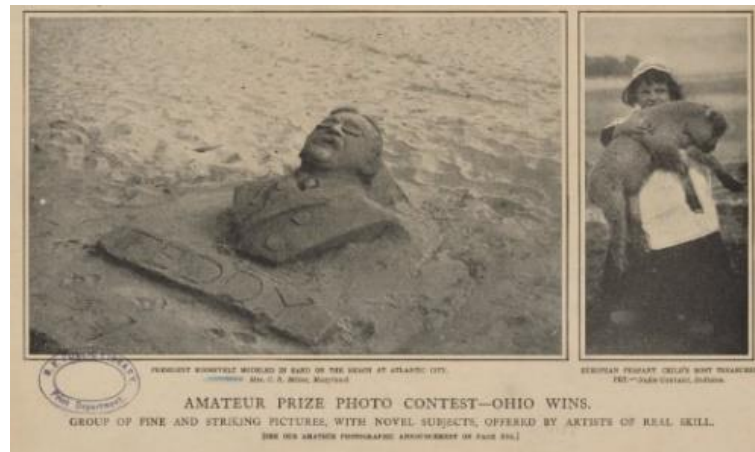


Figure 71. “President Roosevelt Modeled in Sand on the Beach at Atlantic City.”  
*Leslie’s Weekly*, October 6, 1904.  
 New York Public Library Digital Collections.

According to the paper, her entry featuring a sand sculpture of “Teddy” Roosevelt ably demonstrated a “keen reportorial instinct” and an eye for a newsworthy photograph. In the context of this study, her chosen subject was stereoscopic in design and execution.

Success in such photo contests helped build the fledgling career of another figure employed by Underwood during this period. Best known as official photographer to Scott’s ill-fated South Pole expedition, Herbert G. Ponting undertook a stereoscopic assignment for the company in Japan around 1903.<sup>343</sup> Whether he too spent time at Underwood’s training academy, his skill set included working from ladders. In a promotional shot taken during the Japan trip, Ponting was several rungs above the

<sup>343</sup> Bennett, *Photography in Japan*, 267.

Ponting’s career is explored in H.J.P. Arnold, *Photographer of the World: The Biography of Herbert Ponting* (London: Hutchinson, 1969); and Ann Savours, ed., *Scott’s Last Voyage Through the Antarctic Camera of Herbert Ponting* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1974).



ground. The visual jeopardy of his photographic location came from its position at the edge of what was “the largest active volcano in the world” (figure 72).



Figure 72. Herbert G. Ponting during his Underwood assignment in Japan.  
Taken from Underwood stereocard 1904.

Only a few years earlier, Ponting competed regularly with amateur photographers in contests run by *Leslie's Weekly* and other illustrated papers. Following McKinley's assassination in 1901, a Ponting photograph titled “Reading the Death Bulletins at San Francisco” was among five selected for publication by the paper with the theme of “The President's Death,” though it was not good enough to scoop the top prize.<sup>344</sup> Exposure in such contests helped raise Ponting's profile. Shortly afterwards, he undertook a tour of East Asia on behalf of *Leslie's Weekly* and one of Underwood's stereoscopic rivals, the Universal Photo Art Company of Philadelphia.<sup>345</sup> Such commercial opportunities were increasingly available to those who, like Ponting, had both the natural talent and ability to deliver what was required photographically. This may have resulted from formal training or working alongside more experienced colleagues, or a combination of both. According to one study that neatly summed up this trend, Ponting was:

.... one of the first of a new species; the globe-trotting freelance photographer who sold his work to photographic distribution agencies, or worked on

---

<sup>344</sup> “The President's Death,” *Leslie's Weekly*, October 12, 1901, Accessible Archives.

<sup>345</sup> Arnold, *Photographer of the World*, 24.

assignments for the illustrated press, who had begun increasingly to use photographic illustrations.<sup>346</sup>

This description might equally apply to figures like Horace D. Ashton and Clarence L. Chester whose photographic exploits in collaboration with Underwood are the focus of this chapter. Their skills and experience were clearly attractive to photography companies or individual publications with the budget to hire them. The role played by stereoscopic training adds to further understanding the nature of this symbiotic relationship.

Analysis of Underwood's memoranda book in conjunction with company contact prints creates new connections. They link visual evidence of training, displayed in its photographs of specific events, to the photographers responsible. Ashton's role representing Underwood as part of the press corps that joined Roosevelt on his official visit to Panama exemplifies this argument and the case for it. The trip had wider significance. It was the first time a president of the United States stepped outside his own country, even to cross a bridge into Canada or Mexico.<sup>347</sup> Such a momentous occasion was reflected in the resources deployed to ensure comprehensive press coverage. Reports filed by correspondents appeared in the US daily press within twenty-four hours. The *New York Tribune* published a front-page report on Saturday November 17, 1906 headlined "President Sees Work: Goes On Steam Shovel: Examination Of Big Culebra Cut In Pouring Rain."<sup>348</sup> However, because of the distances involved, it was Monday November 26 before any photographs of the same events finally reached the paper's readers, a time-lag they would have expected and was only later resolved by phototelegraphy.

Across three columns of its front-page, the paper splashed Roosevelt in the shadow of the steam shovel surrounded by workers and officials. Duly credited "from

---

<sup>346</sup> Robert Dixon, *Photography, Early Cinema and Colonial Modernity: Frank Hurley's Synchronized Lecture Entertainments* (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 10.

<sup>347</sup> Catherine Forslund, "'Off for the Ditch:' Theodore and Edith Roosevelt Visit Panama in 1906," *White House History* 28 (Fall 2010), <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/off-for-the-ditch>

<sup>348</sup> "President Sees Work," *New York Tribune*, November 17, 1906, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1906-11-17/ed-1/seq-1/>

stereograph, copyright, 1906, by Underwood & Underwood, New York,” there was no mention though of Ashton as its photographer (figure 73).



Figure 73. “President Roosevelt Addressing the Steam Shovel Crew ...”  
New York Tribune, November 26, 1906.

A better-quality print taken from Underwood’s stereoscopic negative reveals the full detail captured by Ashton’s stereoscopic camera. (figure 74).



Figure 74. “Roosevelt, in white linen suit and boater hat, surrounded by workers...”  
Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard College Library.

Closer examination confirms picture editors at the *New York Tribune* cropped the print. They removed the blurred half of a uniformed figure on the extreme left-hand side. In terms of representation, black workers were amongst those gathered around the president in the left-hand half of the image. Though not mentioned in the caption, their presence visibly illustrated the diverse nature of the workforce employed to construct the Panama Canal made up of migrants from countries such as Jamaica and Spain as well as local men.

Despite the wet and muddy conditions underfoot, Roosevelt's choice of white linen suit and straw hat, known forever afterwards as a "panama," seemed impractical for the occasion and weather. Photographically though, the outfit meant his figure stood out from the crowd against the surrounding hillside. Similarly, Chester picked out a white suited figure when taking "View of Cass-St. in Colon, Panama" as noted in an earlier section. In Roosevelt's case, his physical appearance visually perpetuated colonial domination in a way that has proved remarkably resilient. In stereoscopic terms, Ashton was able to utilise the long, curved cable hanging down from the steam shovel. Stretching from the middle distance into the foreground through the entire length of the shot, it created a visual three-dimensional trigger. The framing of the surrounding group only served to heighten the reader's sense of a giant structure looming above the president.

Roosevelt's visit was also a major story for the illustrated press. In its issue of December 8, *Harper's Weekly* used the same photograph, devoting a full page to it.<sup>349</sup> Shot from a slightly elevated position, Ashton looked down on the group, using the location's topography rather than needing a ladder. It would have been natural for workers and officials to gather around Roosevelt to hear what he had to say and even ask questions. However, US government officials were more likely to have choreographed the whole scene. With Underwood's White House connections, Ashton may even have been party to setting up the shot.

---

<sup>349</sup> "The President Quizzing Foremen...", *Harper's Weekly*, December 8, 1906, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015030326550&view=1up&seq=814&q1=Steam%20Shovel>

It is though important to recognise that Underwood was not the only supplier of stereoscopic photographs used by the paper. In a lavishly illustrated feature article by correspondent William Inglis, another stereoscopic company supplied one of the photographs used. Like Underwood, H.C. White Co., of North Bennington, Vermont was a major producer of stereographs and stereoscopes during this period.<sup>350</sup> As its namecheck showed, the firm was also active in supplying press photographs and in the market for skilled stereoscopic photographers. This example further underlines the competitive nature of this branch of photography and the emphasis placed upon recruitment and training by its constituent companies. In another construction scene used by *Harper's Weekly*, Roosevelt was at the steam shovel's controls (figure 75).



Figure 75. "An Example of President Roosevelt's Method ..."  
*Harper's Weekly*, December 8, 1906.

Over at *Leslie's Weekly*, another series of photographs by Underwood from the

<sup>350</sup> Darrah, *World of Stereographs*, 51.

Panama Canal visit were featured. These included an alternate shot of Roosevelt in the operator's cab of the same steam shovel (figure 76).



Figure 76. "Noteworthy Scenes During President Roosevelt's Visit to the Isthmus ..." *Leslie's Weekly*, December 6, 1906.

Recorded by its negative number as "95854," Underwood's memoranda book credited it to Ashton as one of his Panama stereos (figure 77).

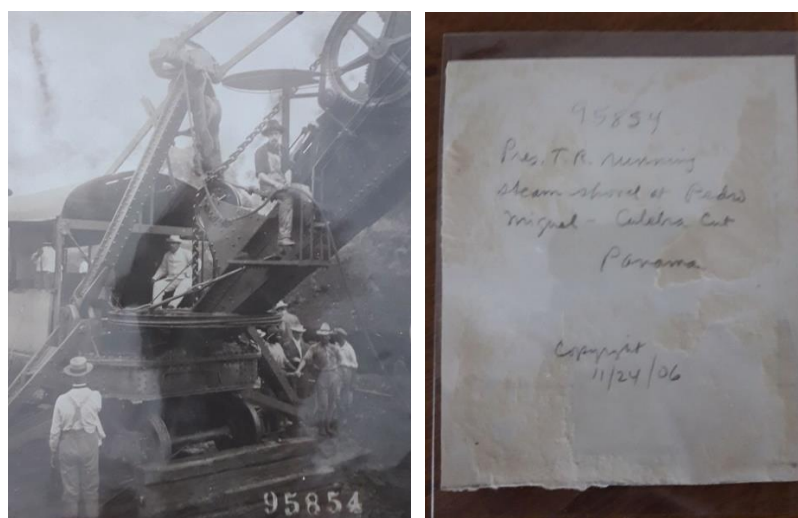


Figure 77. Underwood negative "95854." Ashton's contact print and verso. Courtesy George R. Rinhart Collection.

Unlike shooting a stereo set intended for the company's *Travel System*, Ashton's stereoscopic photography of the presidential visit was recognisably that of a press photographer. For instance, the slightly different photographs of Roosevelt at the steam shovel's controls were only moments apart. By shooting a sequence at the same location with the same perspective, Ashton was supplying photographic alternatives to both his employer and its clients at a range of publications. This offered the possibility of a degree of exclusivity, offering a unique shot unavailable to any of its rival titles. This was despite each photograph from a given sequence being similar in visual terms and made up of the same constituent parts. It is also possible that companies like Underwood got to know the personal preferences of named picture editors at individual publications. Armed with this knowledge, they could supply photographs preferred by way of content and "look."

Successfully meeting these multiple demands and requirements was at the heart of the training regime analysed within this chapter. Such a strategic contribution to any photography company's commercial fortunes was crucial, particularly for those working within the stereoscopic medium with its multi-platform customers.

## *Conclusion*

This chapter's analysis of evidence of corporate training in Underwood photographs taken during 1906 by two of its newly recruited staff proves several key points. Primarily, the company's expectations of what a stereograph should look like were precise. It expressed its detailed approach so that readers of *The Stereoscopic Photograph*, its quarterly magazine, appreciated the care and craft involved. In its 1901 form, key criteria for executing a successful and saleable photograph were itemised. This approach evolved down the years until company co-founder Bert Underwood embodied it in a memorable five-word photographic philosophy in the 1920s for his unpublished memoir. As a compositional approach to photography, it still rings true when analysing the visual qualities of the company's stereoscopic pictures including those that found their way into the pages of the press.

This study's consideration of the importance of "best stand-points" and "artistic taste" as well as "position, foreground, perspective, lighting, life" has been further informed by access for the first time to company records. As a result, analysis of specific assignments undertaken for the company by its photographers Horace D. Ashton and Clarence L. Chester strongly supports the idea that they worked to a clear corporate brief. By looking at the impact of stereoscopic training on the photographs they produced, the medium's influence on the visual make-up of press photographs becomes clearer.

How much the photographers' aptitude and experience informed this and how much was due to the Underwood training academy in Arlington, New Jersey, is debateable. However, the company successfully produced commercial images that worked both as stereographs for the stereoscopic market and as photographs in the daily and weekly press. This achievement supports the idea of a successful sharing and realisation of a corporate vision with its chosen photographic staff and employees.

In the next chapter, Underwood's wider photographic role is explored, both as an originator of stereoscopic photographs for use by the press coupled with the agency brief of its Illustration Department to supply pictures from a wide variety of sources. This is significant in terms of more fully understanding the nuanced origins of photography for the press. The focus of the chapter's analysis is the company's relationship with *National Geographic*, a seminal publication defined by and intimately connected with its use of photography.



## 4. Supply and Demand

### *Introduction*

Far from being limited to daily newspapers and illustrated weeklies, the influence of three-dimensional photography helped shape the format of the monthly magazine. The timing for stereoscopy's input was judicious. The medium enjoyed a resurgence either side of 1900. At the same point, a huge growth took place in the United States in the number of illustrated monthly magazines with a mass circulation. There were reasons for the emergence of this publishing trend. Pre-empted by the economic slump of 1893, a precipitous drop in the cover price charged by the major monthlies was rewarded by massive increases in circulation.<sup>351</sup> In turn, industry needed a stable clientele for its products and looked to advertising to help achieve this goal. As a result, these cheaper, high-volume illustrated magazines offered an entry point to an expanding customer base of affluent middle-class customers.<sup>352</sup>

From this transformative period, a new publication in which photography was intrinsic emerged: *National Geographic*. What started as a monthly academic bulletin for members of the National Geographic Society (NGS) in America later developed into a successful global brand.<sup>353</sup> However, at the outset, the publication was a blank canvas, open to radical new approaches to presenting its subject matter photographically and a willingness to experiment. The roots of *National Geographic's* enduring success can be traced to a decision taken by its first full-time editor, Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor, who held the post for more than half a century.<sup>354</sup> Accounts of how and when this eureka moment occurred revolve around an issue published in January 1905. Grosvenor was faced with an eleven-page hole that needed filling, presumably because of binding requirements. With no suitable material available, he turned instead to a packet of unsolicited photographs from a Russian explorer, who

---

<sup>351</sup> Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 17.

<sup>352</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 16.

<sup>353</sup> "About *National Geographic* Partners," accessed October 22, 2020, <https://www.nationalgeographicpartners.com/about/>

<sup>354</sup> Philip J. Pauly, "The World and All That Is in It: The National Geographic Society, 1888-1918," *American Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1979): 517.

had recently visited Lhasa, the mountain capital of Tibet. In return for just a credit, the explorer offered fifty photographs of “the forbidden city.”<sup>355</sup>

Audience reaction to the resulting issue was immediate. During the following year, NGS membership more than tripled to 11,000. By 1912, the magazine’s monthly circulation topped 100,000 on its way to 750,000 copies by the end of the decade.<sup>356</sup> Grosvenor’s decision to publish the Lhasa pictures and the audience response forever established photographs as the mainstay of the magazine. Indeed, it became its distinguishing feature, giving birth to a publishing phenomenon.<sup>357</sup> Various studies have assessed its impact. Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins analysed the magazine’s approach to photography.

While the *National Geographic* photograph is commonly seen as a straightforward kind of evidence about the world – a simple and objective mirror of reality – it is in fact evidence of a much more complex, interesting and consequential kind.

This, they argued, reflected who was behind the camera:

... from photographers to magazine editors and graphic designers to the readers who look – with sometimes different eyes – through the *Geographic’s* institutional lens.<sup>358</sup>

In this chapter, the early development of *National Geographic* as a platform for photography is analysed using business correspondence between the magazine’s editor and the stereoscopic photography company that is the focus of this study, Underwood. This unique material and its wider evaluation informs enhanced understanding of the role played by stereoscopic photography in the fast-evolving world of magazine publishing in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>359</sup> What is notable is that the relationship between the two parties began in 1903, pre-dating the

---

<sup>355</sup> Howard S. Abramson, *National Geographic: Behind America’s Lens on the World* (New York: Crown, 1987), 61-63.

<sup>356</sup> Abramson, *America’s Lens*, 108.

<sup>357</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 27.

<sup>358</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, xiii.

<sup>359</sup> Thanks to Cathy Hunter, Senior Archivist, Archives & Special Collections, *National Geographic*, Washington, DC, for supplying copies of this correspondence.

fabled and mould-breaking Lhasa edition by more than a year. The business correspondence also reveals that Underwood's stereoscopic input during these formative years of the magazine's history was significant and helped shape its pictorial evolution. By analysing specific articles and features illustrated by the company's stereoscopic photographs, greater insight is available as to "who" was behind the institutional lens highlighted by Lutz and Collins. In addition, commercial sensitivities surrounding pricing meant such information was confidential. What is revelatory about the business correspondence analysed in this chapter is that it includes itemised prices, casting fresh light on arrangements for photo credits and matters of copyright.

### *Early History*

To understand its origins, the interlocking relationship between photography and *National Geographic* bears closer scrutiny. Founded in America in 1888, the NGS was an amateur scientific organisation run by and for non-specialists. As such, several historical trends that converged at the end of the nineteenth century conditioned its structure and mission. These included the emergence and development of mass journalism, photoengraving or halftone printing technology, distinct academic disciplines, and the awakening of American interest in foreign lands. This latter development followed the Spanish-American War of 1898 and acquisition by the United States of new territorial possessions including the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guam. A combination of these factors created space for an organisation that could exist effectively on the boundary between science and entertainment whose subject was America's place in the world.<sup>360</sup>

At the NGS in Washington, DC, these factors all combined to give its membership magazine a marked personality change. Photography was at its heart. Articles became less academic and of broader interest, and more thought was given to the magazine's layout and graphics, resulting in stories more appealing to the eye.<sup>361</sup> As

---

<sup>360</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 16.

<sup>361</sup> Abramson, *Lens*, 57.

editor, Grosvenor was encouraged by the society's new president, Alexander Graham Bell, to study existing popular magazines like *Harper's* and *Century* to glean ideas.<sup>362</sup> The relationship between the two had a further dimension. Grosvenor was Bell's son-in-law.<sup>363</sup> During this research period, Grosvenor was reportedly told by one *Century* executive that the public considered use of halftones to reproduce photographs "vulgar," suggesting they somehow lacked good taste. Steel engravings cost \$100 a plate [around \$3,000 today] compared with halftone plates at less than a tenth of that price. Grosvenor opted for the latter production process. At the same time, he began to work more photographs into each issue.<sup>364</sup> Initially, these were sourced from government agencies such as the US Weather Bureau and US Geological Survey. Members of the society also sent back photographs from their travels around the world. But in time, Grosvenor began to look further afield for photographic suppliers.

The first formal contact between *National Geographic* and Underwood suggested a pre-existing relationship. In an exchange of letters in 1903, Grosvenor wrote to William E. Long, an Underwood manager in New York, thanking him for a recent favour. Grosvenor continued:

We take pleasure in placing your name on our exchange list and will mail the Magazine to you regularly.

We would be very much obliged if in return you would send us such manuals and lists of subjects, illustrations etc., as you may publish.<sup>365</sup>

Grosvenor's choice of terms here was revealing, differentiating between stereoscopic "subjects," and referring to "illustrations etc" as a separate category. This description captured the wide range of photographic material that a stereoscopic company like Underwood could offer via its catalogues and supply to customers. By reciprocally sending the company a copy each month, the magazine's

---

<sup>362</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 21-22.

<sup>363</sup> Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor married Bell's daughter, Elsie May Bell, on October 23, 1900 at King's Weigh House Chapel, London.

<sup>364</sup> Abramson, *Lens*, 61.

<sup>365</sup> Gilbert H. Grosvenor to William E. Long, Underwood, October 10, 1903, Letter Copybook, 226, Archives & Special Collections, *National Geographic*, Washington, DC.

editor appeared keen to develop the relationship. Initially though, Underwood was a reluctant partner. A month later and after no response, Grosvenor made a second request for “your list of illustrations if possible and also your prices.”<sup>366</sup> A further ten-day silence ensued after which he tried again, underlining a genuine commitment to the task he had set himself. His third letter was accompanied by a copy of a newspaper, and he concluded by spelling out a concrete business proposal:

We can make frequent use of such photographs as appear in the enclosed paper of the *Sunday Tribune* of New York.

Your early attention to this request will be appreciated.

Yours very truly, Gilbert H. Grosvenor, Editor.<sup>367</sup>

It was a clever and strategic move on his part. Each Sunday, the *New York Tribune* carried an “Illustrated Supplement” in which Underwood photographs taken “from stereographs” appeared regularly, credited to the company. The specific issue Grosvenor enclosed with his letter is not known, but that of Sunday November 22, 1903 appears a strong candidate (figure 78).

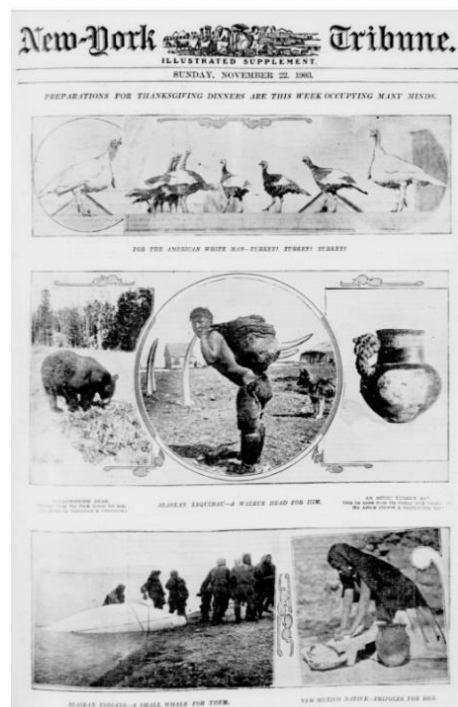


Figure 78. “Preparations for Thanksgiving Dinners ...”  
*New York Tribune* “Illustrated Supplement,” November 22, 1903.

<sup>366</sup> Grosvenor to Long, November 17, 1903, 286.

<sup>367</sup> Grosvenor to Long, November 27, 1903, 305.

It was certainly one that reflected Grosvenor's editorial interests. A full-page of eye-catching photographs appeared under a light-hearted headline, "Preparations for Thanksgiving Dinners Are This Week Occupying Many Minds." The theme employed a variety of people and animals in their natural habitats. At the top of the page, turkeys for "the American white man" appeared alongside a range of other edible options. A small whale was being hauled from the sea by a group of "Alaskan Indians" whilst in the centre of the page, a walrus head was pictured being carried in the arms of an "Alaskan Eskimau." Given his recent inquiries about Underwood's photography, Grosvenor may have noticed the company's credit amidst the montage. The text "photograph by Underwood & Underwood" appeared beneath a Yellowstone Bear captioned "Garbage from the Park Hotels for Him."

Whilst the racist undertone of the accompanying text was typical of its time, the photographs picked out by Grosvenor chimed with the editorial and illustrative aspirations of the fledgling *National Geographic*. Eventually, Underwood responded in a manner expected from a stereoscopic company. Grosvenor acknowledged this in his reply:

I am in receipt of the sets of stereoscopic photographs of Mont Pelee [sic] and the Yosemite and also the stereoscopic glass for which please accept my most hearty thanks.

It is a wonderful work which you are doing, and it will be a great pleasure for me to publish a note in the magazine.

Offering editorial space to Underwood in his magazine with its small but knowledgeable membership was a shrewd move on Grosvenor's part. As to the choice of stereoscopic subjects, they were clearly well targeted. Mont Pelée and Yosemite had recently made headline news and, as a result, had been extensively stereographed by the company.<sup>368</sup> In particular, Underwood's coverage of the Mont Pelée volcanic eruption had already helped establish connections with other key figures linked to the NGS.

---

<sup>368</sup> Grosvenor to Long, January 8, 1904, 439.

## *Mont Pelée, 1902*

When the Mont Pelée volcano erupted on the Caribbean island of Martinique in May 1902, more than 30,000 lost their lives. Because of the devastation caused to both landscape and population, the world's leading volcanologists travelled there to understand more about what happened and why. Press reporters and photographers too went to cover what was a significant news story of worldwide interest. According to the *New York Times*, the cruiser USS *Dixie* sailed for Martinique carrying cargo that included 2,500 tons of food and clothing for survivors. Eighteen newspaper correspondents were also on board.<sup>369</sup>

As was now its standard practice when faced with such a news event, Underwood commissioned a stereographer to pursue its multi-media interests. E. E. Leadbeater, who regularly worked with the company, was commissioned to capture the effects of the eruption on Martinique's capital, St. Pierre, and the immediate vicinity.<sup>370</sup> Born in Ohio in 1870, Edward Edwin Leadbeater possessed a photographic background that made him well equipped to cover such an event. By the mid-1890s, he was in business in Buffalo, New York State with his younger brother Alfred as "Leadbeater Brothers, photographers."<sup>371</sup> By the time of the Mont Pelée eruption, Edward was living in Kearny, New Jersey with his wife, two young children and a stereographer brother-in-law. Photography was the family business.<sup>372</sup>

Sailing to Martinique by scheduled steamer from New York, Leadbeater joined forces with others to view the volcano's still-active crater from close quarters. Among them was Professor Angelo Heilprin, a renowned geologist from Philadelphia. He was present under the auspices of the NGS. Both Leadbeater and Heilprin were passengers on *Fontabelle* operated by the Quebec Steamship Company. It arrived

---

<sup>369</sup> "Cruiser Dixie Sails Laden with Supplies," *New York Times*, May 15, 1902, <https://nyti.ms/3qk6PxO>

<sup>370</sup> E. E. Leadbeater, "Record Breaking Mt. Pelée," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1902, 66, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto2ellia/page/66/mode/2up>

<sup>371</sup> *Trade Directory* (Buffalo, New York: Anon, 1897), 688, My Ancestry.

<sup>372</sup> *Trade Directory* (Kearny, New Jersey: Anon, 1902), 200; and US Census 1900, 540 Chestnut Street, Kearny, New Jersey, line 53, My Ancestry,

on the island on May 25, two-and-a-half weeks after the first eruption. Whether both men knew each other beforehand or only met during the voyage is not known. However, once in Martinique, several journalists joined their party. These included two staff members with *McClure's* and George Kennan of *Outlook* magazine (figure 79).



Figure 79. Underwood photographer “Ledbetter” [sic], Martinique 1902.  
Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

Coincidentally, Kennan was the only journalist among the thirty-three founding members of the NGS.<sup>373</sup> Both Heilprin and Kennan’s links to the society proved advantageous to Underwood in forging a productive relationship with its membership magazine going forward.

In collaboration with this cosmopolitan group, Leadbeater’s stereoscopic photographs taken on Martinique attracted widespread acclaim. Those who witnessed Leadbeater’s stereographic skills at close quarters were particularly impressed. In *Mont Pelée and the Tragedy of Martinique*, Heilprin’s book about the

---

<sup>373</sup> “Second Ascent of Mont Pelee [sic] Made,” *New York Times*, June 4, 1902, <https://nyti.ms/3fUUTOi>

For a profile, see “George Kennan: Investigative Reporter Who Helped Found National Geographic Society,” accessed November 18, 2020, <https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2018/01/06/george-kennan-an-investigative-reporter-who-helped-found-the-national-geographic-society/>



eruption published in 1903, the volcanologist thanked Underwood for permission to use its photographs, referring to the company “whose representative in Martinique was for a while associated with the author in his studies of Mont Pelée.”<sup>374</sup> Heilprin’s text also included extracts from Leadbeater’s own illustrated account of events on the island, first published in Underwood’s quarterly magazine, *The Stereoscopic Photograph* (figure 80).<sup>375</sup>

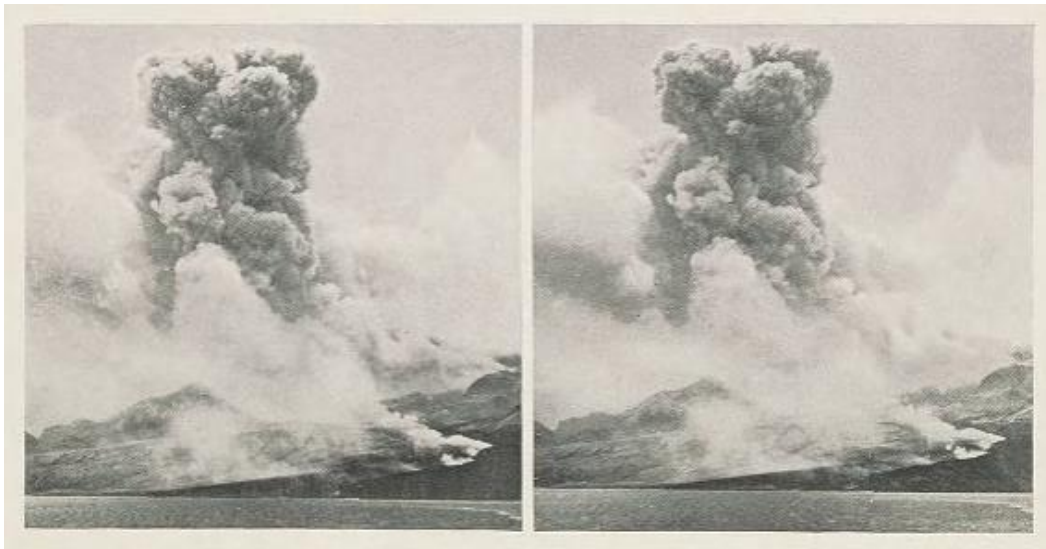


Figure 80. “A Terrible Volcanic Explosion – Mont Pelée in Eruption, June 5, 1902.”  
*Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1902.

As for George Kennan, he too was fulsome in his praise of what Leadbeater produced. Whether Kennan himself obtained Underwood’s stereographs, or they were sent to him by Underwood, he wrote afterwards that they:

... give a better and more satisfactory idea of St. Pierre and of the volcano in its various phases of activity than anything that I have seen, and I shall prize them very highly.

Singling out its stereographer, Kennan added:

---

<sup>374</sup> Angelo Heilprin, *Mont Pelée and the Tragedy of Martinique* (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott, 1903), viii.

For details of Heilprin’s career, see “Obituary: Angelo Heilprin,” *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 39, no. 11 (1907): 666-68, [www.jstor.org/stable/198438](http://www.jstor.org/stable/198438)

<sup>375</sup> Heilprin, *Tragedy of Martinique*, 158-9; and Leadbeater, “Record Breaking,” 66-73.

I congratulate you on the good work that Leadbeater did. His ascent of the volcano with Prof. Heilprin ... was a plucky thing to do.

During all the time that I was with him, he impressed me as enterprising, courageous and capable. I shall have occasion to speak of him in my articles now running serially in *The Outlook*.<sup>376</sup>

Daniel J. Ellison, editor of Underwood's magazine, concluded this exchange of compliments:

This commendation, both of Mr. Leadbeater and the stereographs he obtained, from so eminent an authority as Mr. Kennan, is both gratifying and conclusive."<sup>377</sup>

Amidst all the mutual backslapping, it is worth noting that another key figure in these events received no credit or public acknowledgement. Throughout Kennan's career, his wife Emaline accompanied him on his travels and co-authored many of his writings, including those concerning Martinique.<sup>378</sup> Her death in 1940 was marked in a *New York Times* article headlined "Mrs. George Kennan, widow of author." She can be seen as representative of many women who were key contributors to the narrative that emerges from this study, but still remain in the shadows.

In their respective fields of volcanology, journalism, and photography, Heilprin, Kennan, Leadbeater and Underwood clearly forged an understanding based on mutual respect for each other's craft. Indeed, the relationship between Kennan and the stereoscopic company was formalised in a commercial arrangement. The Christmas 1902 issue of Underwood's quarterly magazine, now re-titled *The Traveller*, included an article accompanied by Kennan's by-line and headlined "Photographing a Volcano." In it, the journalist took the opportunity to highlight stereoscopy's superiority in capturing events in Martinique when compared with the "very good" photographs he had managed to take "with an instrument of the ordinary

---

<sup>376</sup> George Kennan, "The Tragedy of Mount Pelée, I-VII," *The Outlook*. The series of articles ran weekly between June 28 and August 9, 1902, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006060366>

<sup>377</sup> Leadbeater, "Record Breaking," 73.

<sup>378</sup> "Mrs. George Kennan, widow of author, 86," *New York Times*, May 28, 1940, <https://nyti.ms/3fY12cj>

sort.”<sup>379</sup> Soon afterwards, Underwood published its *St. Pierre and Mont Pelée Tour*, “giving eighteen standpoints, with guide book, by George Kennan, patent maps and case,” retailing at \$3.15. Indeed, it may well have been this set of stereos that Underwood in New York sent to Grosvenor at the *National Geographic* that initially helped cement their business relationship.

### *Yosemite, California*

As to the second set of stereos that Underwood sent Grosvenor, the spectacular rocks, trees, and rivers of Yosemite in northern California had long been popular photographic subjects. In 1867, Carleton E. Watkins in association with the California Geological Survey produced images acclaimed at exhibitions in New York and London, praised in the US Congress, and at the Paris Exposition.<sup>380</sup> Indeed, Underwood’s own library featured stereoscopic negatives of the state from the 1860s originated by Charles Bierstadt, one of its first suppliers. On this occasion, the company may have used Grosvenor’s *National Geographic* inquiry as an opportunity to share photographs from one of its current stereoscopic projects.

In 1902, Underwood published *Yosemite Valley Through the Stereoscope* featuring twenty-four stereos and a small guidebook complete with maps of the area. It was a tour “personally conducted” by Charles Quincy Turner, a former editor of *Outing*, a magazine whose editorial brief covered sport and outdoor recreation.<sup>381</sup> The following year, President Roosevelt and the naturalist John Muir undertook a three-day camping trip to the region, stimulating further interest in the area. Muir’s writings about protecting America’s wilderness areas from commercial lumber concerns were attracting nationwide attention including that of the president. At Roosevelt’s

---

<sup>379</sup> George Kennan, “Stereographing a Volcano,” *The Traveller*, Christmas 1902, 154, <https://archive.org/details/traveller2elli/page/149/mode/1up?q=Kennan>

Kennan also contributed two more articles, “A Christmas in the Tropics” and “A Christmas in Siberia,” to the final issue of *The Traveller* in December 1903, <https://archive.org/details/traveller3ellib/page/153/mode/1up>

<sup>380</sup> Robin Kelsey, *Archive Style: Photographs and Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 77-78.

<sup>381</sup> Charles Quincy Turner, *Yosemite Valley Through the Stereoscope* (New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1902), <https://archive.org/details/yosemitevalleyth00turn>

suggestion, a trip to Yosemite with Muir took place. Afterwards, the president wrote to the naturalist:

I shall never forget our three camps; the first in the solemn temple of the giant sequoias; the next in the snowstorm among the silver firs near the brink of the cliff; and the third on the floor of the Yosemite, in the open valley fronting the stupendous rocky mass of El Capitan with the falls thundering in the distance on either hand.<sup>382</sup>

On the final day of the trip, an unnamed Underwood photographer stereographed Roosevelt alongside Muir at Overhanging Rock on Glacier Point (figure 81).<sup>383</sup>

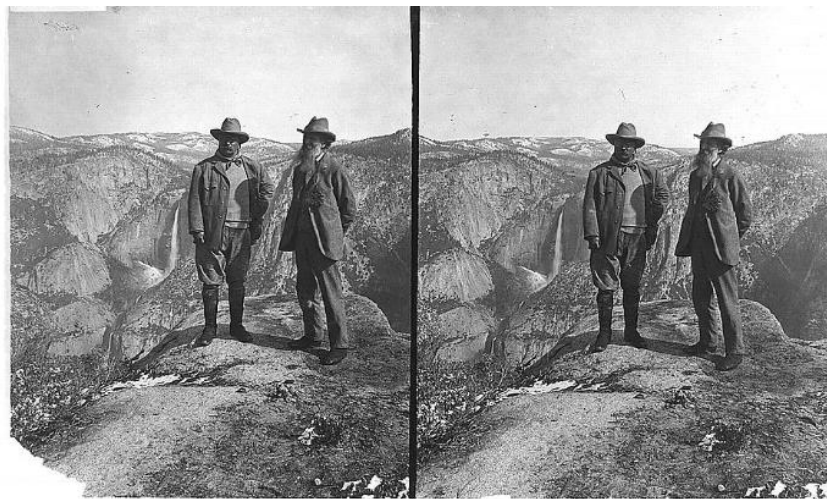


Figure 81. "Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir at Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California."  
US Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

This "exclusive" photograph encapsulated a key moment in nature conservation in the United States. Following Roosevelt's discussions with Muir, measures to preserve parks, forests and fast-disappearing natural habitats for wildlife became law in 1906, known as the Antiquities Act.<sup>384</sup>

---

<sup>382</sup> Theodore Roosevelt to John Muir, May 19, 1903, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, ND, accessed November 12, 2020, <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o184892>

<sup>383</sup> For an account of the Roosevelt-Muir Yosemite trip, see Ralph H. Anderson, "We Will Pitch Camp at Bridalveil," *Yosemite Nature Notes* 30, no.5 (May 1951): 43-46, [https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite\\_nature\\_notes/30/30-5.pdf](https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite_nature_notes/30/30-5.pdf)

<sup>384</sup> Richard J. Hartesveldt, "Roosevelt and Muir - Conservationists," *Yosemite Nature Notes* 34, no.11 (November 1955): 134, [https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite\\_nature\\_notes/34/34-11.pdf](https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite_nature_notes/34/34-11.pdf)

Both *National Geographic* and Underwood shared enthusiasm for the natural world. On receipt of the Mont Pélee and Yosemite stereos and “stereoscopic glass” from Underwood, Grosvenor replied to William E. Long in New York.<sup>385</sup> The tone of his letter suggested a genuine enthusiasm for stereoscopy:

Everything of this sort tends not only to give a more accurate account of the geographic scenes but also to make them vastly more interesting for the young and old.<sup>386</sup>

Grosvenor’s response confirmed a fresh editorial approach at the magazine, seeking out new audiences by using new and emerging visual media and technologies. Underwood too would have been pleased to read the editor’s recognition that stereoscopy gave a “more accurate account of the geographic scenes.” As to Underwood’s choice of Mont Pelée and Yosemite as photographic subjects, they seemed perfectly matched with the emerging aspirations of the NGS and its membership publication. This synchronicity proved significant for the business relationship between the two parties during this embryonic period in the magazine’s history.

### *Lantern Slide Lectures*

Their first commercial exchange involved lantern slides, a significant aspect of Underwood’s business with its own dedicated department. In November 1904, Grosvenor wrote to the company with a firm order for it to fulfil:

Gentlemen. Will you kindly send us one lantern slide of each of the following Numbers:

#5463 - School Boys; #6464 – Home of Okuma; #5525 – Buddhist Funeral;  
#5378 – Liao Hsi Mountains; #5382 – Schoolchildren drilling;  
#5444 – School house; #2166 – War-like spirit.

The above from your supplement list, ‘scenes of active hostilities.’<sup>387</sup>

---

<sup>385</sup> William E. Long contributed an article, “The Stereograph as an Illusion,” to the final issue of Underwood’s quarterly magazine *The Traveller* in December 1903, <https://archive.org/details/traveller3ellib/page/230/mode/2up>

<sup>386</sup> Grosvenor to Long, January 8, 1904, Letter Copybook, 439.

<sup>387</sup> Grosvenor to Underwood, November 4, 1904, Letter Copybook, 351.

These lantern slides were destined for NGS public lectures as part of its annual season with Japan and China among their subjects.<sup>388</sup> “Liao Hsi Mountains” geographically formed a backdrop to the Great Wall of China, whilst “Home of Okuma” referred to Okuma Shigenobu, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs in Japan and leader of the country’s Progressive Party (figure 82).

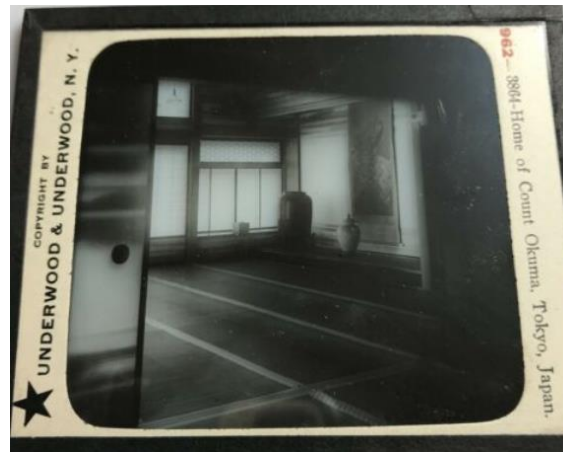


Figure 82. “Home of Count Okuma, Tokyo, Japan.”  
Underwood lantern slide. Private Collection.

Reference to “scenes of active hostilities” suggested current themes, particularly as the Russo-Japanese War was now underway. Grosvenor’s lantern slide order coincided with the appearance of press articles publicising the forthcoming lecture season. The calibre of speakers reflected the society’s growing stature and convenient location close to the heart of the US government. Amongst those booked to address the society was William Howard Taft, then serving as secretary of war under Roosevelt and a future American president. Like Alexander Graham Bell, Taft had a family connection to Grosvenor, in his case as a second cousin.<sup>389</sup> It was yet another example of a pattern involving access to high-powered networks with influential connections exploited by Underwood and those with whom it dealt as a stereoscopic photography company.

---

<sup>388</sup> “Lectures Worth Hearing,” *Times*, Washington, DC, November 11, 1904, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1904-11-11/ed-1/seq-4/>

<sup>389</sup> “With the National Geographic ...,” *New York Times*, September 6, 1970, <https://nyti.ms/3fYumzJ>



Even with the invention of moving pictures and silent cinema, “Magic Lantern Slides,” were a popular form of visual culture. The number of slides in circulation was enormous. In 1902, the Yorkshire Photographic Union’s advertised list of lantern lectures involved thirty-six men and women. Their lectures featured between twelve and sixty slides each on a variety of topics and in a variety of formats.<sup>390</sup> Using its own extensive and growing library of stereoscopic negatives, Underwood could produce almost any image as a lantern slide. As a result, the company’s catalogue was patronised by leading figures on the public lecture circuit. For his illustrations, the popular American lecturer Charles W. Stoddard relied entirely on the work of the Underwood stereographer James Ricalton.<sup>391</sup>

Another celebrated figure with whom Ricalton collaborated was Professor Albert S. Bickmore, first curator of the American Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC. Between 1895 and 1904, Bickmore travelled 12,000 miles a year, gathering data and illustrations for his lectures on natural history, geography and history.<sup>392</sup> As a result, he was able to deliver “418 lectures on 213 different subjects” to teachers under the auspices of the “state superintendent of public instruction” in New York.<sup>393</sup> One of his lectures on Greece utilised seventy-two of Ricalton’s “stereopticon views” that were hand-coloured by another Underwood collaborator, Dwight L. Elmendorf.<sup>394</sup> Similarly prolific, Elmendorf’s popularity was such that his lectures, using his own photographs as illustrations, became annual events at venues across America including New York’s Carnegie Hall.<sup>395</sup>

This public lecture circuit combining photography, education, and a thirst for knowledge about the United States and the wider world epitomised the mission of

---

<sup>390</sup> Kelley Wilder, “Photographic Cataloguing,” in *Documenting the World: Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record*, Gregg Mitman and Kelley Wilder, eds. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 210.

<sup>391</sup> Lucas, *James Ricalton’s Photographs*, 33.

<sup>392</sup> “Dr. Albert S. Bickmore Dead,” *Evening Star*, Washington, DC, August 14, 1914, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1914-08-14/ed-1/seq-8/>

<sup>393</sup> “Prof. A. S. Bickmore dies,” *New York Times*, August 14, 1914, <https://nyti.ms/2JkIYNY>

<sup>394</sup> “Prof. Bickmore on Athens,” *New York Times*, October 10, 1897, <https://nyti.ms/3lqM4wH>

In the report, James Ricalton was incorrectly referred to as “Ricarton.”

<sup>395</sup> “Elmendorf New Travel Talks,” *New York Times*, October 12, 1913, <https://nyti.ms/37qsJXp>

*National Geographic*. To fulfil that mission, Gilbert H. Grosvenor as editor increasingly turned to companies and publishers such as Underwood with its ever-expanding library of photographs from around the globe. As analysis in the rest of this chapter will prove, Underwood commercially exploited its library of stereoscopic negatives in a strategic way. It continued to add new material so that customers like *National Geographic* had multiple photographic and illustrative options from which to choose.

*“Have You Any Good Pictures of Russian Scenes?”*

The next stage in the relationship between magazine and photographic company sums up a key point in what followed. Readers of *National Geographic* looked at photographs the magazine published with the same attention to detail enjoyed by stereocard viewers. The moment for this transition arrived six months after the Lhasa, Tibet issue significantly altered the magazine’s editorial direction. In June 1905, Grosvenor approached Underwood with a plea for photographs that was direct and to the point.

Gentlemen. Have you any good pictures of Russian scenes? I want pictures of people, street scenes, market scenes, etc.

I do not care for pictures of buildings. Yours Sincerely, Editor.<sup>396</sup>

Why Grosvenor wanted these “good pictures” and in what context they might appear, if any, was unclear. However, when the next edition of the magazine came out a few weeks later, Underwood had clearly responded in a way appreciated by Grosvenor. Headlined “Evolution of Russian Government,” the magazine’s lead article was credited to “Edwin A. Grosvenor, LL.D., Professor of Modern Government and International Law in Amherst College.” Utilising yet another familial relationship, the author was the editor’s father, though the connection was not explicit to readers (figure 83).

---

<sup>396</sup> Grosvenor to Underwood, June 2, 1905, Letter Copybook, 103.



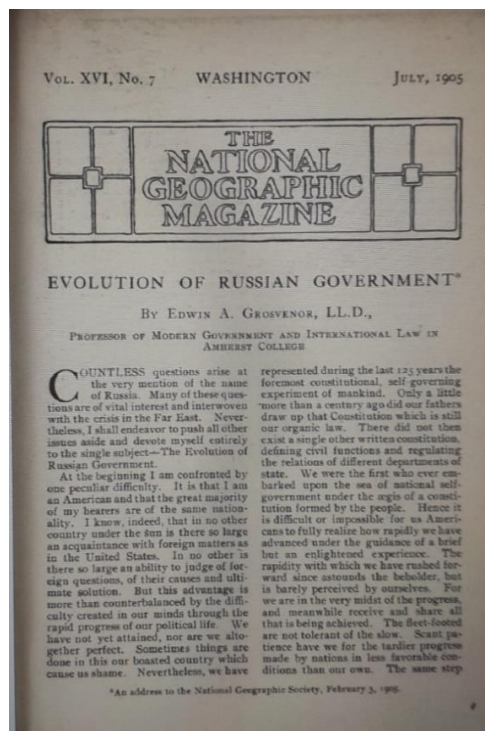


Figure 83. “Evolution of Russian Government” by Edwin A. Grosvenor, LL.D.  
*National Geographic* front cover, July 1905.

As to the article’s origins, a footnote pointed out that it formed an address to the NGS delivered the previous February.<sup>397</sup> Uprisings across Russia though meant its contents had been overtaken by events. To allow for this, the article included a brief asterisked update referring to “the Tsar’s proclamation of religious freedom and equality, issued on April 30 ...” Material taken from Grosvenor senior’s public lecture was repurposed for *National Geographic*, a practice that became a regular pattern.

Photographically, Underwood’s contribution was considerable. Of twenty-three pages given over to the article, twelve were individual photographs supplied by the company. Each was formally credited “from stereograph copyright Underwood & Underwood, N.Y.” Other illustrations came from different sources. Four photographs of varying sizes came from recent books about Russia, one published by Scribner’s, the other by Macmillan. These attributions showed how *National Geographic* was beginning to use a variety of established concerns to source its visual content.

<sup>397</sup> “Dr. Edwin A. Grosvenor To Lecture on Russia,” *Times*, Washington, DC., February 3, 1905, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1905-02-03/ed-1/seq-4/>

Underwood's ability to respond quickly and satisfactorily to Grosvenor's plea for "good pictures of Russian scenes" generated a further letter sent within days of his inquiry. It also revealed more about the workings of the magazine's editorial practice as it gained experience compiling issues in which photography played a more prominent role. "Gentlemen," Grosvenor again wrote:

I return 25 of the 37 photographs you sent me, having retained the other 12. You will receive the remittance of \$42.00 for the 12 pictures from our Treasurer.

In numerical terms, this 1:3 ratio of photographs chosen for publication appeared a respectable strike-rate. In economic terms, it meant Underwood charged the magazine \$3.50 per picture [around \$100 today]. How this figure was arrived at and whether individual photographs attracted a higher or lower figure is not known. But it is instructive in understanding more about the company's pricing policy for servicing the press. The charge per photograph may appear quite low. To explain this, one factor may have been *National Geographic's* small circulation, numbering only a few thousand. Also, fixed costs already absorbed by other parts of the business meant any margin Underwood achieved was a bonus for its managers. Aside from pure dollars and cents, an essential part of the transaction centred on receiving a published credit, one that mentioned both the company by name and "from stereograph" alongside each published image. In promoting the Underwood brand, such deals proved invaluable as the press part of the stereoscopic company's business increased in scale.

As to how and from where Underwood sourced its "good pictures of Russian scenes," closer analysis of the published photographs provides details of its supply chain. One photograph was the type of royal portrait in which Underwood now specialised. Captioned "Latest Picture of the Tsar of all the Russias [sic] and His Interesting Family, including Baby Tsarevitch," it made particularly effective use of the available sunlight (figure 84).



Figure 84. "Latest Picture of the Tsar of all the Russias [sic] ..."  
*National Geographic*, July 1905.

The "Russias" typographical error was not the only one made in the presentation of Underwood's photographic material, suggesting accuracy was a casualty of the rush to meet a deadline. The remaining eleven photographs came from Underwood's *Russia Through the Stereoscope*, published in 1901. Sub-titled *A Journey Across the Land of the Czar from Finland to the Black Sea*, the set featured a hundred stereos plus an accompanying guidebook and trademark location maps. Billed as "personally conducted by M.S. Emery," the author's wider contribution to Underwood's activities was doubly significant. As a woman with a traceable career, she occupied an editorial rather than managerial or photographic role within the company.

Mabel Sarah Emery was born in Massachusetts in 1859. In 1900, the US Census recorded her as a "private secretary" in Lynn City, Boston where she lived with her mother and sisters.<sup>398</sup> By 1910, she was lodging in Manhattan as an "editor" in trade publishing, suggesting a career that changed direction in the intervening years.<sup>399</sup> In her forties, she established a reputation as a published author. *When We Were Little*

<sup>398</sup> 1900 US Census, 94 Washington Street, Lynn City, Boston, Massachusetts, line 35, My Ancestry.

<sup>399</sup> 1910 US Census, 415 W 121 St, Manhattan, New York City, line 26, My Ancestry.

appeared in 1894 followed by *How to Enjoy Pictures* four years later. Both titles were published in Boston, by the Universalist Publishing House, and Prang Educational respectively. These were instructional tomes aimed at younger readers that would have attracted the attention of Underwood's education department. As a writer and editor, Emery contributed many articles to the company's quarterly magazine.<sup>400</sup> Her principal role though was writing guidebooks for its stereoscopic tours. These included volumes about Norway, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Lucerne, and the Engadine and St. Gotthard Railway. Another popular Underwood title was her *Real Children in Many Lands: A Series of Visits Through the Stereoscope*. First published in 1905, it appeared in a revised and updated edition in 1914. Emery's role in supplying authoritative textual material alongside the company's stereos underlined the range of skills and services that Underwood needed to fully service its clientele.

As to "good pictures of Russian scenes," the company made many of the negatives for *Russia Through the Stereoscope* several years before. In 1897, Elmer Underwood undertook an extensive stereoscopic photography trip to the region. At the time, Elmer, his wife Jane (known as "Jennie"), and their two young children were based in London. In a surviving family letter, Elmer detailed an itinerary lasting several weeks that featured St. Petersburg, Moscow, Nijni-Novgorod, Kazan, Kief (Kiev), Odessa and Warsaw as well as Viborg and Helsingfors (Helsinki) in Finland.<sup>401</sup> Whilst in St. Petersburg, the elder Underwood brother stereographed Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and President Félix Faure of France during individual visits they made to see Tsar Nicholas II. Photographs of these news events reached

---

<sup>400</sup> See M.S. Emery, "Pictures and Stereographs," 57-58, and "Nijni Novgorod," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1901, 71-72; "A Christmas Pilgrimage," 95-96, and "A Mistaken Identity," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, December 1901, 115-16; "Pictures and Stereographs," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1902, 57-58; "Christmas and After Christmas," *The Traveller*, December 1902, 144-47; "Kief," *The Traveller*, March 1903, 255-56; "On the Trail of Three Travellers," 50-52, and "Switzerland," *The Traveller*, June 1903, 67-68; "Real Children in Italy," *The Traveller*, Autumn 1903, 103-05; and "Real Children in Denmark," *The Traveller*, December 1903, 221-24.

<sup>401</sup> Elmer Underwood to parents-in-law, St. Petersburg, August 13, 1897, Keystone-Mast Collection, University of California Riverside, accessed November 12, 2020, <http://ucr.emuseum.com/view/objects/asitem/search@/10/title-asc?t:state:flow=30387a02-d137-45f8-a673-9460e1b90850#sthash.PBpjMO3q.dpbs>

Elmer addressed the letter to "Mother and Father," but his father, Rev. Elias Underwood, died in 1895. His wife's parents are more likely candidates as the letter's recipients.

the press and appeared in illustrated weeklies in both America and Europe (figure 85).



Figure 85. "President Faure's Visit to the Czar."  
*The Graphic*, September 4, 1897.

Amongst those using Elmer's work, the *Graphic* carried a "snapshot" capturing President Faure's arrival in St. Petersburg whilst a "photo" pictured him laying the cornerstone of the Troitsky Bridge across the River Neva. The bridge built by a French firm, Batignolles, officially opened in May 1903 as part of celebrations marking the city's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Here, the overlap between travel and press photography, and the multi-faceted nature of Underwood's business was clear. Further evidence to support this sourcing of "Russian scenes" for *National Geographic* comes from titles Underwood gave to its Russia and Finland stereos. These strongly echoed those adopted by the magazine. "Turning Up the Salt, Solinen," as featured in *Russia Through the Stereoscope*, was titled "Turning Up the Salt, Salt Fields, Solinen, Russia." Beyond a factual one-or-two-line description, the magazine also employed a different editorial approach for a few of the photographs. These featured extended captions of up to seventy-five words using content drawn from *Russia Through the Stereoscope*. "Splendid Temple of Our Saviour in a Western District of Moscow" featured a crocodile of figures visible in the left-hand foreground of the photograph (figure 86).



Figure 86. "Splendid Temple of Our Saviour in a Western District of Moscow."  
*National Geographic*, July 1905.

The original Underwood stereocard text relating to this group read:

That must be a girls' boarding-school out for a walk. Perhaps the vigilant *chaperone* is taking her flock home from the church.<sup>402</sup>

However, in the magazine, the extended caption stated:

The procession is a party of schoolgirls coming from the church guarded by a vigilant *chaperone*.<sup>403</sup>

Somewhere in the magazine's production process, an imaginative suggestion offered by Mabel Sarah Emery for Underwood became a statement of fact in *National Geographic*, shifting the balance between entertainment and education. This example showed how Underwood had more of a role in shaping the editorial content than a photographic company merely supplying images. For "The Milkmaids of Kief," Underwood's original title was subjected to a further spelling error by the

<sup>402</sup> Emery, *Russia*, 129.

<sup>403</sup> "Evolution of Russian Government," *National Geographic*, July 1905, 318.

magazine and appeared as “Country Women Tramping into Krief [sic], Russia, With the Morning Supply of Milk” (figure 87).



Figure 87. “Country Women Tramping into Krief [sic], Russia, with the Morning Supply of Milk.”  
*National Geographic*, July 1905.

This inaccuracy aside, the magazine’s extended caption repeated the editorial approach taken by Underwood in *Russia Through the Stereoscope*, highlighting the physical hardships endured by the women:

An enormous weight is carried uncomplainingly ... These women do the heaviest part of the farm work ... often walking five or six miles to deliver their wares.

But the magazine’s version of the text then departed from its previous factual tone, concluding with the statement:

Very few of them can read or write, and they are helpless under the domination of the priests and village head men.<sup>404</sup>

---

<sup>404</sup> *National Geographic*, July 1905, 328.



This latter pronouncement about the nature and structure of Russian society was not one previously attached to the photograph by Underwood's guidebook for its stereo series. Its appearance here suggested that Grosvenor as the magazine's editor might have added the line by way of commentary or agreed to its inclusion.

Returning to his original request, Grosvenor's photographic brief to Underwood was specific.

I want pictures of people, street scenes, market scenes, etc. I do not care for pictures of buildings.<sup>405</sup>

What was noticeable about all twelve photographs duly supplied was that they displayed a successful marriage of the elements required. People were present in all the pictures from the tsar and his family to the women "turning up the salt." Street scenes included crowds gathered outside the Kremlin and market scenes from Moscow and Nijni-Novgorod to Odessa and Viborg. Even though Grosvenor said he did not care for pictures of buildings, a variety of structures were prominent. Indeed, they often took centre-stage. As effective stereoscopic photographs, the buildings shared the space with crowds and other visual triggers such as horse-drawn vehicles. This brought a distinctive photographic style to bear on the magazine's embryonic pictorial appearance and showed its editor what was visually possible in a way he might not have previously appreciated.

The photographs also embodied a fresh approach to relaying information. Readers looking at the images had to simultaneously digest the accompanying captions and evaluate any details captured within each picture. This marked a physical change in the viewing experience for those familiar with looking at a set of stereos. Each stereocard contained detailed text printed on its verso that needed to be read and digested separately. Indeed, viewing stereos was an altogether more tactile experience compared to that offered by the co-presence of photograph and caption on the same page. The latter approach required swifter mental agility, but it was one

---

<sup>405</sup> Grosvenor to Underwood, June 2, 1905, Letter Copybook, 103.



of which increasing numbers of consumers were gaining experience. The overlap between those who owned Underwood *Travel System* titles and members of the NGS is impossible to quantify. But as the society's membership began its exponential rise, a proportion of the magazine's new subscribers would have previously honed their visual dexterity thanks to exposure to the stereoscope.

Aside from the photographs' visual characteristics, the Russian scenes Underwood supplied to *National Geographic* exemplified what a company with access to its own vast archive of images could offer. Working as a photo agency, use of stock or library images was not exclusive to one customer. Indeed, some of the Russian photographs supplied to Grosvenor by Underwood had made appearances elsewhere. Further examination reveals some images were re-titled and recaptioned to match the editorial needs of a particular publication. In May 1903, the *New York Tribune* reported on the bicentenary of the founding of St. Petersburg by Peter the Great. To mark the occasion, the Sunday edition's "Illustrated Supplement" featured a full-page of seven stereoscopic photographs, all copyrighted by and credited to Underwood.<sup>406</sup>

Analysis reveals that two of the same images were amongst those the company supplied to *National Geographic* for its July 1905 issue. In the *New York Tribune*, they appeared as "Milkmaids Coming into St. Petersburg" and "Russian Troika in a St. Petersburg Park." In the *National Geographic*, the same photographs were relocated to Kiev and Moscow, and recaptioned "Country Women Tramping into Krief [Kief], Russia, with the Morning Supply of Milk" and "A Characteristic Russian Troika (three-horse carriage) Before the Old Petrofski Palace in the Northwest Suburb of Moscow." Of course, the troika and women carrying milk were generic features of Russian life and not geographically specific, justifying the practice to a degree. But this example reflected a wider point. Photographers were over reliant on stereotypical imagery, compounding existing assumptions about cultures unfamiliar to western audiences. It also underlined the power of a caption to manipulate a

---

<sup>406</sup> "Illustrated Supplement," *New York Tribune*, May 31, 1903, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1903-05-31/ed-1/seq-29/>

photograph's meaning. This contrasted with the veracity of a photograph, a point highlighted by commentators elsewhere in this thesis. Also, the *New York Tribune* cropped the troika photograph removing the Old Petrofski Palace in Moscow in the background. For an overwhelming majority of readers without first-hand knowledge of either St. Petersburg or Moscow, this sleight of hand went undetected (figure 88).

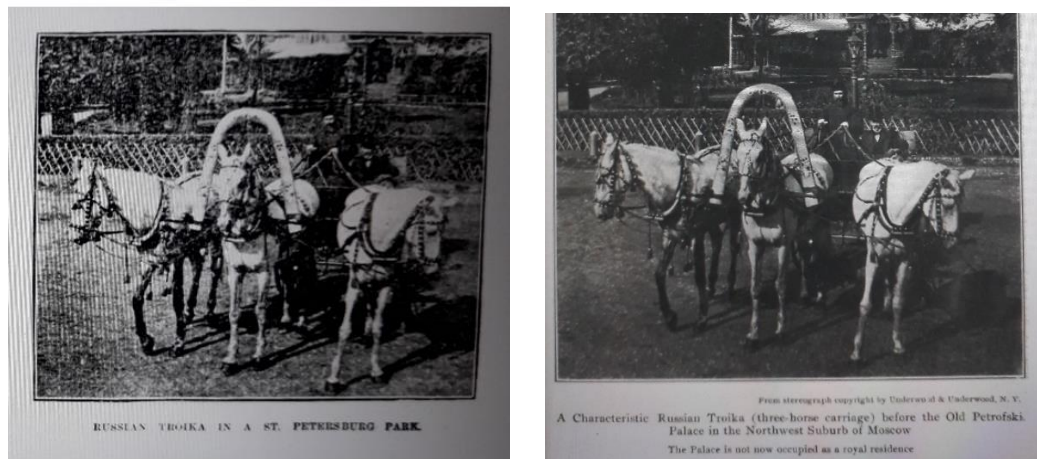


Figure 88. Underwood's "Russian Troika" in St. Petersburg (left) and Moscow (right). *New York Tribune*, May 1903 (left), and *National Geographic*, July 1905 (right).

This representative example raises the vexed issue of trust between photographic supplier and the press with its various readerships. Whether intentional or not, the overall effect of the practice was to mis-lead. As these examples illustrate, a single photograph could have multiple uses during its lifetime, thereby creating issues around accuracy. Down the years, an image supplied in one context might appear in a different one. In addition, inaccurate captions attached to the verso of a photograph for use with a news story or feature article risked perpetuating errors or falsehoods. This became more of an issue as the periodical press built its own libraries including photographs bought from specialist companies and photo agencies. Inaccurate captions spotted at the time by eagle-eyed readers may have surfaced via time-honoured outlets such as "Letters to the Editor." But given this background, it is unsurprising that errors or manipulations took place in such an overtly commercial and pressurised setting as publishing.

Like “Letters to the Editor,” customer feedback was also alive and well in the photographic supply sector. On receiving his “good pictures of Russian scenes,” Grosvenor wrote to Underwood as *National Geographic* editor, dissatisfied with the service he received. One aspect of the transaction had particularly annoyed him:

I beg to direct your attention to the fact that your photographs were shipped in a very careless manner and arrived considerably tumbled.

Despite issuing this rap on the knuckles, he concluded his letter with another request in the same vein as his inquiry about “Russian scenes” only a few days before:

I should like to see some photographs of good Japanese scenes, also of Vladivostock and Manchuria.”<sup>407</sup>

As before, he revealed little about his editorial intentions, underlining the generic nature of Grosvenor’s requests at this formative stage in the magazine’s genesis. This approach though fits with the propagation of social and ethnic types within colonial and anthropological discourse. With the successful publication of these “Russian scenes,” the photographic supply relationship began between *National Geographic* and Underwood. As shown in the second half of this chapter, it was characterised by an imaginative and entrepreneurial use of both new and stock photographs taken with stereoscopic cameras.

### *Scenes from Every Land, 1907*

A measure of photography’s role in pictorial magazine development reached a wider audience with the publication of *Scenes from Every Land* in 1907. Sub-titled “A Collection of 250 Illustrations from the *National Geographic Magazine*, Picturing the People, Natural Phenomena and Animal Life in All Parts of the World,” it featured “a few of the pictures” taken from the publication’s recent past. In the preface, Grosvenor as the volume’s editor reprinted them “in answer to the many requests

---

<sup>407</sup> Grosvenor to Underwood, c. June 7, 1905, Letter Copybook, 142.

received from readers.” He also took the opportunity to reflect on what he called “geography’s lighter side.” Concluding his remarks, he wrote:

The world has become so small that we are now ‘a family of nations,’ who gossip about one another, and if we cannot exchange visits, we can at least read about each other, and, better still, barter photographs.<sup>408</sup>

This bartering of photographs was at the heart of his own relationship with an increasing variety of photographic suppliers. As a stereoscopic company, Underwood supplied five of the “pictures” featured, one that had originally appeared in 1905 and two each from 1906 and 1907. The number of its photographs featured in this miscellany may have been small, but closer analysis of those few selected further informs understanding of the magazine’s evolving visual appearance. This was a moment of transition for Underwood too as it underwent a significant re-orientation with the creation of its Illustration Department dedicated to the photographic supply side of the operation.

The chosen photographs intended to popularise *National Geographic* by boosting the society’s membership. Eliminating any reference to stereoscopy and using the generic credit “Photo & Copyright by Underwood & Underwood, New York,” Grosvenor first took the opportunity to correct the glaring spelling error of “Krief” that marred the previous appearance of “Country Women Tramping into Kief, Russia....” Aside from appealing to his own sense of order, it is also interesting to note that the accompanying extended caption concluded at the phrase “very few of them can read and write.” There was no reference this time to their helplessness “under the domination of the priests and village head men” as there had in the magazine version. These textual changes aside, Underwood’s stereoscopic photographs merited their inclusion on purely photographic terms. Business correspondence about the four other Underwood photographs in *Scenes from Every Land* does not survive in the archives. As a result, their presence in the book informs when they originally appeared in *National Geographic*. In turn, this informs understanding of the

---

<sup>408</sup> Gilbert H. Grosvenor, *Scenes from Every Land* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1907), preface.

full range of a stereoscopic company's catalogue and how the photographs being "bartered," as Grosvenor put it, originally came in to being.

In date order, "Monasteries of the Air, Greece," appeared in January 1906. For *Scenes from Every Land*, Grosvenor shortened references to the magazine as "Nat. Geog. Mag.," saving space and ink. In another development, photographs appeared with brief captions rather than as illustrations with an article. This left readers without an equivalent of a lantern slide lecturer offering detailed commentary. The photographs taken at Meteora, ten miles from the Greek frontier with Macedonia, presented as a sequence of three. The editorial justification for their *National Geographic* appearance was not stated, but their position between an illustrated article on "The Florida Keys" and two photographs of pigeon farms in California suggest pure spectacle was a key factor. Firstly, a wide shot showed the spectacular mountain location of the centuries-old monasteries. On closer examination, two hair-raising means of access were faintly visible on the left-hand side of the image. A set of connecting ladders was attached to the cliff face, whilst a long rope, complete with a windlass hauling net at its end, could be winched up and down using a crank (figure 89).

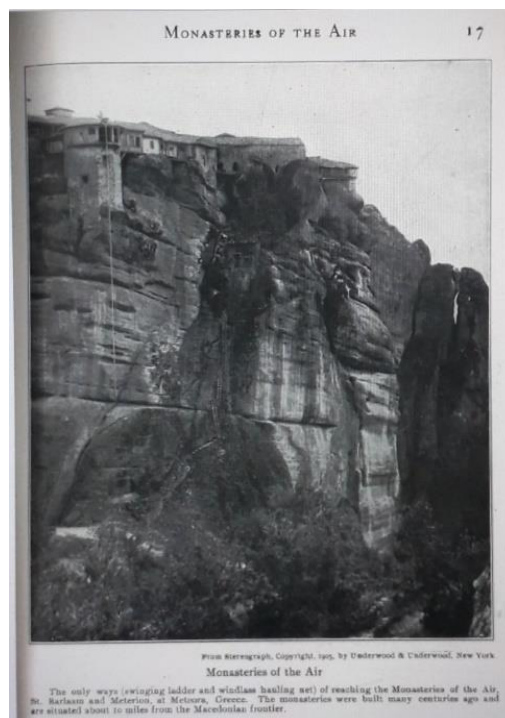


Figure 89. "Monasteries of the Air."  
*National Geographic*, January 1906.

In a second photograph, the rope was dangling in mid-air from the St. Barlaam monastery. In the final image, “Another View of a Monk Ascending” portrayed the human content of the windlass net hauled up to the monastery. All three were eye-catching, particularly in their full-page format, revealing details of the steep rock faces and winding paths. The “Monasteries of the Air” was an example of a dramatic geological location that would appeal to readers of *National Geographic*. Indeed, the location was a place of which Underwood had long been aware and previously stereographed.

As highlighted in Chapter 1, the Meteora Monasteries were amongst locations visited a decade earlier during the company’s first serious engagement with photography for the press during the Greco-Turkish War. They were situated close to where fighting took place between Greek and Turkish forces near the Macedonian border. In 1897, photographs taken there appeared with written reports credited to the company’s founding partner, Bert Underwood. Under the headline “Five Days on the Macedonian Frontier” published by *Harper’s Weekly*, he described travelling to the monasteries’ remote location. After sailing by steamer from Athens to Volo, a seven-hour train journey followed to the mountain village of Kalabaka. His account continued:

This little out-of-the-way place, four hours by mountain paths from the frontier, was chosen by the secret committee of the Ethnike-Hetairia for the centre of their revolutionist operations.

Being at the end of the narrow-gauge railway, supplies and men could be quickly brought in.

The village is very picturesquely situated at the foot of the great tower rocks, on which stand the famous Meteora Monasteries.”<sup>409</sup>

Written as a travelogue, Bert’s description of the journey fed an editorial appetite for such accounts. Alongside it, *Harper’s Weekly* devoted a double-page layout of twenty-four Underwood photographs, pictorially chronicling recent events in the region. Among these were six taken in and around the Meteora Monasteries, one of

---

<sup>409</sup> “Five Days on the Macedonian Frontier,” *Harper’s Weekly*, May 22, 1897, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014126190&view=1up&seq=514&q1=Underwood>

which featured a close-up of a figure visible within a windlass net. It was suitably captioned “One Hundred and Forty Feet in the Air: The Method of Reaching the Meteora Monasteries.” As is apparent from a side-by-side comparison, this photograph replicated the content and appearance of that supplied by the company in 1906 for *National Geographic* and subsequently chosen by Grosvenor for *Scenes from Every Land* (figure 90).

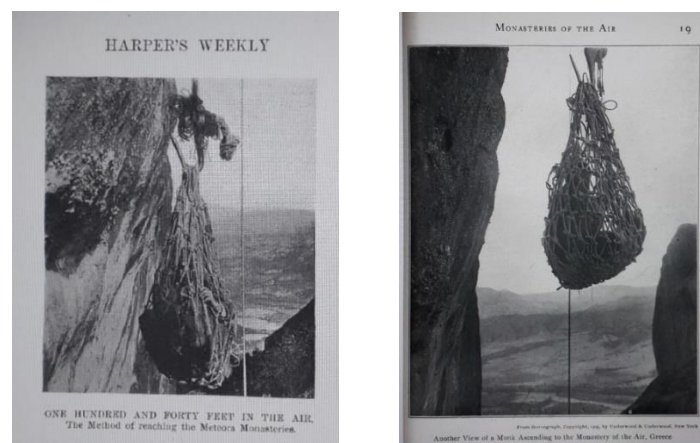


Figure 90. Underwood photographs from the Meteora Monasteries. *Harper's Weekly*, 1897 (left) and *National Geographic*, 1906 (right).

While companies like Underwood recycled and re-purposed images, they also took opportunities to secure new versions of familiar favourites. In the case of Greece, the company built on stereoscopic work carried out during 1897 by Bert Underwood and James Ricalton. Another Underwood photographer, Charles H. Baker, followed their footsteps, spending the winter and spring of 1900-01 stereographing the country. Promoting Baker's new Greece stereos, his employers whetted the appetite of its intended audience:

We anticipate that this new series will be a rare treat to everyone interested in Greek history.<sup>410</sup>

Like other stereographers employed by the company, Baker fitted the profile of one willing and able to travel the globe in pursuit of a photographic commission.

<sup>410</sup> "Snap Shots," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, June 1901, 21, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1elli/page/20/mode/2up>

Underwood's quarterly magazine chronicled his work in both Greece and Palestine during this period.<sup>411</sup> Such was Baker's reputation as a stereographer that he received a particularly prestigious commission. This involved originating images for the company's *Egypt Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Through the Land of the Pharaohs* published in 1905. Baker's stereos complemented text written by a leading Egyptologist of the period, Professor James Henry Breasted of the University of Chicago.<sup>412</sup> By 1907 when Underwood published *Greece Through the Stereoscope*, the one hundred stereos, including classic locations like the Parthenon and Acropolis, reflected the accumulated efforts of various company photographers. The visual and editorial appeal of the Meteora Monasteries was still strong though. The new set found room for three "positions" including one titled "Access to Monastery of St. Barlaam – 180 feet by rope – Meteora." The only ingredient that seemed to have changed in the intervening years was the length of the rope involved.<sup>413</sup>

On its first appearance in *National Geographic*, the next Underwood photograph Grosvenor chose to feature in *Scenes from Every Land* occupied a more conventional illustrative role. The context of its publication though was highly controversial. In September 1906, a speech originally delivered to the US Senate by Francis E. Warren from Wyoming appeared headlined "The Animal Wealth of the United States." Its sub-title, "with an explanation of some of the reasons of its phenomenal development," suggested a positive news story. This was in stark contrast to a recent scandal involving the American livestock industry. Amid all the graphs and tables, the magazine deployed several unremarkable photographs of cattle, sheep, and pigs, as a welcome distraction from the welter of statistics. Of these shots, the most visually arresting came from a stereograph supplied by Underwood. Titled "A Half Mile of Pork: Scene in a Large Chicago Packing-House," it

---

<sup>411</sup> See Chas. H. Baker, "Three Nights with the Shepherds on Mt. Parnassus," *The Traveller*, December 1902, 133-43; and "The Russian Pilgrimage to the Jordan," *The Traveller*, March 1903, 236-41.

<sup>412</sup> Paul T. Nicholson, "Egyptology for the Masses: James Henry Breasted and the Underwood Brothers," in *Sitting Beside Lepsius: Studies in Honour of Jeromir Malek at the Griffith Institute*, ed. Diana Magee, Janine Bourriau and Stephen Quirke (Leuven, Paris, Walpole, MA: Uitgeverij Peters, 2009), 392.

<sup>413</sup> Rufus B. Richardson, *Greece Through the Stereoscope* (New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1907), 311-13.



portrayed parallel lines of pigs' carcasses, hung by their trotters from meat hooks (figure 91).



Figure 91. "A Half Mile of Pork."  
*National Geographic*, September 1906.

Again, the photograph originated at an earlier point in the company's history. In 1894, a copyrighted stereocard sold by Underwood used the Strohmeyer & Wyman imprint. Its memorable title connected the "half mile of pork" to "Armour's Great Packing House, Chicago, U.S.A.," and was part of a set of twenty-four (figure 92).<sup>414</sup>



Figure 92. "A Half Mile of Pork" published in 1894 by Strohmeyer & Wyman and sold by Underwood.  
New York Public Library Digital Collections.

<sup>414</sup> See Keystone-Mast Collection, University of California Riverside, accessed October 23, 2020, <https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/kt0k4011sk/>

Indeed, it was Armour's that made Chicago the meat-packing capital of the world. However, by the time the Underwood image featured in *National Geographic*, the firm's reputation had suffered considerable damage. During the Spanish-American War, a press exposé revealed it had supplied tons of rotten canned beef to the United States army in Cuba, causing soldiers' deaths. In turn, the scandal led to the publication of *The Jungle*, a novel by Upton Sinclair that portrayed shocking conditions endured by workers in those self-same meat-packing houses. It became an instant best-seller and led to legislation to reform the industry. President Roosevelt signed the resulting Meat Inspection Act into law on June 30, 1906. Just a few days earlier, Senator Warren had made his speech about "The Animal Wealth of the United States."

Whilst his article in that September's *National Geographic* demonstrated a newsworthy topicality, its concentration on animal wealth rather than hygiene and workers' safety seemed designed to provide an alternative narrative.<sup>415</sup> Editorially, the magazine's caption for "A Half Mile of Pork" referred to a packing house in Chicago but made no mention of Armour's or that the photograph's origins pre-dated the rotten meat scandal. Nor was there any mention of Upton Sinclair's popular novel. Around the world though, press and public interest in the story was such that Underwood was able to supply a range of publications with these stock photographs from its files. As an example, the *ILN* used several in a feature headlined "The Tinned-Meat Horror: Methods of Chicago Packing-Houses, With Photographs." An artist, "A. Hugh Fisher," who created an elaborate border to one of the pages, was also credited.<sup>416</sup>

Awareness of this background does not undermine the inherent photographic qualities of "A Half-Mile of Pork," ones that informed the decision by Grosvenor to use it both in his magazine and *Scenes from Every Land*. Those qualities lay in the image's stereoscopic composition. Though the Underwood ingredient of "life" was

---

<sup>415</sup> Kristen L. Rouse, "Meat Inspection Act of 1906," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed October 23, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Meat-Inspection-Act#ref1204802>

<sup>416</sup> "The Tinned-Meat Horror," *ILN*, June 16, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

demonstrably missing, the photograph's three-dimensional origins were to the fore. The parallel lines of pigs' carcasses layered in receding planes towards the far horizon, catching the available light streaming in. The shot was illustrative of how one stereoscopic photograph, even an archive one, illustrated a range of news stories and features with contrasting editorial agendas.

The final two Underwood photographs included in *Scenes from Every Land* came from yet another lecture for the NGS reworked as an illustrated article for its magazine. "Beautiful Ecuador" published in February 1907 used seven photographs, two supplied by Underwood. The previous December, Joseph Lee, US minister to Ecuador, delivered a lecture to the society illustrated with "stereopticon views."<sup>417</sup> Whether Underwood supplied any of the lantern slides he used is not known, but photographs taken from their stereographs topped and tailed the magazine article (figure 93).

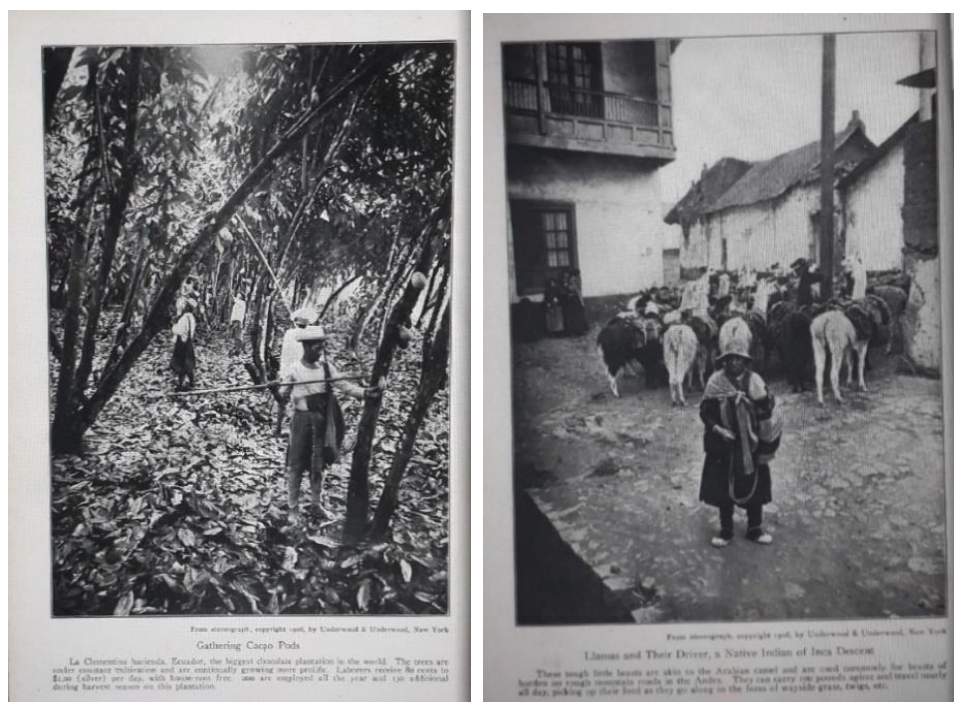


Figure 93. "Gathering Cacao Pods..." (left) and "Llamas and Their Driver..."  
*National Geographic*, February 1907.

<sup>417</sup> "Ecuador's Praises Sounded by Lee," *Times*, Washington, DC, December 1, 1906, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/1906-12-01/ed-1/seq-5/>

Billed as the world's biggest chocolate plantation, "Gathering Cacao Pods" used an avenue of trees, featuring workers along its length, to create an effective stereograph. The second shot, "Llamas and Their Driver," might well have confused *National Geographic* readers.<sup>418</sup> Sub-titled "A Native Indian of Inca Descent," the llama driver was positioned in the foreground, as required for a successful stereo, with his animals in the background. This arrangement suggested that he would be the subject of the accompanying extended caption. Instead, the text concentrated exclusively on the llamas' qualities as "tough little beasts" and "beasts of burden," and their diet of wayside grass and twigs. Unfamiliar animals such as llamas with their appealing faces and long necks clearly had a photographic as well as editorial power.

### *"Good and Interesting Photographs"*

The publication of *Scenes from Every Land* in 1907 not only marked a significant moment in the photographic development of *National Geographic*. From this point, the NGS archives in Washington, DC, feature surviving letters between Gilbert H. Grosvenor as the membership magazine's editor, and C. Richard Abbott as manager of Underwood's Illustration Department. These letters are instructive in describing not only the flow of general requests for photographs to complement a particular article or editorial theme. They also reveal how Underwood used its now global infrastructure to source pictures from around the world, and how it viewed the increasingly thorny issue of costs and copyright.

In November 1907, Abbott took the opportunity to re-state the nature of the photographic relationship between company and magazine that had evolved in a few short years. Writing to Grosvenor, he noted:

We shall endeavor to submit to you from time to time good and interesting photographs and whenever you want any special pictures, please advise us and we will do our best to respond to your specific requirements.

---

<sup>418</sup> A 1907 advert for *Underwood Stereoscopic Tours* offered an Ecuador tour "giving 42 positions, and case." See Richardson, *Greece*, 365.

Abbott also made it clear any use of company photographs beyond the pages of *National Geographic* needed Underwood's approval, noting "You were kind enough to do this recently and we complied with your wishes." However, he continued by spelling out company policy:

The copyright licence to publish will be issued only for the *National Geographic Magazine*, and any other use of the pictures would have to be taken up separately.<sup>419</sup>

Abbott was protecting Underwood's own commercial interests and laying down a roadmap for future dealings. This exchange also supports the argument that press photography, even at this early stage in its evolution, was becoming increasingly lucrative. Copyright infringements were monitored by company departments devoted to protecting their legal property. With his main point made, Abbott concluded his letter with a request for Grosvenor's help "to secure good pictures of Dr. [Alexander Graham] Bell when he returns from Nova Scotia." This was a reference to Bell's holiday home at Beinn Bhreagh, Cape Breton Island. Abbott named the photographer assigned to the job, photographing the president of the NGS and Grosvenor's father-in-law, as "Mr. Ashton."

By this point, Horace D. Ashton was working alongside Abbott in Underwood's Illustration Department. Having joined the company from *Collier's* in 1905, his role went beyond fulfilling only photography assignments. Ashton corresponded directly with Grosvenor on a variety of business matters. The tone of his letters, "... with kindest regards to Mrs. Grovenor [sic] .... I shall look forward with pleasure to your call when you reach New York. Regards to your family," suggested an existing relationship with the editor of *National Geographic*.<sup>420</sup> The men's paths may well have crossed at the start of Ashton's career in Washington, DC. As a connection, it was one that helped further Underwood's growing rapport with Grosvenor and his

---

<sup>419</sup> Abbott to Grosvenor, November 11, 1907, *National Geographic Archives & Special Collections*, Washington, DC. Grosvenor's surname became "Grosvener" in Abbott's letter.

<sup>420</sup> H. D. Ashton to Gilbert H. Grosvenor, January 20 and March 14, 1908, *National Geographic Archives & Special Collections*, Washington, DC.

In Ashton's January letter, Grosvenor's surname became "Grovenor."

increasingly prestigious magazine. However, Ashton's photo shoot with Bell ran far from smoothly as further correspondence on the subject revealed.

An exchange of letters during January and February 1908 show that Ashton initially sent "rough proofs" to Grosvenor for Bell's approval. When this was not forthcoming, it placed Underwood in a difficult position. At the end of March, its intention was to send out "a good story accompanied by the photographs," showcasing the company's creation of photo stories for the nascent field of photojournalism. Eventually, three of the Bell photographs were approved for use, but as it had planned to use twice that number, Ashton needed permission to use one previously published by *National Geographic* featuring "Dr. Bell and his Associates." Undeterred by these complications, Ashton's letter to Grosvenor concluded: "I hope that you can let us have this photograph as it will be quite an addition to the subject."<sup>421</sup> What was apparent here was that the supply and exchange of press photographs was demonstrably a two-way process.

### *Persia: The Awakening East*

In terms of volume, Underwood's next *National Geographic* order was its largest to date. Involving a total of nineteen full-page photographs, both Abbott and Ashton were involved in the transaction. The images illustrated "Persia: The Awakening East," an article in the May 1908 issue, using text from a new book by an American diplomat, W. P. Cresson.<sup>422</sup> It was written after Cresson spent several months in "one of the oldest kingdoms in the world" as the guest of the American minister to Teheran. Aside from two photographs taken by the author's brother, who accompanied him on the trip, the remainder were obtained by Underwood from various sources, illustrating the scope of the company's photographic network.<sup>423</sup>

---

<sup>421</sup> Ashton to Grosvenor, January 20, 1908; Abbott to Grosvenor, February 15, 1908; and Ashton to Grosvenor, February 19, 1908, *National Geographic Archives & Special Collections*, Washington, DC.

<sup>422</sup> "Persia: The Awakening East," *National Geographic*, May 1908, 356-84.

<sup>423</sup> W.P. Cresson, *Persia: The Awakening East* (Philadelphia & London: J.B. Lippincott, 1908), 12.

According to Ashton, these included “one set from a poor Persian photographer” supplied to the company by an unnamed third party. What was clear during the exchange that followed was the difference in approach and attitude compared with the company’s treatment of American and European photographers. During negotiations, the third-party supplier called into Underwood’s New York office to discuss the photographs’ provenance. Grosvenor got three of the Persian photographs at what Ashton described as “our special price of One Dollar and Fifty Cents (\$1.50) each,” equating to around \$40 each today. What made the price “special” was not made clear, but it contrasted favourably with the \$3.50 charged for the “Russian pictures” supplied to the magazine three years before.

The reduced rate may well have reflected a preferential one given to tried and trusted customers. Also, a small sum was no doubt paid originally for these photographs to the Persian photographer. By contrast during this period, Underwood was offering to supply news photographs to national newspapers in America “at the special price of \$3 each,” double the per-photo-fee charged for the Persia photographs.<sup>424</sup> Having stated Underwood’s latest financial terms, Ashton continued:

... if you accept them [the photographs], please be sure and print the credit ‘Photograph, Underwood & Underwood, N.Y.’<sup>425</sup>

This credit wording may reflect that the Persian set were not all stereoscopic in origin. However, as Underwood required the wording “from stereograph” to be used in credits, this transaction reflects a transitional shift in policy and the beginnings of a more integrated attitude towards the medium of photography. As it was, Ashton supplemented the set of images from the Persian photographer with “some very striking ones, which we ourselves had in stock.”<sup>426</sup>

Turning to what appeared in print, *National Geographic* chose to include two from

---

<sup>424</sup> "Underwood & Underwood," New York Public Library Digital Collections, accessed September 17, 2020, <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/c9d2aa80-2b07-0136-8cf4-75c67370174e>

<sup>425</sup> Ashton to Grosvenor, March 14, 1908, *National Geographic Archives & Special Collections*, Washington, DC.

<sup>426</sup> Ashton to Grosvenor, March 18, 1908.



Underwood's stock-in-trade portrait collection of the world's monarchs and political leaders. Having just succeeded his father, the new shah of Persia featured as did his son, the crown prince. Their presence echoed that of the tsar and his family used by the magazine in "Evolution of Russian Government" in 1905. Similarly, these portraits interspersed among street and market scenes taken in Teheran. Reproduced in landscape format, each took up a full page (figure 94).

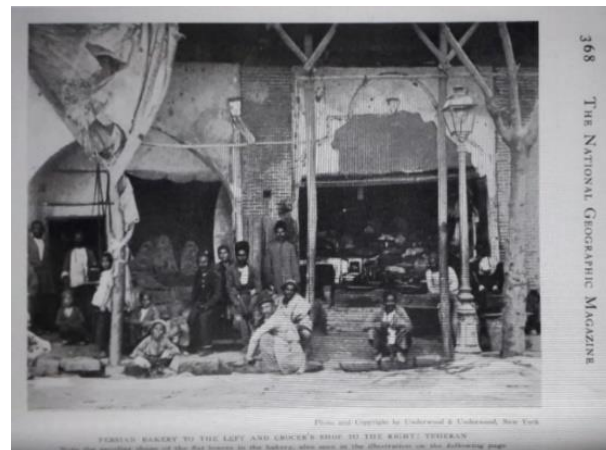


Figure 94. "Persian Bakery to the Left and Grocer's Shop to the Right: Teheran."  
*National Geographic*, May 1908.

Equally striking were four photographs of mass gatherings captured at the British Legation in the city during protests in 1906 against the former shah (figure 95).



Figure 95. "Crowd of Persian Revolutionists."  
*National Geographic Magazine*, May 1908.



In contrast to the street and market scenes, the conception of such a photograph was recognisably stereoscopic. The assembled crowd numbering many hundreds of people filled a walled avenue from the foreground to the distant horizon. Though Grosvenor's side of the Persia correspondence is not extant, Underwood's letters do reveal the editor was anxious to receive assurance about exclusivity. His particular concern was duplicate pictures from the set would appear in other publications prior to his. Following communication with Ashton, Abbott as departmental head clarified Underwood's position.

As if recalling Grosvenor's earlier criticism about the "careless" shipping of the Russian scenes, Abbott first highlighted a small discrepancy in the number of photographs used by the magazine and needing payment:

You have retained in all nineteen (19) pictures instead of eighteen (18) as stated in your letter...Please let us know if we are not correct in the number?

Abbott then reassured Grosvenor that no-one else would be able to secure those photographs he had selected and publish them first. However, he also took the opportunity to point out that when Underwood supplied photographs at \$1.50 each, *National Geographic* could not expect exclusivity.

We could not possibly afford to hold up pictures at this price, or even a much greater one.

In fact, it is only when a large price for photographs is paid to us that we agree to furnish them for first exclusive publication.

I am sure that you fully appreciate this point, but I thought that there would be no harm in bringing it up.<sup>427</sup>

This exchange offers insight into the business model that allowed such low fees for non-exclusive use. The photograph as a material object was a form of invested capital that would generate returns over the longer term. The tone employed by Abbott in his letter also captured the delicate line that commercial photography

---

<sup>427</sup> Abbott letter to Grosvenor, March 24, 1908, *National Geographic* Archives & Special Collections, Washington, DC.

companies in this market had to tread. On the one hand, Underwood needed a productive working relationship with its clients. On the other, a lightness of touch reminiscent of the diplomatic service was necessary, even when a rebuke was being issued.

### *How the World is Shod*

Further understanding of the nature of such business transactions comes from a surviving invoice in the NGS archive. Dated May 4, 1908, it was “retained from parcel submitted, April 2, 08.” Another hand had then added “O.K.” and initialled the instruction “G.H.G., May 7, 08.” As these dates were a month apart, they reflect standard thirty-day terms between receipt of goods and when payment was due (figure 96).

BERT UNDERWOOD, Pres.  
 H. A. STROHMAYER, Vice-Pres.  
 ELMER UNDERWOOD, Treas.  
 C. N. THOMAS, Secy.

**UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD**  
 (INCORPORATED)  
 ILLUSTRATION DEPARTMENT  
 3 and 5 West 19th Street, cor. Fifth Avenue.  
 NEW YORK, LONDON, OTTAWA, CAN., TORONTO, CAN., SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., ARLINGTON, N. J.

NEW YORK BRANCH CHARGES FOR COLLECTING OUT-  
 STANDING ACCOUNTS. PLEASE MAKE REMITTANCES  
 IN THREE MONTHS IN NEW YORK.

CABLE ADDRESS "VIEWE"  
 TELEPHONE 3331 CHELSEA, 234

Sold to *National Geographic Magazine*  
 New York, May 4, 1908

9 Photos. Shoe industry @  
 1.50 each  
 9605-97750-123-9278.  
 23400-88325-4186-  
 4200-57076

OK.  
 G.H.G.  
 May 7, 08

**NOTICE:**  
 Copyright license to reproduce this photograph  
 in your publication is granted on the  
 condition that the price named is paid  
 and that the following conditions shall be

Retained from parcel submitted

\$13.50

Figure 96. Underwood invoice dated May 4, 1908 for nine photographs sold to *National Geographic* for \$13.50.

The photographs referred to as “Shoe industry @ \$1.50 each,” itemised with their negative numbers, appeared in the following September’s issue beneath the headline “How the World is Shod.” Editorially, the feature had the air of a stand-by filler. Three-quarters of a column of text climaxed with statistics revealed as three years old.

Among the great industries of the United States, the manufacture of boots and shoes ranks tenth, for the year 1905 the total output of boots and shoes in this country being 242,110,035 pairs, representing a value of \$320,170,458.

Despite burying its editorial premise in a welter of figures, the photographs were more impressive. The world's footwear was a theme that played to Underwood's strength as a company. It had stereographed the world and its inhabitants during the previous ten years for its *Travel System*. Shoe-themed photographs from Russia, France, Britain, Greece, China, India, and Japan were each briefly captioned and presented in an uninterrupted sequence (figure 97).

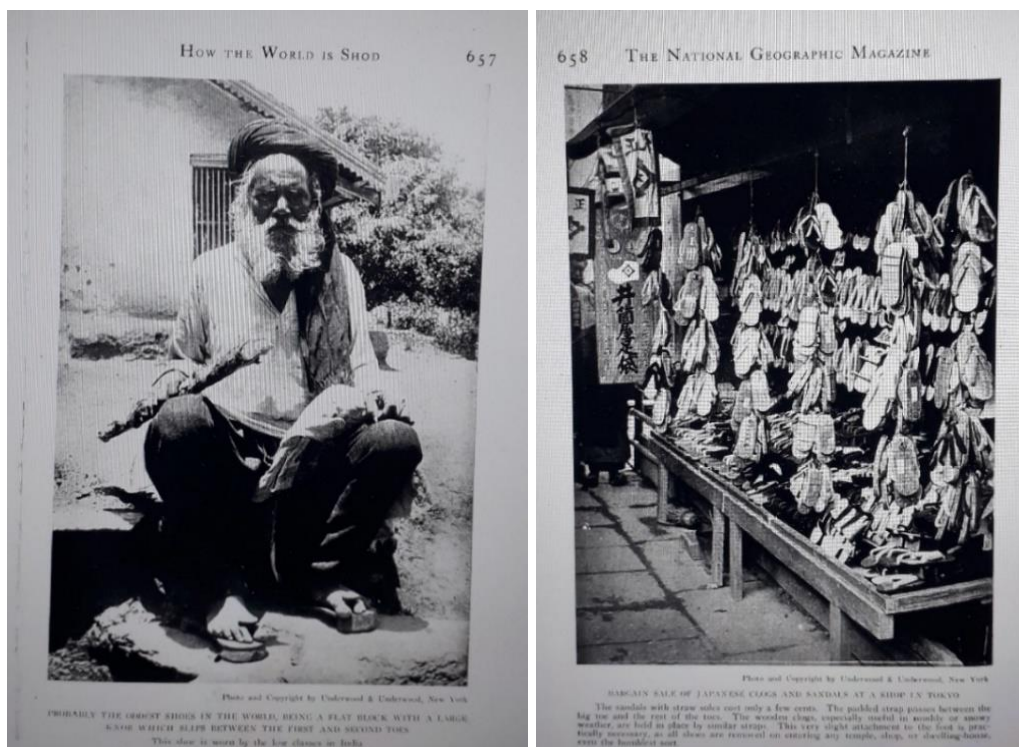


Figure 97. "Probably the Oldest Shoes ..." (left) and "Bargain Sale of Japanese Clogs and Sandals." *National Geographic*, September 1908.

Other suppliers were again involved in generating the illustrative material. The sequence concluded with photographs of two American "high-grade shoe manufactories" provided by the Regal Shoe Company plus a drawing of "footgear of ancient cliff-dwellers, found in Arizona." Like its Persian photographs, Underwood's credit of "photo and copyright" made no mention of "from stereograph." The negative

numbers cited though showed some images were stereoscopic. Ranging from “123” to “97750,” the lower numbers dated back to Underwood’s earliest days. The highest, and so most recent, featured in the company memoranda book consulted for this study. Catalogued in 1907, the sequence “97735-755” were described as “negatives from N.Y. Office.”<sup>428</sup> Like those obtained from Persia, this entry suggested “97750” was purchased from another photographer or a third party. In summary, the range of negative numbers being utilised showed how Underwood was able to fully engage the breadth and depth of its photographic library.

### *Where Roosevelt Will Hunt*

By 1908, the range of photographic commissions Underwood could fulfil for *National Geographic* was in place. However, when news stories came along that the world’s press wanted to illustrate, fresh opportunities arose. After much speculation, the White House confirmed that when Roosevelt completed his term in office the following spring, the president would hunt big game in Africa.<sup>429</sup> For companies like Underwood, the story offered the chance to originate and supply potentially lucrative images across a range of platforms, from stereocards and lantern slides to prints for press use. With a *National Geographic* article on the subject duly commissioned, Grosvenor wrote to Underwood shortly before Christmas 1908 in familiar style.

Gentlemen. Have you any pictures of that part of Africa where President Roosevelt intends to hunt? I should like to see them if you have.<sup>430</sup>

The timing was impeccable suggesting Grosvenor received a tip-off or prior notice of what might be available. In fact, the company had just taken delivery of more than 400 stereoscopic negatives taken in Africa by Peter Dutkewich, one of its regular photographers (figure 98).<sup>431</sup>

---

<sup>428</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 51.

<sup>429</sup> “At the White House,” *Evening Star*, Washington, DC, June 5, 1908, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1908-06-05/ed-1/seq-4/>

<sup>430</sup> Grosvenor to Underwood, December 23, 1908, *National Geographic* Archives & Special Collections, Washington, DC.

<sup>431</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 51.

The negative numbers were “115197-629” dated November 19/20, 1908.

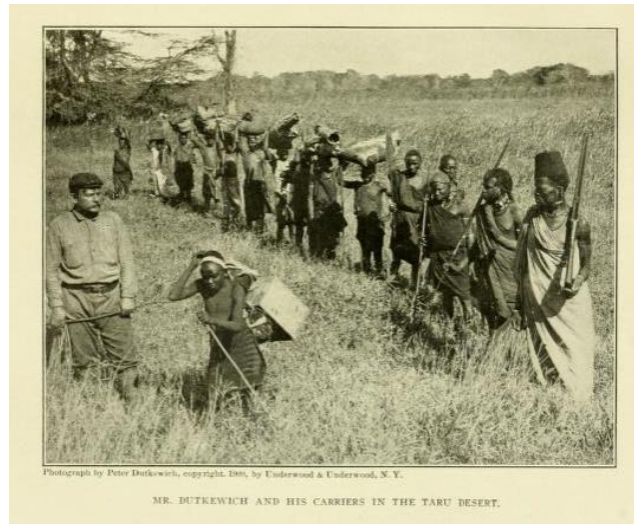


Figure 98. "Mr. Dutkewich [left] and His Carriers in the Taru Desert."  
From *In Wildest Africa* (1910).

The background to the project was illustrative of various themes common to this study. Together with *Leslie's Weekly* correspondent Peter MacQueen, Dutkewich spent several months on a writing-and-photography trip. It required considerable resources and attracted attention from several interested parties. En route from New York, MacQueen became a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS) in London in November 1907. It was an endorsement that proved commercially beneficial. Underwood later donated sixteen photographic prints to the society's collections from the "MacQueen and Dutkewich Expedition."<sup>432</sup> In 1910, *In Wildest Africa* "by Peter MacQueen FRGS" illustrated by Dutkewich's photographs, was published in London by George Bell.<sup>433</sup>

This collaboration reiterated the extensive establishment and publishing network to which Underwood had access and continued to exploit. It also continued to reach to the highest echelons of American society. On his return from Africa, MacQueen, a member of Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" regiment during the 1898 Spanish-American War, visited the White House. A meeting between the two took place amid mounting

<sup>432</sup> See "MacQueen Dutkewich Expedition 1908," Royal Geographical Society, London, accessed November 25, 2020, <https://rgs.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-search.pl?q=Peter+MacQueen>

<sup>433</sup> Thanks to Joy Wheeler, Information Officer, Photographs, Royal Geographical Society, London for help in tracing MacQueen's membership record and Underwood photographs in the society's collection.

disquiet about the president's forthcoming trip. Afterwards, MacQueen reported that Roosevelt told him:

I am no great hunter and I am not going to Africa to slaughter animals, only to secure a few specimens for the museum here. I want to study Africa.<sup>434</sup>

As to MacQueen's collaborator, Underwood had a long-established relationship with Peter Dutkewich. Born in Warsaw, Poland in 1871, Meletius Peter Dutkewich emigrated to America as a teenager and became a US citizen in 1895.<sup>435</sup> Such was his standing with the company that Bert Underwood devoted a section to him in his unpublished memoirs.<sup>436</sup> As a photographer, Bert first recalled meeting Dutkewich in Athens during the Greco-Turkish War whilst he was working for "another photographic house."

I liked the young fellow and before leaving offered him a job right then, for his employers were not treating him right, were not trusting him with sufficient funds to carry on his work.

According to Bert's memoir, Dutkewich felt this situation keenly, but refused to quit until he had fulfilled his contract:

I liked him all the better for turning me down. The next year he came to me [Underwood].<sup>437</sup>

As well as working for the Underwood brothers, Dutkewich pursued a peripatetic photography career featuring stints with other American stereoscopic companies including B.W. Kilburn & Co., of New York.<sup>438</sup> Like others in this field, he fitted the role of a freelance rather than a staff employee, contracted to undertake a specific project or work for a period in a particular country. This enabled Underwood to

---

<sup>434</sup> "African Hosts of Roosevelt," *Sunday Star*, Washington, DC, January 10, 1909, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1909-01-10/ed-1/seq-1/>

<sup>435</sup> "Meletius P. Dutkewich," US passport no.120, Tokyo, Japan, March 24, 1900, My Ancestry.

<sup>436</sup> Bert Underwood, "Peter, not the Great, nor the Saint, but the Brave and True," Box 1, Folder 5, 1-14, George Eastman Museum.

<sup>437</sup> Underwood, "Peter, not the Great," 3-4.

<sup>438</sup> "Meletius Peter Dutkewich," US passport no. 28, Melbourne, Australia, March 11, 1902, My Ancestry.



deploy its photographic resources where needed, especially whenever a major news story broke, wherever it occurred.

Once Dutkewich's photographs from Africa reached Grosvenor, he was keen to use them in *National Geographic*.<sup>439</sup> However, there was a snag. Underwood had agreed that another magazine, *New York*, could publish the pictures in its March 1909 issue. As previously pointed out to Grosvenor, any agreement for "first exclusive publication" involved the company receiving a large price. Grosvenor was determined to muscle in on publication and a flurry of correspondence ensued. Abbott in the company's Illustration Department tried to arbitrate a solution. As printing and distribution deadlines loomed, the exchange culminated in a telegram from Grosvenor. Its text suggested money had changed hands and he now wished to protect his own interests:

Our African pictures released us March [Fifth] exclusively for one other publication and ours or will they be used generally?"<sup>440</sup>

Abbott's response, if there was one, does not survive in the archive. However, the March 1909 issue of *National Geographic* confirmed that Grosvenor went ahead with publication anyway. "Where Roosevelt Will Hunt" featured twelve of Dutkewich's photographs copyrighted by and credited to Underwood. Accompanied by a "Map of Africa," the overall presentation echoed that used for several years in conjunction with its own stereoscopic *Travel System* sets. Up to fifty pages of the magazine covered the story, reflecting the huge press and public interest. Again, the bulk of the text was taken from an address given to the NGS, this time made in November 1908 by the author and diplomat Sir Harry Johnston, an influential British government administrator in Africa (figure 99).<sup>441</sup> In the preface to *In Wildest Africa*, Peter MacQueen acknowledged his "indebtedness" to Johnston amongst various authors on Africa.

---

<sup>439</sup> Grosvenor to Abbott, January 9, 1909, *National Geographic Archives & Special Collections*, Washington, DC.

<sup>440</sup> Grosvenor to Abbott, telegram, January 14, 1909.

<sup>441</sup> "Beginning Winter Course," *Sunday Star*, Washington, DC, November 8, 1908, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1908-11-08/ed-1/seq-26/>

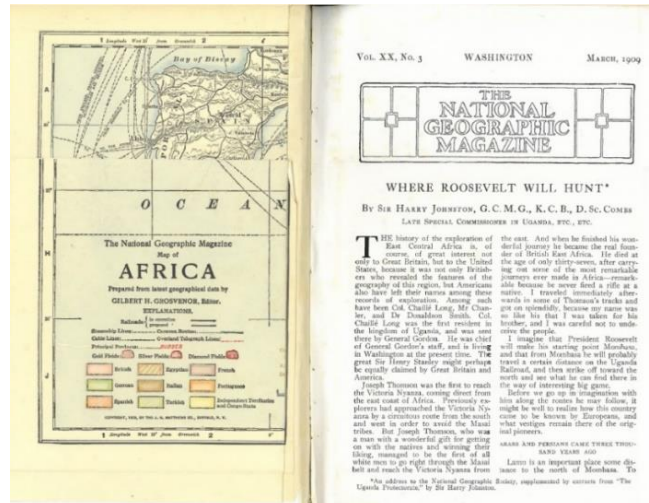


Figure 99. "Where Roosevelt Will Hunt" article with "Map of Africa." *National Geographic*, March 1909.

The magazine also took advantage of what was a highly newsworthy moment to show its ongoing commitment to the medium of photography. As well as Underwood's images, more than forty other photographs appeared. Drawn from several sources, they included eighteen credited to Carl E. Akeley, the celebrated American naturalist. As was now characteristic, the magazine took particular care with the photographs' reproduction and presentation. Those supplied by Underwood, originally taken in landscape format, appeared in the magazine in portrait-style, turning each one through ninety degrees. As these were photographs the company had originated rather than retrieved from its library or purchased, they occupy a different place in understanding the impact of stereoscopy on magazine publishing and *National Geographic* in particular.

In *Reading National Geographic*, Lutz and Collins argued that for Gilbert H. Grosvenor, the photograph was "a direct transcription of a reality that was timeless, classless and outside the boundaries of language and culture." As the magazine's editor, his judgement was that the photographs had self-evident meanings and that they could be read by anybody "without deep study."<sup>442</sup> In view of these observations, it is instructive to look at the Underwood photographs published with "Where Roosevelt Will Hunt." In fact, the chosen images employed a variety of

<sup>442</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 27-28.



photographic styles that the magazine's readers could view differently. The first of these styles employed a documentary approach, capturing scenes of tribal life in the region. Four of the photographs featured the nomadic Masai from East Central Africa. The images were placed consecutively, a full page devoted to each one in landscape format, so foregrounding their stylistic and thematic similarities (figure 100).

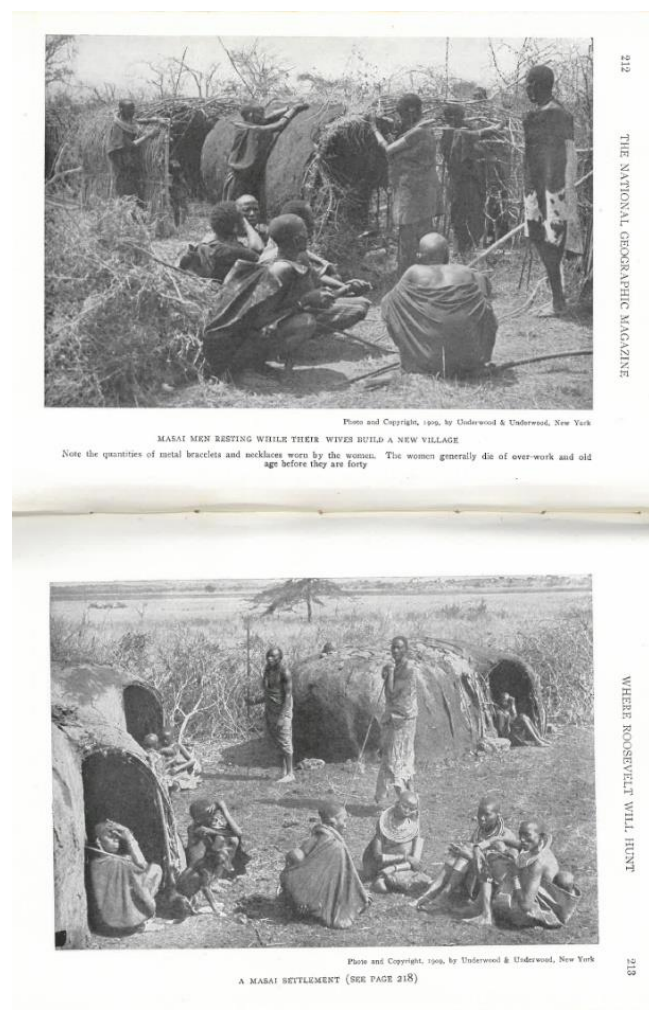


Figure 100. "Masai Men Resting While Their Wives Build a New Village" and "A Masai Settlement." *National Geographic*, March 1909.

The photographs' captions were brief as in "A Masai Settlement" though one observed at greater length how Masai women, pictured building a village while their menfolk were resting, "generally die of over-work and old age before they are forty." It also drew attention to the "quantities of metal bracelets and necklaces worn by the

women.”<sup>443</sup> A second photographic style on view was that of the conventional portrait, deployed to capture individuals or small groups with a greater degree of intimacy. A striking example selected by Grosvenor was “A Belle of Mombasa with her Pet Deer” (figure 101).



Figure 101. “A Belle of Mombasa With Her Pet Deer.”  
*National Geographic*, March 1909.

As a portrait, this was a visual format familiar to the *National Geographic* readership. It was also one that enabled a photographer to bring out the sitter’s human qualities, whatever their ethnicity and class. Here, a young woman from an elite position was portrayed in a style untypical of an anthropological or anthropometric approach. Replicating the description used about jewellery worn by Masai women, the extended caption highlighted her physical characteristics:

<sup>443</sup> “Where Roosevelt Will Hunt,” *National Geographic*, March 1909, 212.

For a contrasting use of “Masai Men Resting . . .,” see “Women: Ostrich-like and Energetic, Ornamental and Useful,” *ILN*, March 20, 1909, British Newspaper Archive.

...she paints circles on her cheeks and dyes her hands purple and is a recognised model of feminine stylishness.”

Cradling her pet deer, Dutkewich as Underwood’s photographer added a further dimension to which *National Geographic* readers would be able to relate, pointing out the animal was “safe from the hunter’s rifle.” The photograph also used the young woman’s head dress to frame her facial features. Photographically, the neutral background and emphasis on black and white as colours within the framing allowed the rich monochromatic tones to come to life.

Finally, in line with the article’s title, the remaining Underwood photographs portrayed hunting in its various forms, captured using different photographic conventions. The graphic scenes selected by Grosvenor make uncomfortable viewing to contemporary eyes. However, the captions supplied by the magazine did not always draw attention to what the photographs showed. A typical example was “In the Great Rift Valley of East Africa.” The inert bodies of two zebras, one on the ground and one carried shoulder-high, were part of a posed group carrying rifles and a spear (figure 102).

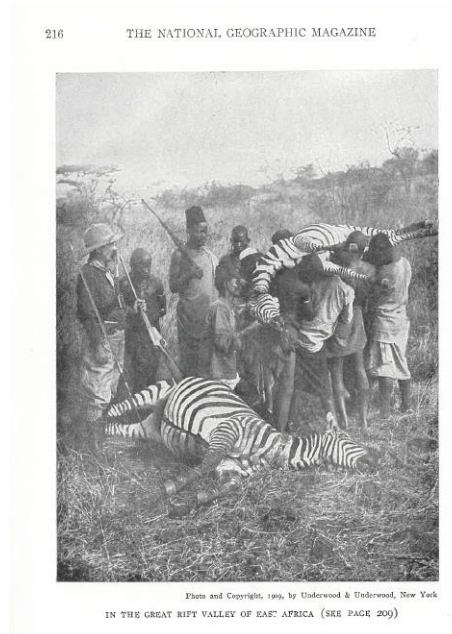


Figure 102. “In the Great Rift Valley of East Africa.”  
*National Geographic*, March 1909.

Whether this type of portrayal was realistic, as highlighted by Lutz and Collins, the overall photographic aesthetic of other hunting photographs supplied by Underwood was artistic or painterly. A particularly striking example was “Resting and Feasting after a Morning’s Hunt in the Jungle.” The accompanying text revealed it portrayed “an American sportsman with native guests and servants near the British frontier of German East Africa” (figure 103).

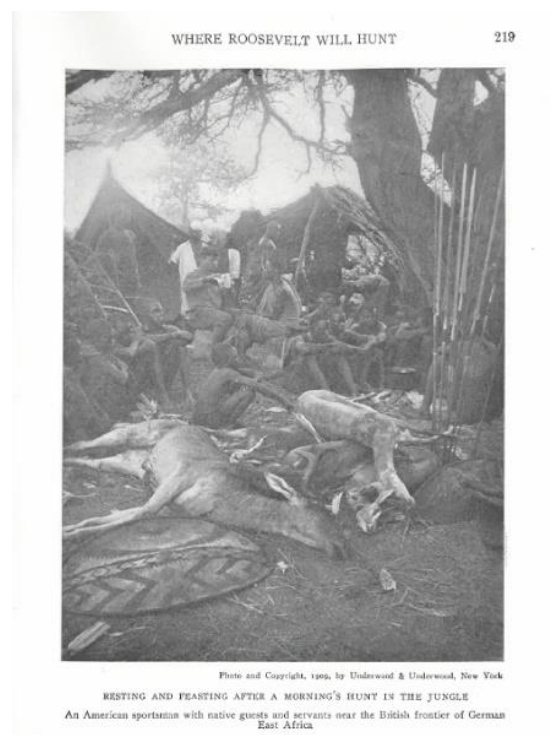


Figure 103. “Resting and Feasting After a Morning’s Hunt in the Jungle.”  
*National Geographic*, March 1909.

The photograph was clearly meticulously staged. Carcasses of various wild animals draped over the ground with spears and shields framing the spoils of the hunting. The photograph’s composition also bore evidence of other visual influences. Soft focus and use of light in the top half of the shot employed techniques more often associated with art photography movements of the era such as pictorialism.<sup>444</sup> As to the photograph’s subject, the “American sportsman” at its centre, drinking from a vessel, bore a striking resemblance to Underwood’s photographer Peter Dutkewich.

<sup>444</sup> See Marien, *Cultural*, 170-72.

If so, his portrait image may have been the work of his expedition colleague, Peter MacQueen, who was also a skilled photographer (figure 104).<sup>445</sup>



Figure 104. Close-up insets of Peter Dutkewich taken from figures 98 (left) and 103.

One explanation for the photograph's creation might be that Dutkewich wore a moustache physically reminiscent of Roosevelt, and the scene evoked the president's forthcoming Africa trip. Whatever its motivation, the stereocard version of the photograph confirmed it was from a stereoscopic camera (figure 105).



Figure 105. Underwood stereocard retitled "East African hunters in camp after a day's work with spear and gun." Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

<sup>445</sup> Peter MacQueen authored several articles for *Leslie's Weekly* about the Africa trip, illustrated with his and Dutkewich's photographs. See "Picturesque Scenes in East Africa: The President's Hunting Grounds," November 26, 1908, 521-22; "Wildest Africa as Roosevelt Will See It," December 3, 1908, 543-44; "How the Roosevelt Party Will Be Fed While on the Hunt in Africa," March 18, 1909, 246-51; and "Glimpses of Roosevelt's Hunting Grounds in East Africa," May 13, 1909, 440-44.

Despite this, it was credited “Photo and Copyright. 1909, by Underwood & Underwood, New York” when it appeared in *National Geographic*, again emphasising the company’s gradual move away from highlighting stereoscopy as its primary photographic platform.

The varied representational conventions embodied by these photographs for “Where Roosevelt Will Hunt” were far from a naïve view of photographic truth. They showed instead a conscious awareness of photographic artifice. As for *National Geographic*, its editor was pleased with his choice of photographs. Later in 1909, when a second edition of *Scenes from Every Land* appeared, some of the same Underwood images featured. These included “A Belle of Mombasa with her Pet Deer” and “In the Great Rift Valley of East Africa.”<sup>446</sup>

The Roosevelt article also appears to have contributed to the fast-growing membership of the NGS. Publication coincided with a year-on-year increase during 1909 of nearly 15,000, taking it above 50,000 for the first time.<sup>447</sup> Bert Underwood later described Dutkewich’s work as “the finest collection of photographic negatives of native tribe life in Central Africa that has ever been made.”<sup>448</sup> The various outlets found for his photographs by the company suggest Underwood more than recouped its financial outlay on the project.

Since first publication more than a century ago, “Where Roosevelt Will Hunt” and *Scenes from Every Land* have prompted wider observations about the photographic development of *National Geographic*. The photographic historian Mary Warner Marien noted that *Scenes from Every Land* reprinted “upbeat, pleasant images from the magazine, offering armchair adventure, while avoiding the worst stereotypes of

---

<sup>446</sup> Gilbert H. Grosvenor, *Scenes from Every Land* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1909), 52-53.

<sup>447</sup> Abramson, Lens, 108.

<sup>448</sup> Bert Underwood, “Peter,” Box 1, Folder 5, 13.

For a contrasting example of how Underwood’s Africa photographs were used, see “Will Mr. Roosevelt Be Arrayed as One of These?”, *ILN*, April 10, 1909, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001578/19090410/059/0017>



native people.” But she also noted that *National Geographic* “often pictured people in the less developed world as primitive, implicitly suggesting that non-industrial societies remain static without Western intervention.”

Another topic she drew attention to was nudity, especially female nudity, which the magazine showed despite early twentieth century prudery. Warner illustrated her argument with a Dutkewich photograph credited to Underwood, “Girl Friends In A Village In East Equatorial Africa,” that originally featured in “Where Roosevelt Will Hunt.”<sup>449</sup> She concluded with an observation that encapsulated the role played by Underwood’s stereoscopic input to shaping *National Geographic* as a photographic vehicle:

In the United States, a long-standing joke had it that American teenagers got their first look at naked bodies in *National Geographic*. Its policy of accuracy, and its announced educational goal allowed, even invited, readers to look.

In effect, *National Geographic* carried forward the high-minded dual pursuit of information and entertainment beloved of fans of the stereoscopic photograph.<sup>450</sup>

## Conclusion

What is clear from this analysis of the period between 1903 and 1909 is that the role played by photography in *National Geographic* rapidly evolved to a sophisticated visual level. As this chapter has revealed, the input of stereoscopy during this formative period was striking. As a photographic company, Underwood contributed to that evolution as a supplier of many stereoscopic images. These helped shape the visual look of the magazine through its illustrated articles and stand-alone sequences of captioned photographs.

This influential role was enabled by the scale and scope of Underwood’s photographic activities across the world. As a result, its library of more than 150,000

---

<sup>449</sup> Peter MacQueen’s *In Wildest Africa* features the same image, but captioned “Four Belles of the Taveta Forest.” See photograph facing 178. In Mary Marien Warner’s *Photography: A Cultural History*, it is captioned “Girls in a Village of East Equatorial Africa.”

<sup>450</sup> Warner, *A Cultural History*, 217.

images, principally created for its stereoscopic *Travel System*, were available for use. These pictures of people and places around the world, regarded by many then as both exotic and remote to western audiences, squarely met *National Geographic's* editorial and photographic brief shaped by Gilbert H. Grosvenor as its first editor.

Analysis of business correspondence between the two parties confirms that Underwood, with its pictures taken “from stereographs,” was among the magazine’s earliest photographic suppliers. In particular, the company’s travel-orientated projects on every continent helped feed the demands of a magazine readership interested in the wider world beyond the United States. It was an audience, like that for stereoscopic travel sets, who wanted to see and learn more about people and the places in which they lived and worked.

Underwood used the verso of its mounted cards to offer relevant information about its stereographs and used its patented map system to pinpoint their locations. *National Geographic* supplied expert articles to its readers illustrated by relevant photographs and maps. In achieving the magazine’s successful combination of information and entertainment, Underwood was a key visual and editorial contributor.

The magazine also utilised Underwood’s presence in places where news events were happening such as Roosevelt’s trip to Africa. Its “stereoscopic artists” could not though be everywhere at once. Sometimes, as in the case of “the poor Persian photographer,” this involved prioritising the procurement of photographs over properly crediting and paying those who had taken them.

In summary, this all coalesced to produce a wide range and variety of stereoscopic subjects, providing the re-energised world of magazine publishing with a rich source of photographic images. As the various examples cited have demonstrated, many were perfectly in tune with the editorial and illustrative ambitions of *National*



*Geographic* as it first defined its role in portraying the world and its people photographically.

In the final chapter, consideration turns from “an endless supply of special features” to investigating Underwood’s boast of being able to service the press with photographs of what it labelled “prominent people” through an analysis of the revitalised phenomenon of celebrity stereoscopy on both sides of the Atlantic.

## 5. Stereoscopic Celebrity

### *Introduction*

We live in an age in which personal details about people who have made a name for themselves, or who are prominent in any way, are eagerly devoured by the general public.<sup>451</sup>

This extract from a 1906 profile of millionaire and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in *The Graphic* captures a significant factor driving sales of newspapers and magazines, that of celebrity. Public interest in the lives of the rich and famous was a staple of the printed press throughout the nineteenth century and long before. Well-known figures attracted attention for a variety of reasons. For some, it came from an inherited position in society, enjoyed by royalty and the aristocracy. For others, it resulted from accomplishments in a field of endeavour such as politics, showbusiness and increasingly sport. In the late 1850s, the celebrity photograph was introduced to a mass audience through the *carte-de-visite*.<sup>452</sup> By the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, the visual transition of the press from engravings to incorporating more photographs provided stereoscopic companies with new outlets and the prospect of lucrative commercial opportunities. In innumerable cases, popular stereographs of famous faces produced by companies like Underwood translated into memorable photographs for use by the press.

Those who found themselves at the centre of public attention became increasingly aware of the need to shape their own image. The emergence of light-weight cameras enabled the photography of ordinary people on the street or at their leisure. During the 1890s, an accomplished photographer like Paul Martin was able to demonstrate this candid technique using a detective or hand camera.<sup>453</sup> The trend was counterbalanced by intimate images featuring well-known people created in collaboration with a professional photographer. These photographs, often captured

---

<sup>451</sup> "From Telegraph Boy to Millionaire," *Graphic*, March 31, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>452</sup> For an overview of the phenomenon, see John Plunkett, "Celebrity and Community: The Poetics of the Carte-de-visite," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 8, no.1 (January 2003): 55-79.

<sup>453</sup> Pritchard, *50 Cameras*, 49.

away from the formalities of a portrait studio, were taken “at home” or in places to which the public, increasingly armed with snapshot cameras, did not have access. Stereoscopy’s ability to supply an added perspective of three dimensions was employed by recognisable individuals and their advisers in shaping their public profile. Knowing that a stereoscopic audience would enjoy “being there,” virtually inhabiting the same world as a famous face, was important in creating newsworthy images for use by newspapers and magazines. Stereoscopic cameras were also increasingly present to capture day-to-day events or moments where the presence of well-known people was in and of itself “news.” For a company like Underwood with access to a global network of freelance stereographers in multiple countries, a heady combination of celebrity and fame yielded a rich vein of new material for its press photography activities.

This chapter analyses stereoscopy’s role in portraying “prominent people.” This change of categorisation from “prominent men” reflected the fact that more women were now entering a public sphere previously denied them. It was another significant social and cultural change that the medium was on hand to capture. On both sides of the Atlantic, famous individuals and celebrity couples from different strata of society appeared in photographs on the pages of newspapers, illustrated weeklies, and magazines. Many of these figures had enduring appeal that resulted in their lives becoming a self-generating serial with regular instalments marked by triumph and tragedy. In Underwood’s case, the establishment of its Illustration Department around 1906 marked a significant shift in how it approached celebrity photography for use by the press.

In the second half of the chapter, this shift is analysed through the activities of famous people whose surnames were often sufficient identifiers such as Carnegie, Rockefeller et al. Photographs which featured these celebrated figures became a key ingredient in a range of affordable titles. Reflected in rising circulations, audiences of all ages were willing to follow every move of their favourite celebrity or star. Photographs taken “from stereographs” were an integral part of this process. The chapter concludes with analysis of how Underwood as a stereoscopic company

covered one of the era's defining news stories, that of successful powered flight culminating in its first fatality. This coverage signified a transition towards its next incarnation, leaving behind the stereoscopic *Travel System* and laying the foundations to be among the world's principal photo agencies.

### *Miss Mary Leiter and the Hon. George Curzon MP*

A news story that exemplified huge changes in the visual portrayal of fame by the press started at the outset of the period analysed by this study. On Monday April 22, 1895, Miss Mary Leiter married the Honourable George Curzon MP at St. John's Church opposite the White House in Washington, DC. Given its high-profile participants and prominent location, the union of the eldest daughter of a Chicago millionaire and an aristocratic British member of parliament attracted attention on both sides of the Atlantic. Mary's father, Levi Ziegler Leiter, made his multi-million-dollar fortune from the dry goods businesses that bore his name, and subsequent real estate investments.<sup>454</sup> Under the headline "White Satin and Tulle Will Deck A Lovely Bride," Washington's *Evening Star* previewed the wedding in its column "The Social World." The paper declared:

Of all the wealthy American girls who have married into the English aristocracy, Monday's bride may be truthfully said to be far ahead of them in point of good looks.

Turning its attention to her bridegroom, the column continued:

Mr. Curzon is to be envied for his good fortune ... He is a good-looking man and, in England, is said to move with the air of one not unaware of that fact.<sup>455</sup>

A few days later, *The Times* in London reported the nuptials in its daily "Court Circular" column. As a newspaper of record reflecting its elevated societal role, it described how St. John's Church was "a mass of flowers, plants and palms," adding:

---

<sup>454</sup> "Death of Mr. L.Z. Leiter," *Daily Telegraph*, June 10, 1904, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>455</sup> "The Social World," *Evening Star*, Washington, DC, April 20, 1895, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1895-04-20/ed-1/seq-5/>

Large crowds of spectators assembled outside to witness the arrival and departure of the bride and bridegroom and the guests.<sup>456</sup>

Given its cast list and setting, the Leiter-Curzon wedding featured the classic hallmarks of high society. Guests came from government and diplomatic circles. Chief amongst them was Frances Cleveland, wife of the president, who Washington's *Evening Star* described as "an intimate friend of the bride." It was a friendship dating back to 1888. Then only recently married to Grover Cleveland who was nearly twice her age, the twenty-three years-old first lady invited her teenage friend Mary Leiter to co-host a society luncheon.<sup>457</sup> Dictated by precedent, Mrs. Cleveland attended the Leiter-Curzon wedding alone. As the London *Times* informed its readers:

... the President was not present, as it is not the custom for him to attend any private social ceremonies."<sup>458</sup>

Glamour and power combined visually at St. John's Church in a transatlantic display of opulence. How the press illustrated the event was in marked contrast to a modern-day celebrity wedding.

Negotiations involving large sums of money have become the norm to cover such events. In 2008, the phenomenon was epitomised in Britain by Premier League footballer Wayne Rooney and his bride Coleen McLoughlin. Rights to photograph their wedding sold to *OK!* magazine for £2.5 million, a then record amount.<sup>459</sup> In 1895, rather than using photography, press coverage still relied heavily on tried-and-tested techniques of illustration to capture the event's heady combination of fame and fortune. In its wedding preview, Washington's *Evening Star* used engraved head-and-shoulders portraits of the couple (figure 106) as did the *New York Daily Tribune* for its wedding report (figure 107).

---

<sup>456</sup> "Court Circular," *Times*, London, April 23, 1895.

<sup>457</sup> Harold Nicolson, *Mary Curzon: A Biography* (London: Phoenix Giant, 1998), 29.

<sup>458</sup> "Court Circular," *Times*, London, April 23, 1895.

<sup>459</sup> Jennifer Bullen, *Media Representations of Footballers' Wives: A Wag's Life* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 83.



Figure 106. "Miss Leiter" and "Mr. Curzon."  
*Evening Star*, Washington, DC, April 20, 1895.



Figure 107. "Miss Mary Leiter" and "The Hon. George Curzon, M.P."  
*New York Daily Tribune*, April 23, 1895.

On the big day, the *Evening Star* went one step further. As part of a detailed report on its front page, the paper published three artist's impressions captioned "At the Church Entrance," "Altar Decorations" and "There She Is" (figure 108).

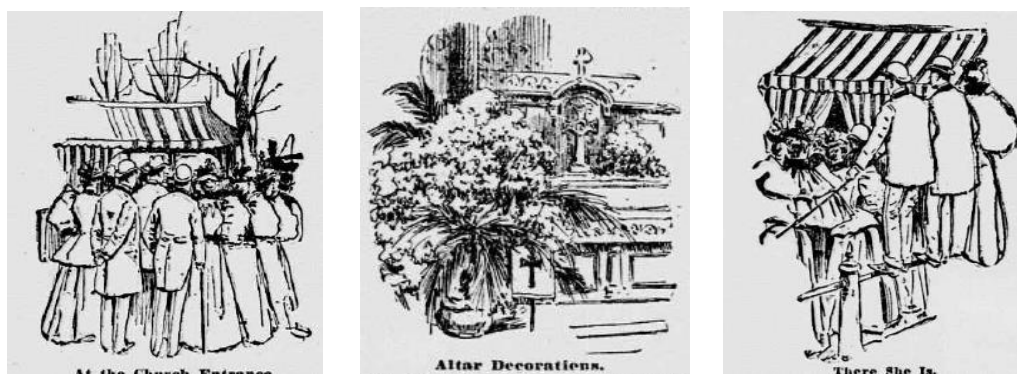


Figure 108. Artist drawings used to illustrate Leiter-Curzon wedding report.  
*Evening Star*, Washington, DC, April 22, 1895.

Given print deadlines for a daily newspaper, the drawings were imaginative impressions of the wedding location. This pre-publication artistry enabled the required wood or metal blocks to be prepared in advance. This use of special artists was still to the fore in the illustrated weeklies of both America and Britain. However, thanks to the gradual adoption of halftone printing, photography was starting to make an impression. For the Leiter-Curzon wedding, the *ILN* employed photographs of the couple. Under the headline “Our Illustrations,” posed studio portraits appeared side-by-side with a written report recording the event. Artists still had a part to play, decorating the photographs with a highly ornate floral border (figure 109).



Figure 109. “Marriage of the Hon. G. N. Curzon and Miss Mary Leiter.”  
*ILN*, April 27, 1895.

Aside from meeting audience expectations, its decorative style mimicked the appearance of a printed wedding invitation or order of service. This marriage of illustrative forms, harnessing both art and photography, was a common visual style in press coverage. It was one, judging by many examples considered by this study, which endured uninterrupted throughout the period under analysis.

As official confirmation of the Curzons’ standing in British society, these conventional profile shots were credited to prominent court photographers in London. Miss Leiter’s was taken by Alice Hughes of Gower Street whilst Russell & Sons of Baker Street

photographed her husband. As analysed in Chapter 2, Underwood joined both Hughes and Russell at Buckingham Palace on the day of King Edward VII's coronation in 1902. These photographers' names would have registered as requisite marks of quality to *ILN* subscribers, whatever the social origins of the paper's readers. Closer inspection also reveals that the uncredited line-drawings of the couple featured in the *New York Daily Tribune* (figure 107) bore a striking similarity to the photographs used by the *ILN* (figure 109). Here, one visual medium was creatively feeding off another, again a recurring theme. Indeed, the mere act of the couple's union quickly became a talking-point. In America, *Harper's Weekly* reported that the marriage prompted the proposal of a resolution in the state legislature of Illinois. The resolution required that its daughters, of whom "Miss Leiter of Chicago" was one, "do not accept the hand in marriage of any person who is not a citizen of the United States."<sup>460</sup> This patriotic call to arms though did not prove to be an impediment to their progress in high society.

Within a short space of time, the couple's arrival on the international stage was well and truly confirmed. In June 1895, the *Washington Times* carried an unillustrated front-page report headlined "Royalty Sits at a Table Spread by American Money." Among those present at the Curzons' first grand dinner party in their new London home were guests fitted to grace such an occasion. Described as the "father of the hostess," Chicago millionaire Mr. Levi Z. Leiter was joined by the Prince of Wales and Shazada Nasrullah Khan.<sup>461</sup> As a son of the amir of Afghanistan, the crown prince was in Britain representing his father on a nationwide visit, culminating in a state reception at Windsor Castle hosted by Queen Victoria.<sup>462</sup> The *Washington Times* also noted that "a number of dukes and duchesses" were amongst those attending the Curzons' grand dinner party.<sup>463</sup> The newspaper's report was not accompanied by either engraved drawings or photographs to confirm that the event had actually taken place, but this position soon changed. Prompted by the

---

<sup>460</sup> "A Futile Resolution," *Harper's Weekly*, May 11, 1895, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015023105938?urlappend=%3Bseq=418>

<sup>461</sup> Nicolson, *Mary Curzon*, 83.

<sup>462</sup> "The Shahzada's Visit," *ILN*, June 15, 1895, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>463</sup> "Royalty Sits at a Table Spread by American Money," *Washington Times*, June 27, 1895, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87062244/1895-06-27/ed-1/seq-1/>



emergence in Britain of tabloids such as the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Sketch*, such occasions would soon guarantee the presence outside of a posse of press photographers.<sup>464</sup>

In the decade following their marriage, the potential of George and Mary Curzon to generate eye-catching photographs for newspapers and magazines was more than fulfilled. In 1898, the newly ennobled Baron Curzon of Kedleston in Derbyshire became Viceroy of India. With his wife as Vicereine, the Curzons were among the most celebrated and influential power couples in the world, overseeing the then most populous part of the British Empire. Their time in India at the head of 280 million people culminated in the Delhi Durbar held in January 1903 to celebrate King Edward VII's coronation. Photographically and commercially, this fortnight of sumptuous ceremonial was an opportunity Underwood exploited to the full. Its photographer James Ricalton and a team sent from London comprehensively stereographed the durbar.

Shortly afterwards, the company actively promoted a new edition of its *India* series of one hundred stereographs.<sup>465</sup> According to an advert in Underwood's magazine *The Traveller*, its new set embraced:

...rare and beautiful photographs of wonderful ancient rock-hewn temples and palaces. Striking and impressive Himalaya Mountain scenery and strange Oriental life.

However, the set's travel perspective complemented the fruits of a more intimate photographic relationship that Underwood cultivated with the Curzons as a celebrity couple, and with Mary Curzon in particular (figure 110).

---

<sup>464</sup> Ryan Linkof, "'The Photographic Attack on His Royal Highness': The Prince of Wales, Wallis Simpson and the Prehistory of the Paparazzi," *Photography and Culture* 4, no. 3 (2011): 279.

<sup>465</sup> "Coming Out Soon," *The Traveller*, March 1903, xxii-xiii, <https://archive.org/details/traveller2ellia/page/xii/mode/2up>



Figure 110. "Her Excellency Lady Curzon on the terrace of a bungalow at Gulmarg ..." Underwood stereocard. National Portrait Gallery, London.

As an American company, Underwood was suitably qualified to enjoy such a relationship. Even when a mother of two young daughters, press reports still referred to Lady Curzon as "the former Miss Leiter of Chicago / Washington." How then was Underwood able to stereograph her far from the media spotlight before sharing the resulting intimate images with a worldwide audience through the international press? To answer that question requires closer scrutiny of developments in press coverage featuring those in the public eye that gathered momentum during the second half of the 1890s.

### *Prominent People*

By the time the Curzons married, London was at the centre of a new visual journalism as "the picture capital of the world."<sup>466</sup> As highlighted in Chapter 1, Underwood deployed shrewd business acumen and relocated its UK offices from Liverpool to London in 1894. The premises it occupied for several years at 26 Red Lion Square in Holborn were ideally situated, being close to Fleet Street and its

<sup>466</sup> Linkof, "The Public Eye," 63.

newspaper industry. In producing press photographs that portrayed fame and celebrity, the company's philosophy encapsulated how it went about selling sets of stereocards. Faced with a potential customer, Underwood door-to-door sales staff followed a carefully worded script complete with a choreographed set of instructions. Indeed, key points in any sales pitch employed theatrical flourishes. First, the script recommended showing a flat "view." An example quoted in one of its manuals used a photograph of William McKinley as President of the United States. To meet McKinley, the customer went to Washington, DC, into the East Room of the White House "where the state receptions are held." The script continued, "Then we are specially admitted to the President's private office." Only after saying the word "office" and not before, the flat photograph was slowly drawn out of the hand-held stereoscope, revealing the stereograph beneath and the "first view of the real McKinley" (figure 111).

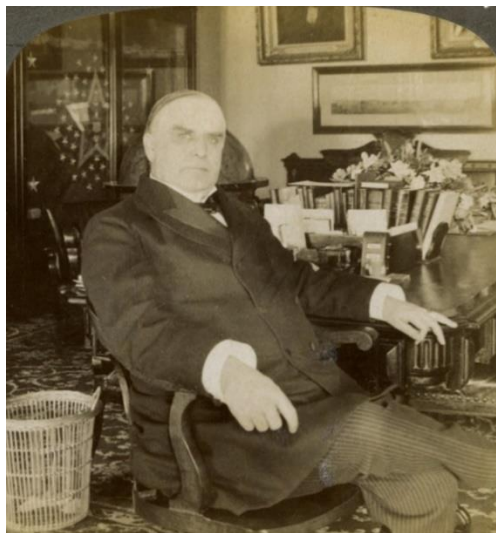


Figure 111. "First View of the Real McKinley."  
From Underwood stereocard, late 1890s.

The script went on:

Here you are before the man himself. Now, that is not a picture – you never saw a picture like that – there is the real flesh and blood man – the real table, books, carpet, paper basket. Isn't it wonderful?<sup>467</sup>

---

<sup>467</sup> Ross, *Underwood Travel System*, 45.

The fact that Underwood used McKinley's international fame to sell its core product further informs understanding of how the company went about its press activities. Stereographing famous figures or celebrity subjects was integral to its business, offering purchasers accessibility and an illusion of proximity. This approach resulted in a steady flow of photographs that were attractive to the press and became a key ingredient in a range of newspaper and magazine titles designed to appeal to a mass audience.

A news event with which McKinley was strongly associated in the public mind offers a good entry point to show how a stereoscopic company portrayed celebrity to press audiences. During the Spanish-American War of 1898, the London illustrated weekly *Black and White* published three photographs credited to Underwood. Two featured street scenes in Santiago, Cuba, clearly originated from stereographs. The third photograph was "Three Famous Fighters" (figure 112).

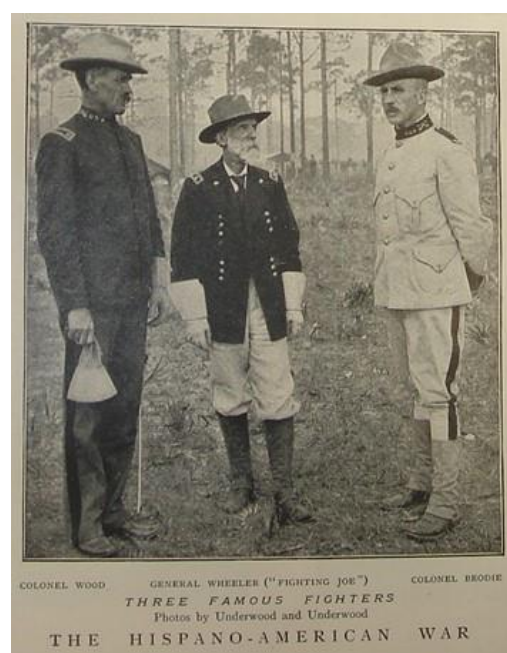


Figure 112. "Three Famous Fighters," including "Fighting Joe" (centre).  
*Black and White*, August 20, 1898.

Pictured at the centre of a trio of military figures was General Joseph Wheeler known as "Fighting Joe." Wheeler's fame derived from his time as a senior Confederate

officer during the American Civil War. Now in his sixties, he was still serving in the US army.<sup>468</sup> Wheeler's photographic portrayal in conjunction with the word "famous" was intentional. No further textual explanation appeared with the photograph. Given that *Black and White* was a non-American publication, this would suggest that "Fighting Joe's" fame was such that no further explanation was required and that readers were aware of his back story.

As well as military commanders, various conflicts during this period thrust politicians of all persuasions more prominently into the public eye. Amongst events that offered opportunities to generate headlines was the South African War of 1899-1902. A representative example was George Wyndham MP, parliamentary under-secretary at the War Office. His public profile received a boost when he made what the *Daily Telegraph* described as a "spirited speech" in the House of Commons. Under attack for relying on "luck and pluck" in its war preparations, Wyndham admitted there had been deficiencies. But argued that the actual achievements of the War Office, "for sending out so large a force in such a short time," were to be warmly praised.<sup>469</sup> A few weeks later, it fell to Wyndham, described by *The Graphic* as "a master of elocution," to announce a change in the country's fortunes. In Parliament, he read out a telegram from Lord Roberts, the new chief of the British army, announcing "the capitulation of Cronje," the Boer leader.<sup>470</sup>

Wyndham was a rising political star. Photographically, Underwood responded in the weeks between his two government statements about the war. The company copyrighted a photograph of the politician "side face, seated" together with other members of the War Office including his immediate superior Lord Lansdowne, the secretary of state.<sup>471</sup> In London, the *Graphic* published a page headlined "Officials at the War Office" taken from Underwood's stereographs, previously highlighted in

---

<sup>468</sup> "Wheeler, Joseph (1836-1906)," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, accessed November 17, 2020,

<https://bioguideretro.congress.gov/Home/MemberDetails?memIndex=W000338>

<sup>469</sup> "To-Day," *Daily Telegraph*, February 2, 1900, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>470</sup> "Parliament and Cronje's Surrender," *ILN*, March 3, 1900, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>471</sup> COPY 1/444/587-93, National Archives, Kew,  
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C12765818>



Chapter 1.<sup>472</sup> Posed as conventional mid-shot portraits, the officials were pictured in office or library settings in a variety of reading and writing poses. In some of the images, large maps were visible in the background, suggesting a degree of knowing choreography in their creation and execution. Underwood also produced stereocards featuring the War Office team, tapping into any nationalistic fervour generated by events in South Africa. As a commercial strategy, the captioning of a company stereocard from another shoot featuring Wyndham underlined the point. This time, it featured a more domestic setting and labelled him “The Man of the Hour” (figure 113).



Figure 113. “The Right Hon. G. Wyndham, Esq .... The Man of the Hour.” Underwood stereocard, National Portrait Gallery, London.

Sitting in an upholstered chair at a desk covered with a tablecloth and strewn with papers, Wyndham’s demeanour was one of studied concentration. Rather than seen in the rarefied surroundings of an office in Westminster, his working environment had a more relaxed air. This added to the impression that he was comfortable operating in more humble surroundings. Most importantly, the stereocard led the viewer into Wyndham’s private space. It offered a behind-the-scenes glimpse into his world and that of the government in which he served. The practice of early studio photographers was also on view. A variety of furniture props were employed to create an opulent parlour ambience and feeling of home.<sup>473</sup>

<sup>472</sup> See Chapter 1, Figure 15.

<sup>473</sup> Jana Bara, “Through the Frosty Lens: William Notman and his Studio Props, 1861–1876,” *History of Photography* 12, no. 1 (1988): 27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.1988.10442092>

How the commission to photograph “Officials at The War Office” came about is unclear. It may have originated within Whitehall or Westminster or been prompted by Underwood’s commercial instincts, but it represented an important moment for the company in terms of selling a brand of stereoscopic celebrity that would appeal to the press. At the heart of this strategy was a young photographer who took its War Office photographs, “Frank Foulsham, of 95 Wigmore Street, London.” In a world away from politics, Foulsham was set on a path to supply the press and in turn the public with affordable photographs of their favourite stars of stage and screen. For Underwood, the collaboration secured an entry into the world of showbusiness.

Born in London’s Regent Street in 1876, Frank Foulsham was barely out of his teens when his name appeared in connection with photography in press reports. In 1896, *Cycling* announced he had been “highly commended” for his photograph featuring an advertising poster designed to promote the illustrated weekly magazine.<sup>474</sup> Three years later, his name appeared in *The Era*, billed as “the great theatrical journal.” On a page devoted to the “London Music Halls,” the paper reported that “Mr. Frank Foulsham and Miss Gladys Tussell” accompanied “Mr. Spencer, the aeronaut” in a balloon ascent from Crystal Palace. The article, describing a photographic publicity stunt, continued:

The atmosphere was clear, and good views of the Tower-bridge, Isle of Dogs, Greenwich Hospital and Victoria and Albert Docks were obtained. The photographs were taken by a series of snap-shot and other cameras.

However, the balloon’s descent in a strong breeze at Great Waltham, near Chelmsford, was less successful. According to *The Era*:

[It] resulted in the anchor catching in a brook. Eventually the balloon was ripped up by an oak.<sup>475</sup>

The report typified a method of getting readers to engage with photographs by turning the press article into a news story about their making. This was in line with

---

<sup>474</sup> “Our Poster Competition,” *Cycling*, October 3, 1896, British Library.

<sup>475</sup> “The London Music Halls,” *The Era*, July 8, 1899, British Library.

the logic of celebrity where people became famous through appearances in the press and so talked about by readers. Six months later, Foulsham's burgeoning theatrical connections in London secured access to one of the era's biggest stage stars. This assignment, again for Underwood, encapsulated the attractions of intimate photographic portraits of famous faces. They were accessible both to the press and as content for new visual formats such as "real photograph" postcards.

### *The Belle of New York*

In 1898, Edna May, a twenty-year-old American, became the "talk of the town" following her appearance as Violet Gray in *The Belle of New York*. The show was a musical comedy telling the story of a Salvation Army girl who becomes heir to a fortune. After a brief run in New York, its opening night at London's Shaftesbury Theatre attracted rave reviews, "A.A.B" in the *Daily Mail* declared:

... a brighter, merrier, and prettier entertainment has not been seen in London for years.<sup>476</sup>

The public agreed and the show eventually ran for nearly 700 performances.<sup>477</sup> In a classic tale of overnight success, the production launched Edna May, real name Edna Pettie, as an international theatre sweetheart. When the curtain finally came down, Frank Foulsham photographed the show's star. His images were copyrighted by Underwood including one titled, in the style of a news photograph, "Miss Edna May surrounded with flowers and presents given to her on the occasion of her last appearance in England at the Shaftesbury Theatre, December 30, 1899."<sup>478</sup> Ten days later, a full page featuring Foulsham's photographs duly appeared in the press under the headline "*The Sketch Says 'Au Revoir' to Miss Edna May*" (figure 114).

---

<sup>476</sup> "The Belle of New York," *Daily Mail*, April 13, 1898, Gale Primary Sources.

<sup>477</sup> "Obituary," *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, January 3, 1948, Gale Primary Sources.

<sup>478</sup> COPY 1/444/53-57, National Archives, Kew, Surrey,  
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C12765282>





Figure 114. "The Sketch Says 'Au Revoir' to Miss Edna May."  
*The Sketch*, January 10, 1900.

On Underwood's part, placing Edna May's photographs with *The Sketch* was well targeted. The paper began weekly publication in 1893 as a light-hearted sister paper to the *ILN*, describing itself as being for:

... cultivated people who in their leisure moments look for light reading and amusing pictures, imbued with a high artistic value.

For the *Sketch*, she wore a full-length velvet gown with lace shawl. The photographs portrayed her sitting at a table, reading and writing replies to fan mail, and accompanied by "her little sister." The sequence concluded with "*The Belle* and Her Final Trophies," a display of the flowers and presents, mentioned in the copyright

registration, used strategically as props to frame the actress. Though the location was unidentified, its appearance suggested a domestic setting or hotel suite. Framed photographs on the lid of an upright piano added a homely touch.

Visually, *Sketch* readers regularly enjoyed photographs of their favourite stars together with news of current and forthcoming theatrical shows. But here, they entered a more private space. It was an opportunity to glimpse a famous name in an off-stage setting, to see the sort of dress she wore away from the footlights and appreciate her hairstyle. The overall package was presented with an air of glamour and sophistication that was no doubt aimed at further endearing Miss May to her public. Such access with a camera also invoked a degree of intimacy that was important in popularising this style of photographic portrayal for press use.

Though a marked contrast with Underwood's War Office portraits in terms of tone and subject, these "behind-the-scenes" photographs with their implicit candour were increasingly attractive to commercial companies. Demand from the press for such images was growing as various illustrated weeklies and magazines tried to meet the expectations of a receptive mass market. Underwood's photographs of Miss Edna May were not credited by *The Sketch* as being taken "from stereographs." However, their three-dimensional appearance involved the typical use of multiple planes. This visual hallmark suggested a series of stereocards featuring the star was also on sale. If so, this would have provided customers wanting a keepsake with a complementary stereoscopic experience.

As outlined in its sales pitch, Underwood was happy to compare this three-dimensional experience favourably with that created by "flat" photographic formats. Its photographs taken "from stereographs" fed into a vibrant visual culture increasingly built around public interest in notions of celebrity and fame. By securing Frank Foulsham's portrayals of Miss Edna May and officials at the War Office, Underwood again showed itself adept in choosing those it collaborated with. This

ability to spot and nurture photographic talent added further lustre to its well-connected business network.

### *Foulsham & Banfield Ltd*

What was notable about Underwood's decision to employ Frank Foulsham for these two photographic assignments was what followed and its impact on the press. Rather than photographers, Foulsham and his colleague and future business partner, Arthur Banfield, regarded themselves as "journalists."<sup>479</sup> By the following year, the firm of Foulsham and Banfield Ltd was specialising in photographic portraits of theatre and stage stars. The pair were contemporaries. Born in Worcestershire in 1875, Arthur Clive Banfield enjoyed a career in various photographic styles including micrography.<sup>480</sup> Founded by the two men when in their mid-twenties, the firm that bore their names mirrored the generational nature of those gravitating towards photography in London, supplying the press with commercial images.

At the outset of their partnership, Foulsham and Banfield's portrait studio was strategically located to suit its theatrical line of business, first in Wigmore Street and then in Old Bond Street, only a stone's throw from London's theatreland. During the Edwardian period, leading stage performers signed up to sit exclusively for publicity photographs for a fixed period. It was these publicity shots that found a ready market in the press, hungry for celebrity news and gossip. Amongst stars with whom Foulsham and Banfield had contracts were the popular "postcard beauties" Phyllis and Zena Dare, Gabrielle Ray, and Marie Studholme. Selected poses from such

---

<sup>479</sup> 1901 UK Census, 95 Wigmore Street, London, schedule 374, My Ancestry.

Articles bearing their by-lines appeared in various magazines reflecting the eclectic range of their interests. See Arthur Banfield, "The War in Toyland," *Royal*, September 1900, 397-99; and Frank Foulsham, "Short Weight: The Dodges of Dishonest Dealers" *Leisure Hour*, June 1901, 644.

<sup>480</sup> "Banfield, Arthur Clive," V & A, website accessed November 17, 2020, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1374602/photograph-banfield-arthur-clive/>

sittings were sold to the public by the Rotary Photographic Company, a prolific postcard publisher of the period (figure 115).<sup>481</sup>



Figure 115. (Left to right) Misses Zena and Phyllis Dare, Miss Gabrielle Ray and Miss Marie Studholme. Photographs by Foulsham and Banfield. National Portrait Gallery, London.

These “real photograph” postcards proved hugely popular. By 1904, Rotary Photographic’s monthly output was a quarter of a million. Multiple examples of these inexpensive collectibles feature in collections such as the National Portrait Gallery, London. Not only did the postcards capture stars in their stage outfits and on the sets of scenes from theatrical plays. Other occupations featured too. These included royalty, politicians, clergymen, judges and counsel, musicians, writers, poets, jockeys, cricketers, footballers, children and many more. Subject cards covered animals, art, birds, yachts, battleships, song and motto cards, nursery rhymes, comic cards, and greetings. Centenaries and anniversaries were also popular. For instance, commemorative postcards were mass produced in 1905 to mark the centenary of the battle of Trafalgar.<sup>482</sup>

In many respects, these “real photograph” postcards mirrored Underwood’s own photographic expansion beyond its core *Travel System* series. Showbusiness quickly became another of the stereoscopic subjects that it offered. However, the

<sup>481</sup> “Foulsham and Banfield Ltd,” *Album 36*, National Portrait Gallery, London, <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/about/photographs-collection/photographic-holdings-albums>

<sup>482</sup> Anthony Byatt, *Picture Postcards and their Publishers* (Malvern: Golden Age Postcard Books, 1978), 234-37.

world of performing for the camera inhabited by stage performers was hardly unfamiliar territory. Its popular series of comic stereographs featuring staged tableaux recounted what audiences of the time regarded as entertaining and titillating stories. Many of these so-called “comics” were yet another aspect of its multi-media business. A representative example of the genre was “Mr and Mrs. Newlywed’s new French Cook” (figure 116).



Figure 116. “Why, you little beauty! How long have you been our cook?”  
Underwood stereocard 2 of 10 © 1900.

A sequence of ten stereocards concluded with the “new” cook being replaced by a less physically attractive version and Mr. and Mrs. Newlywed living happily ever after. Such was the commercial value of these “comics” that Underwood re-registered the copyright of this series in Britain in 1902. “Mr. and Mrs. Newlywed” and their ilk were part of a branch of the visual media transformed at this point by the invention of the *Kinetograph*. What were known in Britain as “What the Butler Saw” machines filled arcades at seaside resorts with “peep shows” offering an opportunity to watch a minute’s worth of suitably saucy film material.<sup>483</sup> Despite this rival attraction, comic stereos were still popular sellers. Among the Underwood photographers responsible for their creation was Henry Strohmeyer, the company’s vice president. His involvement underlined the point that a man used to joining

<sup>483</sup> Max and Clifford Thurlow, *Making Short Films: The Complete Guide from Script to Screen* (London: A.C. Black, 2013), 395.

presidential whistle-stop tours across America saw similar commercial value in photographing such novelty stereos.<sup>484</sup>

In its practice, Underwood shared other similarities with Foulsham and Banfield. As shown by the photographs of “Miss Edna May” and “Officials at the War Office”, a new trend emerged to remove celebrity figures from the formality of a physical studio. Foulsham and Banfield was soon supplying *The Sketch* with more intimate “off-duty” photographs of the rich and famous. Shoots for one of the paper’s long-running series took place in private homes under the heading “Photographic Interviews.” The format married a page-long article with a second page of briefly captioned pictures. This invariably took the form of nine photographs laid out in three equally spaced rows. In total, more than eighty “Photographic Interviews” appeared weekly in *The Sketch* between 1902 and 1904. Foulsham and Banfield supplied photographs for the earlier part of the series. Increasingly, the paper turned to its own staff photographers, using the credit “exclusively for *The Sketch*.”

As a format, the success of these “Photographic Interviews” and the high calibre of guests attracted to take part was enduring. Many of the household names featured are still familiar today. Among the series earliest subjects, credited to Foulsham and Banfield and typical of the genre, were “Mr. and Mrs. George Bernard Shaw.” The nine photographs featuring Shaw and published by *The Sketch* showed a degree of co-operation between subject and photographer. The playwright, himself a prolific amateur photographer, was wearing a stylish three-piece tweed suit with buttoned waistcoat.<sup>485</sup> For the benefit of the camera, he undertook various pursuits including chess, piano-playing, and looking at framed portraits of Nietzsche and William Morris (figure 117).

---

<sup>484</sup> COPY 1/458/439-448, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 12, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C9416944>

<sup>485</sup> For an overview of Shaw’s photography, see Bill Jay and Margaret Moore, *Bernard Shaw on Photography* (London: HarperCollins, 1989).



Figure 117. "Photographic Interviews: III. Mr. and Mrs. George Bernard Shaw." *The Sketch*, March 12, 1902.

In one photograph captioned "Domesticated," Shaw was sitting in front of a fireplace pouring a cup of tea for his wife. This example reflected another characteristic of this approach. It set well-known individuals in the context of their immediate and wider family. Given the range of activities featured, this format required a high degree of performance from the subject for the benefit of the camera and its intended audience. Such exposure was valuable enough for the chosen person to let a photographer enter their private home. This was no doubt at some inconvenience to the sitter and required enough time given to the shoot by both parties. But if successful, the sitter gained an enhanced image in the public sphere and the photographer had a commercially valuable product to sell.

From a reader's viewpoint, such visual material was noticeably more informal in tone and style from posed portraits that were previously the norm in much of the illustrated press. From the perspective of a public figure, it allowed a side of their personality or character previously hidden from view to show through. It even enabled a negative view originated and perpetuated by journalists and editors to be countered. The chance to be involved in marketing or advertising campaigns were also a spur for a well-known person to place themselves in front of the camera, offering opportunities for money to be earned from their celebrity status through the columns of newspapers and magazines. All these factors fed into enhancing photography's importance to the press.

### *Lady Curzon, Vicereine of India*

While Foulsham and Banfield was among photographic firms using these criteria to explore notions of fame and celebrity, Underwood investigated the stereoscopic possibilities offered by such behind-the-scenes access. During the summer of 1902, its stereographic record of the coronation of King Edward VII had culminated in photographs capturing the newly crowned monarch and his grandchildren in the less formal surroundings of Balmoral. Inspired by this success, analysed in Chapter 2, the company now turned its attention to the couple married in Washington, DC, in 1895 as Miss Mary Leiter and the Hon. George Curzon MP.

As Viceroy and Vicereine of India, the Curzons became the focal point of the coronation durbar in Delhi in 1903. King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra stayed in Britain for fear of provoking other dominions request that they be equally honoured. Instead, the King's brother and his wife, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, travelled to India to represent the royal family.<sup>486</sup> As anticipation grew in the months prior to the event, Underwood took the opportunity to portray Lady Curzon alone in a setting far from the public gaze. During a private visit to the hill station at Gulmarg,

---

<sup>486</sup> Nicolson, *Mary Curzon*, 160.



Kashmir, the company stereographed her at a bungalow where she was staying. In one sequence, she posed against a backdrop of drapes and carpets (figure 118).

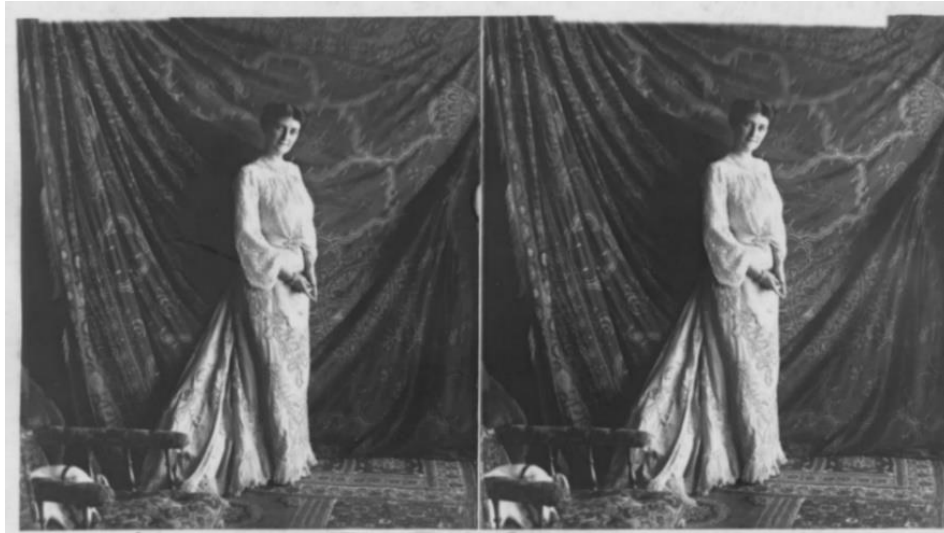


Figure 118. "Her Excellency Lady Curzon in a Bungalow in Gulmarg, Kashmir, 1902."  
Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.

In terms of fashion, the outfit worn by the Vicereine was particularly striking and would have been of interest to followers of fashion around the world. Matched with a lace blouse, her yellow silk skirt came from an "oak leaf" evening gown designed by the House of Worth in Paris (figure 119).



Figure 119. Lady Curzon's oak leaf dress by the House of Worth.  
Courtesy of Fashion Museum, Bath, and North East Somerset Council.

Its provenance spoke volumes about the wearer and her choice of outfit. Established in 1858 by British-born Charles Frederick Worth, the Paris fashion house that bore his name used aggressive self-promotion to earn him the titles “father of haute couture” and “the first couturier.” Worth’s designs were notable for their use of lavish fabrics and trimmings, his incorporation of elements of historic dress, and attention to fit.<sup>487</sup> One study of clothing worn by Lady Curzon during her time as Vicereine highlighted this outfit as being particularly significant. Teaming both day and evening wear, it was a significant break with etiquette. She may have worn this outfit, or one similar, when she presided over a smaller durbar at Gulmarg. Like other such ceremonies held in India, it was traditionally a male-dominated affair, so it may have been a deliberate decision on her part to be photographed in these clothes by a known supplier of press photographs. It was an opportunity to portray herself in a fresh way. Photographically, the highly embossed “oak leaf” pattern of the yellow silk skirt also yielded rich visual possibilities for a stereoscopic camera. The full three-dimensional effect, primarily intended for a stereocard, was soon on view in the American press. Fully two months before coronation celebrations in Delhi, the front page of *Harper’s Weekly* featured a photograph from Underwood’s shoot with the former “Miss Leiter of Chicago” (figure 120).



Figure 120. “Lady Curzon. The Latest Portrait of the Vicereine of India.”  
*Harper’s Weekly*, October 25, 1902.

<sup>487</sup> Jessa Krick, “Charles Frederick Worth (1825–1895) and the House of Worth,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, accessed November 17, 2020, [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm)

Its captioning as “the latest portrait” of the Vicereine underlined Underwood’s role in meeting press demands for what was “new” and “exclusive” to give individual publications a competitive edge.<sup>488</sup> By the time the coronation durbar took place in Delhi during the first fortnight of January 1903, Underwood’s informal portraits of Lady Curzon were appearing in the British press. The *ILN* featured a different photograph from the same sequence used by *Harper’s Weekly*. On a full page labelled “Personal,” the photograph of “Lady Curzon of Kedleston, wife of the Viceroy of India” was at its heart, surrounded by photographs of six well-known men. These included Signor Guglielmo Marconi described as “the famous wireless telegraphist” (figure 121).



Figure 121. “Lady Curzon of Kedleston” (centre).  
*ILN*, January 3, 1903.

<sup>488</sup> Nicola J. Thomas, “Embodying Imperial Spectacle: Dressing Lady Curzon, Vicereine of India 1899-1905,” *Cultural Geographies* 14, no. 3 (July 2007): 381-82, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44251153>

Other popular London weeklies turned to various sources and suppliers for their Lady Curzon imagery. The Vicereine's official Coronation Durbar portrait, credited to Bourne and Shepherd of Calcutta, was in marked contrast to Underwood's offerings. In a decidedly regal setting, she was pictured sitting on a throne wearing full regalia including tiara, diamonds, and pearls. A few weeks after events in India, it was this formal photograph, captioned "Lady Curzon in Durbar Dress," to which *The Sketch*, though enamoured of more informal photographic styles, devoted the whole of its front page (figure 122).



Figure 122. "Lady Curzon in Durbar Dress."  
*The Sketch*, January 28, 1903.

Whatever photographic choices were made by the press, the coverage reflected a level of fame with contemporary resonance. In many ways, Mary Curzon was famous, not because of any achievements, but rather because of her constructed celebrity. Underwood's photographs added to that aura, portraying her as a woman in contrast to the "prominent men" with whom she shared a page in the *ILN*. Whilst their head-and-shoulders shots were boringly predictable, the Vicereine's poses included a glamorous full-body length shot with a coy look to camera. This approach embraced photography as a means of constructing identity through iconography in a

way that became familiar as the twentieth century progressed.<sup>489</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that Mary Curzon willingly participated in this photographic relationship with Underwood, that its stereoscopic element and the company's links to the press were ones she was aware of. For the company, it represented the wholesale adoption of an approach that became part of its stock-in-trade in the years that followed, utilising any and every opportunity to photograph such figures. As the rolling news story featuring Lady Curzon reached its climax, Underwood's photographs of her proved extremely valuable as stock shots, both to the company and the press it supplied with topical photographs. During 1904, the Vicereine's health deteriorated following the birth of her third child. The following year, her husband controversially resigned as Viceroy of India only part-way into his second term. Then in July 1906, Lady Curzon unexpectedly died at the age of thirty-six. Given her celebrity and enhanced public profile, the story made front-page news on both sides of the Atlantic. Britain's first tabloid newspaper, the *Daily Mirror*, made particularly striking use of an Underwood stereoscopic photograph (figure 123).



Figure 123. "Death of Lady Curzon of Kedleston."  
*Daily Mirror*, July 19, 1906.

<sup>489</sup> For an overview of Diana, Princess of Wales as photographic icon, see Jude Davies, *Diana, A Cultural History* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001), 135-180.

Announcing the “Death of Lady Curzon of Kedleston,” its front page used a cropped version of a portrait taken by the company at Gulmarg four years earlier, placing it alongside a family portrait with two of her children. In visual terms, the *Daily Mirror* measured Lady Curzon’s fame as being on a par with that of the legendary English cricketer Dr. W.G. Grace. The paper’s other front-page photo story featured his appearance captaining the Gentlemen against the Players at the Oval on what was his fifty eighth birthday. As the story of her death dominated the top half of the page, it was pre-eminent. The following day, the story kept its top billing. Under the front-page headline “The Late Lady Curzon on a Tiger-Shooting Expedition,” another stock photograph featured the former Vicereine, this time alongside her husband (figure 124).



Figure 124. “The Late Lady Curzon on a Tiger-Shooting Expedition.”  
*Daily Mirror*, July 20, 1906.

Twelve months earlier, the same photograph was used by the paper in a front page montage used to mark the Viceroy’s resignation.<sup>490</sup> Though credited on both occasions to Underwood as “from stereograph,” the photograph was strikingly similar

<sup>490</sup> “Lord Curzon’s Resignation of the Indian Viceroyalty,” *Daily Mirror*, August 22, 1905, British Newspaper Archive.



to one attributed elsewhere to the celebrated Indian photographer Lala Deen Dayal during a Shikar expedition in 1902.<sup>491</sup> Whatever its exact provenance, either originated from a stereograph or sourced by the company from another photographer, the illustrative options Underwood made available to the *Daily Mirror* as Britain's first tabloid encapsulated another watershed in its stereoscopic contribution to the daily press.

Taking the Leiter-Curzon wedding in 1895 explored at the start of this chapter, and Lady Curzon's death just over a decade later, the visual contrast in newspaper coverage of both events was stark. It was a graphic illustration of the evolving role played by photography in reporting news, particularly about the rich and famous and those who were simply well-known. Analysis of the period between 1895 and 1906 proves that Underwood moved far beyond any parameters set by its stereoscopic *Travel System* project. It was now working alongside and in competition with other companies and agencies supplying photographs to the press. As a result, pictures taken "from stereographs" were integral to portrayal of the world of celebrity.

Extensive sampling of the periodical press in America and Britain using photographs in their news reporting reveals myriad examples of Underwood pictures taken "from stereographs" or simply credited "Underwood and Underwood." It is difficult to say whether these photographs were all stereoscopic in origin. As this study has proved, some came from freelance photographers or third parties. Even after 1906 and the establishment of its Illustration Department, the company requested the credit "from stereograph" as a condition of a photograph's use, even when that provenance was arguable. However, as stereoscopy's commercial fortunes waned in the years before the First World War, Underwood had more than half an eye on what proved to be its next metamorphosis. In the rest of this chapter, the company's transition to a photo agency business model will be analysed by exploring how news events were photographed during the remainder of the decade through a celebrity prism.

---

<sup>491</sup> "Tiger hunt, 1902," National Army Museum Online Collection, accessed November 19, 2020, <https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1963-04-2-2-44>

## Royalty and First Families

The launch of the *Illustrated Daily Mirror* in 1904 was a significant development in the British press. Its singular commitment to using photography to report the news as a tabloid meant it quickly became the country's second best-selling daily newspaper behind the *Daily Mail*.<sup>492</sup> Underwood's London operation was geographically and commercially in a strong position to meet demand from this latest journalistic innovation. An evergreen press subject involved royal personalities. Using its international network of freelance photographers, Underwood actively explored regal photo opportunities whenever and wherever they arose. In May 1906, King Alfonso XIII of Spain married Princess Victoria Eugénie of Battenberg. As the youngest granddaughter of Queen Victoria, the new Queen of Spain's status as a figure of interest to millions of readers worldwide went unquestioned. The result was a steady stream of photographs featuring the newly married couple taken at various events and during their honeymoon (figure 125).



Figure 125. "Queen Victoria of Spain (right) at the Royal Bullfight."  
*Daily Mirror*, June 7, 1906.

Under the heading "From our Camera Correspondents," the *Daily Mirror*, now minus the *Illustrated*, featured examples of Underwood's expanded photographic network in action. The Queen of Spain was seen presenting prizes at a pigeon-shoot, with her

---

<sup>492</sup> See Taylor, *The Great Outsiders*, 81-83.



husband on a pony excursion, and at a bullfight where she wore a mantilla.<sup>493</sup> This traditional form of lace scarf, covering a woman's head and shoulders, signified modesty in God's sight. The paper's report managed to introduce a comment on how Victoria looked wearing her mantilla, that it "greatly becomes her, according to the Spanish fashion." To illustrate this, Underwood's stereographer gained access to a neighbouring box at the bullfight, clicking the shutter at the exact moment she looked directly in the direction of the camera. The *ILN* used a similar photograph including her new husband as part of the royal party, showing that a sequence of shots was taken.<sup>494</sup> Given the volume of photographs now available from professional and amateur sources, even pictorially conservative publications were willing to devote full pages to a layout of such photographs. It also reflected a response to market trends aimed at dissuading readers from defecting to the tabloids. In the July 28 issue of the *ILN*, Underwood was credited with another photography firm, Hutin Trampus, for six photographs grouped together under the headline "The Queen of Spain as Horsewoman" (figure 126).

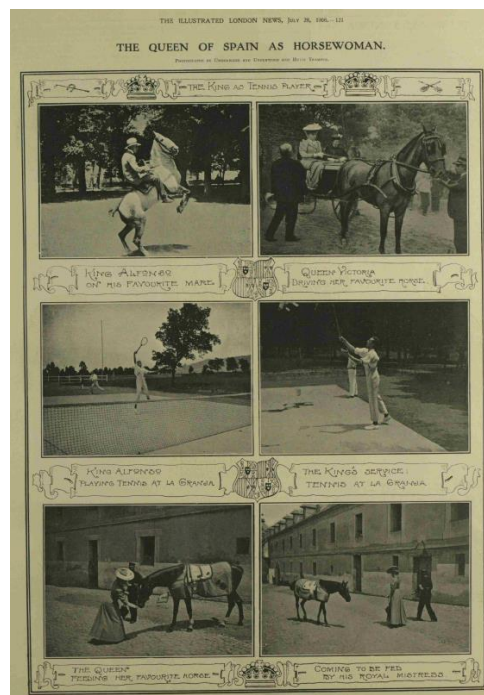


Figure 126. "The Queen of Spain as Horsewoman."  
*ILN*, July 28, 1906.

<sup>493</sup> "Queen Victoria at the Royal Bullfight," *Daily Mirror*, June 7; "Queen of Spain at a Pigeon Shooting Match," *Daily Mirror*, June 21; and "The Queen of Spain in her New Home," *Daily Mirror*, June 30, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>494</sup> "The Queen of Spain and Her Dead Assailant," *ILN*, June 9, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

The pictures portrayed the couple as young, fit, and modern. The queen's rapport with horses presented her in such a way that she looked totally at ease. Action shots featured the monarch playing tennis, an emerging pastime in the country. It was one so new that Spain only inaugurated a national tennis championship in 1910.<sup>495</sup> The couple's active co-operation in creating these photographs came at a time when monarchies across Europe were under increasing scrutiny and attack from anti-royalists. Photography had a role to play in the press countering that view. The images supplied to the *ILN* seemed designed to convey a simple message. Both king and queen had the necessary qualities to produce a suitable son and heir, guaranteeing the long-term future of the Spanish monarchy.

The handiwork of special artists was also on view in the visual material. Hand-drawn captions beneath the halftone photographs entwined an elaborate page border featuring crowns and coat-of-arms. This combination of visual styles underlined that for some publications and their audiences, like the *ILN*, art still had an active role to play in illustrating the news. Also, the approach offered a visual distraction for the reader from the sheer volume of photographs now deployed. Not every image was as engaging as the next, particularly given their ubiquity, whether created by jobbing professionals or hobbyists. The artistically created settings and backdrops seemed designed to give audiences other things to look at aside from yet another photograph.

The phenomenon of glimpsing such figures at play extended beyond the royal families of Europe. In America, the families of presidents, both incumbent and former, increasingly found themselves having to co-operate with photographers. Underwood's long-standing relationship with the White House and access to its occupants yielded innumerable popular presidential images. Such were their scale and scope that in 1908, Underwood copyrighted a composite photograph featuring dozens of images solely featuring Theodore Roosevelt. All were captured stereoscopically by company vice president Henry Strohmeyer dating back to the

---

<sup>495</sup> "Tennis, history, origin and early years," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/sports/tennis>

1890s. Head-and-shoulders shots “in a large number of positions” were painstakingly cut and pasted from their original prints and presented as a montage.<sup>496</sup> Of course, White House advisers and political strategists wanted the public to see and receive positive messages from these. But not all aspects of the lives of the first family of the United States were so controllable. As his eldest child, Roosevelt’s daughter Alice attracted much press attention, particularly because of her “wild child” reputation. Though Underwood like other favoured photographers took conventional portraits, informal candid pictures of her were also in demand. Aged twenty-one, “Princess Alice,” as she was known to the press, joined William Taft as secretary of state on a US congressional commission to the Far East in 1905. During the trip, rumours started about her blossoming romance with Congressman Nicholas Longworth. As supporting evidence, an Underwood photographer covering the trade mission stereographed the couple together (figure 127).

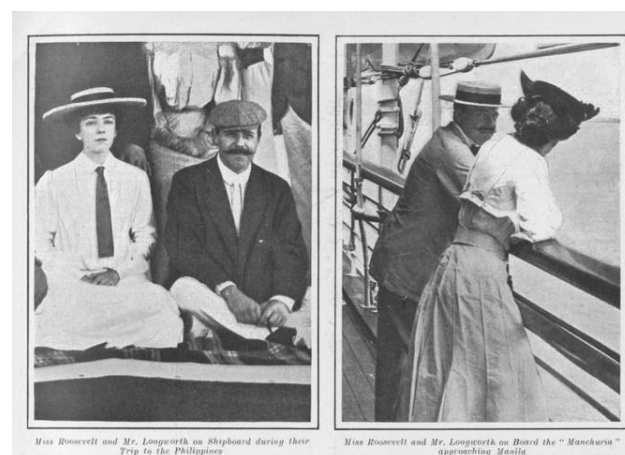


Figure 127. “Miss Roosevelt and Mr. Longworth” during US Far East tour.  
*Harper's Weekly*, February 17, 1906.

One shot taken aboard ship featured Alice with her back to the camera and Longworth pointedly staring back at the lens. Both dressed in a middle-class style that belied their true status. In Alice’s case, what she wore would have been of interest to those following her life through the gossip columns. Adopting such a look suggested a deliberate public relations strategy. The issue of how the president’s daughter styled herself might enable those back in America to relate more easily to a

<sup>496</sup> COPY 1/520/78, National Archives, Kew, accessed November 6, 2020, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/browse/r/h/C9664030>

serious trip far from its shores. On this occasion, Underwood was engaged in a more recognisable form of candid news photography. It caught what may have been spontaneous moments or ones that were pre-arranged. But the expressions on the faces of the couple suggested the camera's attention, while tolerated, was unwelcome. A few months after returning to the United States, the couple announced their engagement followed within a few months by their wedding. As a matter of legitimate public interest and to meet press demand, Underwood photographs, chronicling the Roosevelt-Longworth liaison, were published in Britain and America, notably by the *Daily Mirror* and *Harper's Weekly*.<sup>497</sup>

Long after leaving the top job behind, the family lives of former presidents continued to be of interest to the press and its readerships. When Grover Cleveland died in 1908, Underwood revisited stereoscopic images made during his years in retirement. Halftone printing meant they could be repurposed as press photographs whilst simultaneously tapping into the enduring market for commemorative stereocards. Like other papers, *Leslie's Weekly* published these images in tribute (figure 128).<sup>498</sup>



Figure 128. Taken from "The Public and Private Life of Grover Cleveland."  
*Leslie's Weekly*, July 9, 1908.

<sup>497</sup> "Miss Roosevelt Engaged," *Daily Mirror*, December 13, 1905; and "The Longworth-Roosevelt Wedding," *Harper's Weekly*, February 17, 1906.

<sup>498</sup> "The Public and Private Life of Grover Cleveland," *Leslie's Weekly*, July 9, 1908, Accessible Archives.

Artists' drawings portrayed the "public life" of Cleveland's inaugurations in 1885 and 1893. In Underwood's stereographs of his "private life," he enjoyed his favourite pastime of duck hunting, sitting alone in his library, and walking the dog with his young son. Also featured was the six-member Cleveland family including his wife Frances, whose friendship with Lady Curzon when Mary Leiter of Chicago began this chapter. The Underwood stereograph from which the picture originated marked the former president's seventieth birthday the previous year. Far from the formalities and staged sets of a portrait studio, the family group gathered on the steps of their home in Princeton, New Jersey where Grover Cleveland was a university trustee. The substantial house in the background was clearly in keeping with his status. Like Alice Roosevelt-Longworth, his young family's middle-class dress and demeanour reflected a new degree of informality in the photographic portrayal of VIPs. This played into a narrative concerning the broadening of democracy in the first decade of the twentieth century and a growing movement within different strata of society towards questioning authority. To counter this, even the Cleveland family's choice of clothing reflected a desire to be approachable and even ordinary. The political instincts of an ex-president were still intact.

### *Swimmers and Suffragettes*

At this point in press photography's evolution, not everyone who came within reach of a camera lens was born into privilege or from an elected position of power. Photographing those thrust into the public eye solely by talent, skill or ability required a different approach. Women from less elevated backgrounds than Frances Cleveland, Alice Roosevelt-Longworth, Queen Victoria of Spain, and Lady Mary Curzon now featured and in new contexts. Underwood actively contributed to this more inclusive portrayal, calling on a variety of photographic sources.

In the same July week in 1906 during which Lady Curzon's death dominated press coverage, Underwood photographed a new swimming sensation as she completed her latest triumph. Barely out of her teens, the Australian Annette Kellerman took part in a seven-mile race in Paris along the Seine. What was surprising was that she

competed against not only other women, but also men. Kellerman arrived in Britain the previous year, attracting attention by swimming several miles along the Thames before later staging an unsuccessful attempt to cross the English Channel. Her exploits generated column inches and even caused controversy. In one celebrated example, Kellerman wore a full-length one-piece “figure suit” for an appearance before the royal family at London’s Bath Club. The garment’s design was so revolutionary that it marked the start of modern swimwear for women.<sup>499</sup>

Photographically, Underwood’s shots of Kellerman’s Paris swim told a news story in visual terms recognisable more than a century later. The *Daily Mirror* devoted prime space on both its front page and inside the paper to the swim’s key moments. The accompanying credit of “Photographs by Underwood and Underwood” suggested a freelance or third party had supplied them. This was in keeping with the company’s increasing use of non-stereoscopic sources (figure 129).



Figure 129. “Lady Swimmers’ Entente Cordiale in the Seine.”  
*Daily Mirror*, July 17, 1906.

These swimming contests were a form of personal appearance that attracted large crowds. The euphoria shown in press photographs simultaneously enhanced the profile of someone subjected to public attention and acclamation (figure 130).

---

<sup>499</sup> “Annette Kellerman: Hollywood’s first nude star,” *BBC News Magazine*, accessed October 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35472490>





Figure 130. "Great Seven Mile Swimming Race Through Paris."  
*Daily Mirror*, July 17, 1906.

In addition, the publicity machine surrounding celebrity figures embraced other photographic formats too. Using its established theatrical style, Foulsham and Banfield photographed Kellerman. The resulting cabinet card issued by Rotary Photographic reflected a gradual shift in mores and echoed her later Hollywood career as the first silent film star to appear nude. Wearing her ground-breaking swimming costume, she appeared in front of a painted studio backdrop featuring a stormy sea and a few strategically placed props including life-like rocks (figure 131).



Figure 131. Miss Annette Kellerman in her “figure suit.”  
National Portrait Gallery, London.

Other women faced with gender barriers were fighting for the right to have opportunities on a par with men. They also attracted the attention of photographers. Those in Britain aiming to secure “Votes for Women” began to use militant, direct action. Founded by Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters, the Women’s Social and Political Union relocated from Manchester to London in 1906 with the express aim of securing national press coverage for its cause.<sup>500</sup> Supporters of the WSPU were regularly described and photographed by the London dailies standing in groups at Trafalgar Square, Hyde Park, 10 Downing Street, and the Houses of Parliament.<sup>501</sup> During a disturbance at Parliament’s opening in October 1906, the *Daily Mirror* reported that Adela Pankhurst, “a youthful suffragette, not yet eighteen years of age,” had been arrested and jailed for two months. Accompanied by a head-and-shoulders photograph credited to Underwood, a brief one-sentence news story appeared in a section of the paper headlined “Pictures of Events” (figure 132).

<sup>500</sup> See June Purvis, *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography* (London: Routledge, 2002). For an overview of the suffragist/suffragette movement, twelve essays from a range of perspectives feature in June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton, eds., *Votes for Women* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>501</sup> Katherine E. Kelly, “Seeing Through Spectacles: The Woman Suffrage Movement and London Newspapers, 1906–13,” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 11, no. 3 (2004): 329.



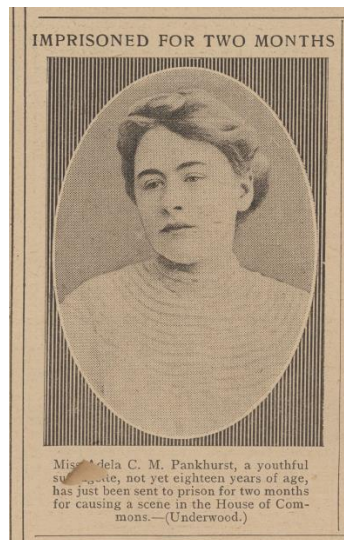


Figure 132. "Imprisoned for Two Months."  
*Daily Mirror*, October 26, 1906.

The reason for the company's credit was not obvious. Rather than creating the image, the company may have obtained a "pick up" picture from a third party or used one sourced by the suffragette movement. What was notable was that the *Daily Mirror's* decision to single out Adela Pankhurst seemed driven by its possession of a photograph of her. This fact alone seems to have motivated the paper's coverage as her actual role in events did not merit its editorial prominence. According to a *Daily Telegraph* report of proceedings, she was one of ten suffragettes in court following "the rowdy conduct of women at the opening of Parliament."<sup>502</sup> Described as a "school teacher" of "40 Upper Brook-street, Manchester," the *Daily Telegraph* report also added important detail to the context of her jailing:

In the afternoon, Miss Pankhurst was taken into custody for insulting behaviour, and, refusing to pay a fine of 20s, went to gaol for fourteen days.

As well as singling out her youth, the fact she was a Pankhurst informed the *Daily Mirror's* decision to publish her photograph. This now familiar tabloid approach to reporting news was on view in the paper's "Pictures of Events" section. Photographs themselves were often the story. Next to Adela Pankhurst, one featuring a stage-coach robbery in Yosemite, California appeared. During the hold-up, the armed man responsible invited one of his victims to "snapshot" both him and four passengers at

---

<sup>502</sup> "Woman's Revolt," *Daily Telegraph*, October 25, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

the scene. "Snapshotting a Stage-Coach Robber" was the resulting headline. This deliberate use of photographs to shape and create a new editorial agenda was one to which Underwood as a stereoscopic company was willing and able to contribute.

As if to underline the point, the company had a photographic connection with another of the women sent to Holloway Prison with Adela Pankhurst.<sup>503</sup> In the same *Daily Telegraph* court report, twenty-five-year-old Mary Gawthorpe was listed as an "organiser." Her address, given as "4 Clement's Inn" in The Strand, was the headquarters of the WSPU. A few months earlier, Gawthorpe gave up her teaching job in Leeds and moved to London to be a full-time paid organiser for the union.<sup>504</sup> As a result, she became a well-known figure in the suffragette movement and her private life was soon the subject of press intrusion. Under the headline "Suffragette's Secret," the *Daily Mirror* claimed that "the wittiest speaker in the cause of 'Votes for Women,'" was to be married. The report continued:

The thing is a dead secret at present. In fact, ... Miss Gawthorpe objects to personal affairs of the sort being made public.

To the *Daily Mirror* yesterday, she would neither confirm nor deny the truth of the statement.

In a woman's way she inquired, however, how the *Daily Mirror* 'got to know,' but on being asked for a complete denial refused to give it.

This reported exchange, with its patronising and misogynistic tone, accompanied an unusually crude halftone. Above it, a credit appeared as "stereograph copyright, Underwood and Underwood, London and New York" (figure 133).

---

<sup>503</sup> For an account of suffragettes force-fed at Holloway Prison, London, see Caitlin Davies, *Bad Girls: A History of Rebels and Renegades* (London: John Murray, 2018), 57-60.

<sup>504</sup> "Biographical Note," Mary E. Gawthorpe Papers, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archive, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, New York, accessed October 5, 2020, [http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/tamwag/tam\\_275/bioghists.html](http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/tamwag/tam_275/bioghists.html)

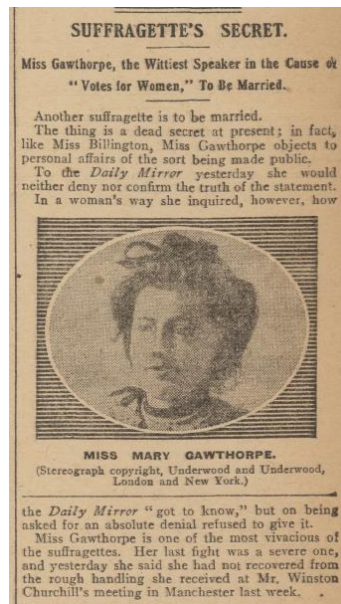


Figure 133. "Suffragette's Secret. Miss Gawthorpe ... To Be Married."  
*Daily Mirror*, February 12, 1907.

The origins of this image are not known, but if taken from an Underwood stereograph, the quality of its reproduction might have given the company's London managers cause for concern. When compared with pictures taken "from stereographs" that it supplied to other newspapers, illustrated weeklies, and magazines, it was hardly recognisable as a photograph at all. Indeed, the image bore evidence of what Beegan identified as the considerable retouching and even extensive redrawing required to ensure a photograph was fit for publication.<sup>505</sup> Its quality suggested it was unlikely to have come from an individual portrait stereograph. Instead, it may have come from a group stereo and been enlarged as an individual image. Despite the photograph's shortcomings, it had done its job.

In an early example of tabloid practice, the *Daily Mirror* story was untrue. Mary Gawthorpe remained single until she emigrated to the United States with her family in 1916, marrying an engineer in Newark, New Jersey five years later.<sup>506</sup> Whilst the WSPU may have trusted or distrusted various newspapers during its existence, the union was not reliant on the press for publicity. A "real photograph" postcard featuring

<sup>505</sup> Beegan, *The Mass Image*, 172.

<sup>506</sup> "Biographical Note," Guide to the Mary E. Gawthorpe Papers, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archive, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, New York, accessed November 25, 2020, [http://dlib.nyu.edu/findaids/html/tamwag/tam\\_275/bioghist.html](http://dlib.nyu.edu/findaids/html/tamwag/tam_275/bioghist.html)

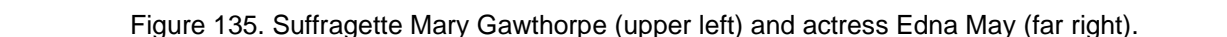
“Miss Mary E. Gawthorpe” credited to a Manchester photographer was later issued. Together with those of other WSPU figures including fellow organiser Annie Kenney and the union’s founder Emmeline Pankhurst, it offered another photographic alternative for the press (figure 134).<sup>507</sup>



Figure 134. Postcard of Miss Mary E. Gawthorpe, Organiser, WSPU. Parliamentary Archives.

Underwood’s unflattering image of Mary Gawthorpe made her almost unrecognisable to *Daily Mirror* readers. But a few days later, a slightly improved reproduction made a further appearance in the same paper, again credited to Underwood. Under the heading “Current Events Illustrated,” she was pictured alongside three other women as “Suffragettes Who Stormed the House.” A total of ten photographs appeared on the double page accompanied by bold headlines and brief captions. The line-up of figures signified a levelling up in terms of who the paper regarded as being worthy of readers’ attention. A new portrait of the kaiser took its place alongside not only Mary Gawthorpe but Edna May too. Several years after she first shot to fame as “The Belle of New York,” a photo story headlined “Engagement of Miss Edna May” updated readers with

<sup>507</sup> For a discussion of how the public representation of Annie Kenney was used in the press by the WSPU, see Lyndsey Jenkins, “Annie Kenney and the Politics of Class in the Women’s Social and Political Union,” *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 4 (December 2019): 477–503.





of the newly famous. As an example, 1906 marked a significant moment in the history of an American institution that had, like the suffragettes, aroused controversy.

It was twenty-five years since Booker T. Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama specifically for black students. Washington was a divisive figure, especially within the black community. He attracted both plaudits and criticism for his attempts to use education as a means of social advancement rather than challenge racist laws. From humble beginnings, the former slave had overseen Tuskegee's development into a 2,000-acre campus that offered training in thirty-seven industries to more than 1500 students, both boys and girls.<sup>508</sup> To celebrate its achievements, the institute's leaders and high-profile supporters organised a series of events. For Underwood and other press suppliers, it placed well-known figures together in the same place at the same time. As part of the anniversary celebrations, Washington addressed a benefit evening at New York's Carnegie Hall. The *New York Tribune* was amongst newspapers that used Underwood's picture (figure 136).



Figure 136. "Booker T. Washington in Carnegie Hall last week."  
*New York Tribune*, January 28, 1906.

In the company memoranda book, the Underwood serial number of this photograph was recorded as "88743," but it was not attributed to a named photographer.<sup>509</sup> This suggested the company regarded it as more of a routine job rather than a particularly

<sup>508</sup> "Dr. Booker Taliaferro Washington," Tuskegee University, accessed November 19, 2020, <https://www.tuskegee.edu/discover-tu/tu-presidents/booker-t-washington>

<sup>509</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 28.

prestigious assignment requiring the attendance of one of its big names. In journalistic terms though, a speech at such a location by a prominent figure in the African American community was headline news. Those figures with a public profile who supported Washington's mission and that of other progressive causes were in attendance. Among those pictured listening as he addressed the audience were fellow speakers Joseph H. Choate, former US ambassador to Britain, and the celebrated author and humourist Samuel Langhorne Clemens, a.k.a. Mark Twain. Both had previously crossed paths with Underwood. Choate declined to help the company with its Edward VII coronation project in London in 1902. However, more importantly and significantly in terms of stereoscopic celebrity, Twain had collaborated with Underwood photographer Horace Ashton only a few weeks before. It proved to be the first of a series of celebrated and commercially valuable stereoscopic portraits.

The choice of Carnegie Hall for Washington's speech was also significant. Andrew Carnegie, the multi-millionaire industrialist who funded its construction and oversaw its opening in 1891, was one of Tuskegee's benefactors.<sup>510</sup> Three months later, Carnegie was amongst those who travelled to Alabama for its silver anniversary celebrations. Again, Underwood photographed Washington, this time accompanied by what a company stereocard described as "distinguished guests" including the diminutive, white-bearded figure of Carnegie (figure 137).



Figure 137. "Booker T. Washington and distinguished guests, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama." Underwood stereocard, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

---

<sup>510</sup> "A Brief History of Carnegie Hall," Carnegie Hall, New York, accessed October 6, 2020, <https://www.carnegiehall.org/About/History/Explore-the-History-of-the-Hall>

According to Underwood's memoranda book, this stereo shot was the work of company vice president Henry Strohmeyer. Negative number "90660," visible on the stereocard caption with its 'U' prefix, was attributed to "H.A.S" and developed by "A.C.L." The latter initials referred to Alfred C. Leadbeater, whose brother Edward photographed the Mont Pelée volcano eruption for Underwood in 1902. This was another glimpse of the trusted group of photographers at the centre of the company's day-to-day operations, delivering the corporate ethos and standards of quality outlined in Chapter 3. Indeed, further entries titled "Tuskegee" reveal that Horace Ashton also developed some of Strohmeyer's negatives as well as taking and developing his own shots at the institution.<sup>511</sup> The newsworthiness of the event was recognised by other leading photographers with links to the press including Frances Benjamin Johnston. She captured both Washington and Carnegie sitting next to each other in a larger group photograph taken at Tuskegee.<sup>512</sup>

For its appearance in the press, Strohmeyer's stereo of Washington and distinguished guests appeared visually disconcerting. The individuals within the group stood at different angles, employing different eye-lines. This configuration added depth of field and enhanced the three-dimensional effect required for Underwood's core business. In a newspaper though, the group appeared to be staring distractedly into the distance in different directions rather than looking at the camera. It was a technique on view in H.F. Mackern's shot of "Sir Alfred Milner and staff" in 1900 highlighted in Chapter 1. By now, it was becoming a recognised visual style in the press. American publications that embraced photographs originated stereoscopically were happy to use Underwood's work. Amongst those that reported from Tuskegee were the *New York Tribune*.<sup>513</sup> Also, *Leslie's Weekly* devoted a full-page to seven of the company's "from stereographs." These were accompanied by captions referring throughout to the "eminent visitors" and "prominent persons" who had attended.<sup>514</sup> This brand of illustrated news coverage helped cement the place of

---

<sup>511</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 32.

<sup>512</sup> "Andrew Carnegie and Booker T. Washington," National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, accessed October 6, 2020, [https://www.si.edu/object/npg\\_NPG.2009.8](https://www.si.edu/object/npg_NPG.2009.8)

<sup>513</sup> "A Group of Notable Friends...", *New York Daily Tribune*, April 15, 1906, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1906-04-15/ed-1/seq-21/>

<sup>514</sup> "Wonderful Educational Progress ...," *Leslie's Weekly*, April 19, 1906, Accessible Archives.



such figures in the public consciousness and generate interest in their lives and activities.

### *Carnegie and Twain ... and Rockefeller*

In terms of how “eminent” or “prominent” such figures were, a handful enjoyed a level of recognition that was incomparable. Both Andrew Carnegie and Mark Twain were in this elevated category. Their fame and reputations were such that their surnames alone were sufficient identifiers. Born within a few days of each other in 1835, their lives ran in parallel with photography’s invention and development as a medium. As a result, both recognised and appreciated the role photography had played in shaping their public profiles. However, both disliked the attention of photographers. For companies like Underwood, this presented challenges. In what was both a competitive field and crowded marketplace, it endeavoured to develop photographic relationships with both men. In so doing, the company’s aim was to create a supply of “exclusive” stereoscopic images to share with a press hungry for new and unusual photographs of legendary figures.

In Carnegie’s case, the decision at the turn of the new century to sell his steel company to the financier J.P. Morgan for \$480 million opened a new chapter in his own life. As a full-time philanthropist, he set about distributing his fortune in the fields of education and public libraries. When not in America, Carnegie spent time at Skibo Castle in the Highlands of his native Scotland. At the time of his retirement from full-time business in 1902, *The Sketch* in London featured Carnegie in one of its “Photographic Interviews,” a format highlighted earlier in this chapter.<sup>515</sup> However, the tone of the article and photo captions more than hinted at Carnegie’s reluctance to fully participate in the journalistic process. They included “Good Morning, I Hate Being Photographed” and “No More After This. You Can Go Round the Grounds if You Like.” These were no doubt written with a hint of irony. Indeed, the article revealed a *Sketch* photographer had travelled 1400 miles to obtain just four

---

<sup>515</sup> “Photographic Interview,” *Sketch*, October 8, 1902, British Newspaper Archive.

“snapshots” of Carnegie at his Scottish base. Undeterred, Underwood set about wooing the millionaire philanthropist over the next few years for its own photographic purposes.

By 1906, the courtship paid off. Underwood’s Horace Ashton stereographed Carnegie at his new mansion in Manhattan. Shots of the Scot’s distinctive figure were taken outside a Georgian-style country house located on Fifth Avenue, and also in the office from where he oversaw his philanthropic projects.<sup>516</sup> In the world of high finance and business, the desk had become an established photographic totem of success. Just as Frank Foulsham stereographed “Officials at the War Office” at their desks for Underwood in 1900, Carnegie was pictured with his. *The Graphic* in London promptly used the image for a personality profile headlined “From Telegraph Boy to Millionaire.”<sup>517</sup>

These “desk” photographs conveyed a familiar grammar of power and influence. Stereoscopically, they took viewers right to the heart of a private physical space where these figures did their successful thinking, a much-valued quality prized above manual labour by contemporary matrices of work. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the company photographed other “prominent persons” together with their desks including Edith Kermit Carow a.k.a. Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, the railroad magnate E.H. Harriman, and inventors Guglielmo Marconi and Thomas Edison. Indeed, Underwood’s memoranda book emphatically recorded the latter as “Edison at desk, 95981-86” attributed to a photographer named “Schenck.” Coincidentally, Schenck took the shot of Harriman, and worked on other assignments for the company during this period. His biographical details are unknown despite research undertaken for this study.<sup>518</sup>

If the desk was a standard prop in celebrity circles, Underwood looked to explore more imaginative photographic ways of portraying fame. After successfully

---

<sup>516</sup> Underwood memoranda book,” 28.

<sup>517</sup> “From Telegraph Boy to Millionaire,” *Graphic*, March 31, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>518</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 48 and 55.

stereographing Carnegie at his Manhattan home,” Ashton turned his attention to Mark Twain. Company records for the first few days of January 1906 confirm that this is exactly what happened. Underwood’s memoranda book recorded “Ashton’s Mr. Carnegie, 88533-541” followed sequentially by “Ashton’s Mark Twain, 88542-549.” With Twain’s co-operation, Ashton was able to produce a markedly different portrait, picturing the author “at work,” lying in bed wearing his nightclothes (figure 138).<sup>519</sup>



Figure 138. “Mark Twain at work,” Underwood stereoscopic photograph. Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.

Ashton later described how he came to take this photograph, employing a degree of humour on his own part:

Mr. Twain did not take kindly to reporters and photographers, and I was lucky to have been one of the few journalists he allowed into his home to photograph him.

Because Mr. Twain did much of his writing in bed using a fountain pen and a writing tablet, I asked to take his picture in bed.

The result was a candid shot that captured the famed author doing what he did best – writing.<sup>520</sup>

This extract taken from his memoir, published posthumously, is instructive for several reasons. Ashton’s description of himself as a journalist in this context

---

<sup>519</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 28.

<sup>520</sup> Ashton, Ashton, and Atwater, *Spirit of Villarosa*, 98.

showed how a photographer engaged in the illustration business viewed his role in relation to obtaining a news story. His use of the term “candid shot” was questionable as being an honest and straightforward piece of work. Whilst Underwood’s photographer may have done the asking as he claimed, the idea of Twain posing in bed in this way was not new. The author photographed in bed, surrounded by reporters in a hotel room, had first occurred in 1895.<sup>521</sup>

Despite this repetition, photographing Twain at work wearing his visibly wrinkled pyjamas was still a big story for audiences even a decade later. When extracts of Twain’s long-awaited autobiography were serialised in the press shortly afterwards, one of Ashton’s “bed” photographs credited to Underwood duly featured.<sup>522</sup> According to the Mark Twain Project at the University of California, Ashton took a series of similar photographs for Underwood between January 4 and November 30, 1906.<sup>523</sup> The company though was not alone in photographing the author in this recumbent pose. Among others who did were Twain’s biographer Albert Bigelow Paine, a former professional photographer. According to Linda Haverty Rugg, Paine’s photographs included stereos that he took of the author during 1906 and 1907. Originally intended for inclusion in Twain’s autobiography, they did not appear until a new edition in 1959. The H.C. White Company of New York, another firm with stereoscopic credentials, also photographed Twain working in bed, this time smoking a cigar.<sup>524</sup> These portrayals effectively coupled celebrity with eccentricity as a commercially attractive combination.

The working relationship between an illustrious subject like Mark Twain and a company photographer like Horace Ashton was highly productive for Underwood. It was one that echoed those of Henry Strohmeyer with McKinley and Roosevelt, and James Ricalton with everyone he came in to contact with from attendees at the Delhi

---

<sup>521</sup> Linda Haverty Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves: Photography & Autobiography* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 58.

<sup>522</sup> “The Autobiography of Mark Twain,” *New York Tribune*, November 24, 1907, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1907-11-24/ed-1/seq-29/>

<sup>523</sup> See “Images,” Mark Twain Project, University of California, accessed October 6, 2020, <https://www.marktwainproject.org>

<sup>524</sup> “Mark Twain ‘Thinking for a Word’...,” *New York Daily Tribune*, April 29, 1906, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1906-04-29/ed-1/seq-22/>

durbar to Japanese army and navy commanders. Ashton's rapport with Twain yielded a succession of other memorable images in the years before the writer's death in 1910, marketed as both popular stereocards and distributed to the press. This flow of images continued despite a perceived misunderstanding between subject and photographer following a photo shoot at Twain's home in Tuxedo Park, New York, in 1907. Isabel Lyon, Twain's private secretary, complained to Ashton that photographs from the shoot went to the papers before the author had seen them. *Harper's Weekly*, for instance, devoted its front page to one of these images taken by Ashton, picturing Twain in his trademark white suit, holding a kitten (figure 139).



Figure 139. "In his Hours of Ease." *Harper's Weekly*, August 24, 1907.

After an exchange of letters about the issue of pre-approval, Underwood's photographer duly apologised.<sup>525</sup> Rugg argued that the disagreement over these Tuxedo Park photographs demonstrated Twain's total control over the use of his own image, describing Ashton's role in the exchange as "hapless." Undeniably, the author had clear ideas about his photographic portrayal in the press. Twain's choice of suit in the "kitten" photograph recognised white as a colour that helped a person stand out, whatever the backdrop. Wearing a white suit was a visual strategy also employed by President Roosevelt later in 1906 while inspecting work on the Panama

<sup>525</sup> Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves*, 45-6.

Canal as analysed in Chapter 3. As to celebrities pre-approving the use of photographs, it was becoming standard practice. Ashton ran into similar difficulties two years later when seeking agreement to use photographs he had taken of Alexander Graham Bell as president of the National Geographic Society analysed in Chapter 4. These examples, as well as earlier ones highlighted, such as George Bernard Shaw and President McKinley, all suggest a self-conscious rhetoric of intimacy.

Twain may have been unhappy with Ashton personally or Underwood as a company for releasing the Tuxedo Park photographs without his say-so. If he was, any ill feeling soon evaporated. Indeed, Twain invited Ashton to take yet more informal and eye-catching stereoscopic photographs. Among them was a card-playing session with Clara Clemens, his daughter. Twain was in his familiar white suit whilst his daughter wore a silk dress that caught the light and would have been of interest to fashion aficionados. The resulting photograph proved highly popular with the press, particularly when Miss Clemens, an accomplished singer, made her London debut at the Queen's Hall in 1908. To mark the event, the *New York Times* published an interview, accompanied by the card-playing picture, in which she admitted it was "hard to have a genius for a father" (figure 140).<sup>526</sup>

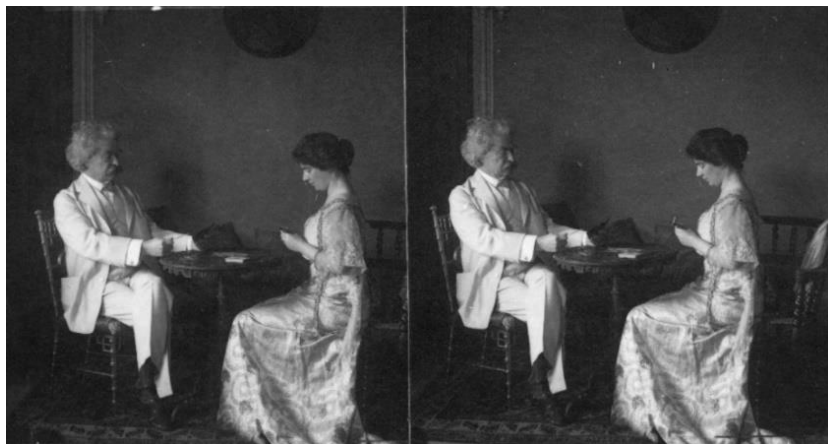


Figure 140. "Mark Twain and Miss Clemens," Underwood stereoscopic photograph. Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.

---

<sup>526</sup> "Twain's Daughter Talks About Him," *New York Times*, June 14, 1908, <https://nyti.ms/3fYLGv3>

The supply of proofs for use in any pre-approval process was by now reflected in Underwood's memoranda book. The entry for "Mark Twain and Miss Clemens" listed four negative numbers plus six "proofs."<sup>527</sup> Twain's willingness to playfully perform for the camera or be portrayed at home or at play was an approach increasingly adopted by others in the public eye. Even Andrew Carnegie agreed to leave his desk behind and indulge his own passion for golf. Underwood stereographed the millionaire philanthropist at his summer cottage in the grounds of America's oldest golf course, St. Andrews in New York State (figure 141).

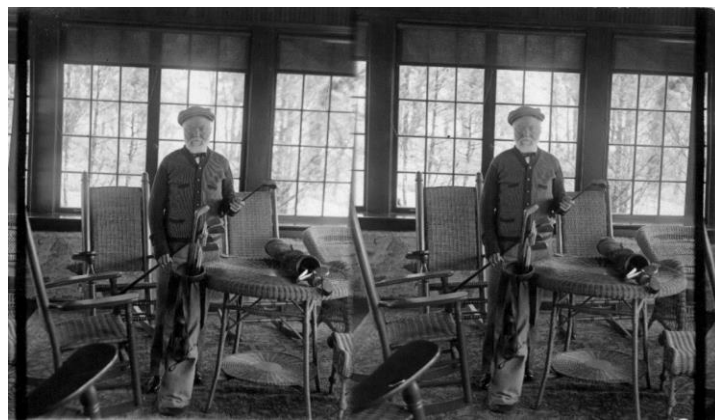


Figure 141. Andrew Carnegie at his summer cottage, St. Andrews, New York. Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography.

The stereo not only captured Carnegie's surroundings, but also his choice of leisurewear and the golf clubs he used when out on the course. Underwood's memoranda book covering April 1908 recorded another entry titled "Mr. Carnegie playing golf." Again, there was a reference to "proofs" suggesting Carnegie too was given the opportunity to signal his approval or otherwise.<sup>528</sup>

An action shot duly appeared in the *ILN* though from Carnegie's point of view, he was reduced to the ranks of a mere mortal. A bowed figure wearing a cap and accompanied by a caddy was "in serious difficulties in the rough." Whether Underwood took the shot using its hard-won access or obtained it from a third party,

---

<sup>527</sup> "Mark Twain and Miss Clemens," Underwood memoranda book, 112516-30.

<sup>528</sup> Underwood memoranda book, 112950-68.

readers may well have felt they only had the paper's word for it as Carnegie's distinctive facial features remained hidden from the camera's gaze (figure 142).



Figure 142. "Mr. Carnegie's Golf Difficulties at the American St. Andrews."  
*ILN*, May 23, 1908.

In terms of quality, the shot contrasted sharply with another golfing sequence supplied by Underwood to *Harper's Weekly*. John D. Rockefeller, Carnegie's fellow millionaire and philanthropist, was another ultra-famous figure. Similarly pictured at play, the accompanying interview endorsed the benefits of playing golf illustrated by five action shots taken "from stereographs." These included two featuring Rockefeller's "drive" which was described as "a blend of caution and daring" (figure 143).

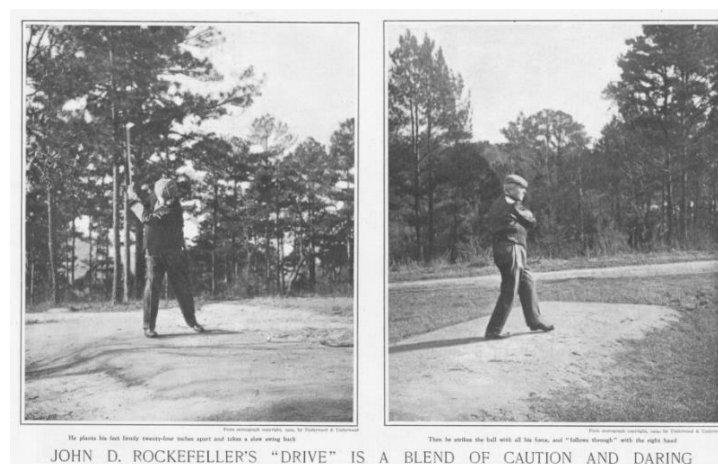


Figure 143. "John D. Rockefeller's 'Drive' ...."  
*Harper's Weekly*, February 13, 1909.



Photographically, the enlarged stereo images filled a full-page using landscape format. It was reminiscent of an approach to presentation of Underwood images by *National Geographic* amongst other publications. In technical terms, the fact that a stereoscopic camera could capture a sequence of frames within the rapid movement of a golf swing exemplified strides made by the medium within the scope of this study. By the time William Howard Taft became the twenty seventh president of the United States in 1909, the company was able to respond to any editorial whim dreamt up by a news or picture desk. When the *New York Times* decided to highlight the presidential interest in golf, Underwood's action photographs of both Rockefeller and Carnegie were available as supporting stock shots (figure 144).



Figure 144. "Mr. Taft revives the popularity of golf at the national capital."  
*New York Tribune*, April 4, 1909.

Their prominent position, flanking Roosevelt's successor, was an emblematic display of the role the company had created. Underwood's interest in fame and celebrity now moved rapidly into the arena of hard news. Its stereoscopic photographers placed themselves where events occurred in real time. To conclude this chapter, stereoscopy's role to this point in shaping early press photography is epitomised by a news story involving the first death to result from a plane crash.

## *Aviation's First Fatality*

Following their pioneering first successful powered flight in 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright turned their attention to selling aeroplanes to the world's armies and navies. At the time, the brothers' exploits were not as well-known as today. They wanted to keep their invention from prying eyes so it could be perfected and sold to the highest bidder.<sup>529</sup> In September 1908, a series of test flights took place at Fort Myer, Virginia. Their aim was to persuade the US Army Signal Corps to buy a two-seat observation airplane. Huge crowds watched the flights, attracting considerable press interest from reporters, photographers, and film cameras. Whilst Wilbur was in France trying to woo the military there, Orville took to the air with Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge, himself a pioneering aeronaut. In yet another example of the role played in this study by contacts and networks, it was Alexander Graham Bell who recruited the lieutenant to join the inventor's own Aerial Experiment Association. In turn, this appointment supported by President Roosevelt led to Selfridge being the first member of the US military to fly an airplane.<sup>530</sup>

For Underwood, Horace Ashton attended the test flights at Fort Myer with his stereoscopic camera. In his words, "their plane performed beautifully." But during one flight, Ashton later saw an incident he described in his posthumous memoir:

The plane wobbled and then began to fall from the sky. There was nothing any of us on the ground could do to save it, so I snapped two pictures while it fell and one just as it hit the ground.

Ashton claimed that a soldier tried to prevent him reaching the crash scene and "jabbed his bayonet into my back," causing a minor flesh wound. But in the traditions of "hold the front page" journalism, he managed to hold on to his camera and got the story anyway.

---

<sup>529</sup> David Egerton, *England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines* (London: Penguin, 2013), 3.

<sup>530</sup> "The Short, Soaring Life of Lieutenant Selfridge," Smithsonian Libraries, Washington, DC, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://blog.library.si.edu/blog/2015/09/16/the-short-soaring-life-of-lieutenant-selfridge/#.X33LzO17k2x>

Scrambling to my feet, I continued to run. I arrived just in time to take photographs of men pulling Orville and the remains of poor Lieutenant Selfridge from the wreckage.<sup>531</sup>

The crash seriously injured Orville Wright, but a few hours later, Lieutenant Selfridge died without regaining consciousness. In the process, he became aviation's first fatality. Underwood company records titled the assignment as "Ashton's Wright Air Ship Accident," noting that the negatives, "114868-75," were developed in New York.<sup>532</sup> Photographs from this sequence subsequently appeared in the press credited to the company "from stereographs." *Leslie's Weekly* used two of Ashton's location scenes, one featuring each man, under the headline "Perils of Aerial Navigation."<sup>533</sup> Its rival *Harper's Weekly* devoted a whole page to five of Ashton's shots and another company's photograph headlined: "The Fatal Fall of the Wright Aeroplane" (figure 145).



Figure 145. "The Fatal Fall of the Wright Aeroplane."  
*Harper's Weekly*, September 26, 1908.

<sup>531</sup> Ashton, *Spirit of Villarosa*, 115-16.

<sup>532</sup> "114868-75," September 17, 1908, Underwood memoranda book.

<sup>533</sup> "Perils of Aerial Navigation," *Leslie's Weekly*, October 1, 1908, Accessible Archives.

Evidence from this coverage confirms that Ashton worked at the crash scene as a news photographer. He captured images of both the dying Selfridge and the injured Wright. Press picture desks had to decide on their usability and whether to keep the horror of the crash from readers. The chosen images showed only glimpses of the men on the ground, shielded behind the figures of those helping them.

The following summer, the Wright brothers returned to Fort Myer, this time with a new airplane to complete the army's acceptance trials. The "Wright Military Flyer" satisfied all requirements and was purchased by the US Army for \$30,000 (\$860,000 today), the first in the world by any government.<sup>534</sup> Again, Ashton was present for Underwood at what was a significant moment in aviation history. It was one which embodied a heady combination of worldwide fame and the prospect of fortunes made. Of the company's many stereo shots at Fort Myer, negative number "117480" summed up the photographic balance it continued to strike, simultaneously serving a stereoscopic audience and its press clients. The resulting Underwood stereocard captured "The Wright aeroplane in flight" (figure 146).

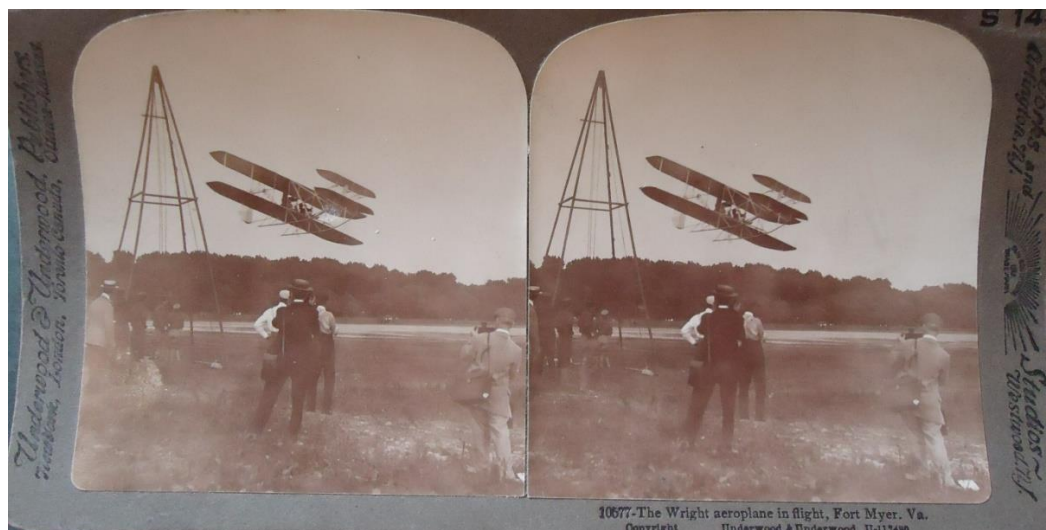


Figure 146. "The Wright aeroplane in flight, Fort Myer, Va."  
Underwood stereocard © 1909. Courtesy of George R. Reinhart Collection.

<sup>534</sup> "1909 Wright Military Flyer," Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC, accessed November 20, 2020, [https://airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/1909-wright-military-flyer/nasm\\_A19120001000](https://airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/1909-wright-military-flyer/nasm_A19120001000)

As befitted a classic stereo, its composition involved a backdrop of trees on the distant horizon, the plane plus its launch derrick in the middle ground, whilst the immediate foreground featured rapt figures watching the spectacle unfold. As the first decade of the twentieth century ended, a commercial turning point for the medium of stereoscopy loomed.

Whether their inclusion was deliberate, two of the figures in “117480” were other photographers present to record what the press agreed unanimously was a major news event. Rather than weighed down by cumbersome boxes of equipment, each was using a hand-held light-weight camera with a portable bag casually swung over one shoulder. Together with the presence that day of motion picture cameras, it was a portent for stereoscopic companies like Underwood that the medium’s heyday was over. Press photography was signalling it was ready to move on to the next stage in its history (figure 147).



Figure 147. “117480,” Underwood contact print.  
Courtesy of George R. Rinhart Collection.

## Conclusion

Examination of the pages of Underwood's memoranda book, chronicling its photographic assignments during the period from 1906, confirms the broader picture revealed by this chapter. The company succeeded in stereographing a veritable "who's who" of people who, as *The Graphic* put it, "have made a name for themselves or are prominent in any way."<sup>535</sup> The result was that Underwood and other players in the market could not only sell stereocards of these figures to the public. It could also supply the press with photographs "from stereographs" of famous individuals busily making the news and creating headlines around the globe.

Many of these stereo images were visually appealing, not only in terms of the subjects themselves. Their clothes, their homes, workplaces, and activities they performed in front of the camera reflected a changing world in America and Britain. Political movements were demanding greater democracy, increased literacy brought heightened awareness of social inequalities, and new inventions like the aeroplane, motor car, and motion pictures all contributed to a new order that characterised the years surveyed in this chapter. In turn, this fed a growing appetite among newspaper and magazine readers to see figures involved in these changes portrayed in fresh ways. Previously, these had been the domain of special artists or formal photography studios, but indoor and outdoor locations that were naturalistic and newly accessible to light-weight cameras encouraged a change of tone photographically.

The press was also interested in bringing a new generation of names to the attention of its readers, particularly those who were stars in expanding fields such as showbusiness and sport. Demand for photographs of these figures with their mass appeal ensured the concept of stereoscopic celebrity blossomed further. But the overriding theme that has been implicit and explicit throughout is the circularity of celebrity. Press actively created celebrity rather than merely reflecting it. As a

---

<sup>535</sup> "From Telegraph Boy to Millionaire," *Graphic*, March 31, 1906, British Newspaper Archive.

stereoscopic photography company, Underwood was amongst those actively involved in this process at a time when the press reinvented the way it portrayed famous and well-known people using photographs. This stereoscopic source of visual culture visibly added to the richness of press photography as it fully embraced halftone printing. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine the concept of celebrity flourishing without the active involvement of the mass media and of stereoscopic companies like Underwood.

## Epilogue

By 1911, the emergence of motion pictures and cinema meant the public's love for all things stereoscopic was on the wane. Not for the first time and like others in the same market, Underwood had to be fleet of foot. Writing to newspaper proprietors across America, C. R. Abbott, as head of its Illustration Department, distilled its next big idea:

We desire ... to connect with a photographer in every city and town in the United States and to have photographs constantly arriving from all quarters.

The Associated Press gets the news by wire for publication – we want the pictures – there's the difference.<sup>536</sup>

At this point though, Underwood still regarded itself as a stereoscopic photography company. As such, its familiar credit highlighting that fact, “from stereograph, Underwood & Underwood,” continued to appear alongside its press photographs.<sup>537</sup> It finally quit the stereo view business around 1919 when Keystone purchased its negatives, leaving it to pursue press photography exclusively.<sup>538</sup> The business model adopted by the company offered an annual subscription. Press customers received a daily selection of “the most worth-while news photos that Underwood & Underwood publish,” or a pay-per-photo service, providing “a variety to select from at a reasonable price.”<sup>539</sup>

Even at the time of Abbott's letter to US newspaper proprietors, the company was increasingly moving into areas characteristic of a photo agency. Underwood's coverage of a news story that still exerts fascination more than a century later exemplified this, that of the sinking of RMS *Titanic* on the night of April 14/15, 1912.

---

<sup>536</sup> C. R. Abbott to H. W. Fay, January 18, 1911, George R. Rinhart Collection.

Henry W. Fay was a newspaper proprietor in De Kalb, Illinois. See 1910 US Census, South Fourth Street, De Kalb, Illinois, line 53.

<sup>537</sup> See “Royal Visit to Henley,” *Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post*, July 8, 1912, British Newspaper Archive.

<sup>538</sup> Gleason, “Canvassed and Delivered,” 48.

<sup>539</sup> “Copy of an Outline,” Robert Taft Photography Papers, accessed November 14, 2020, <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/702>



After striking an iceberg on its maiden-voyage, the ship's distress call was answered by the Cunard liner *Carpathia* whose crew rescued more than 700 people from the Atlantic. Bernice Palmer was a seventeen-year-old travelling on *Carpathia* with her mother on a cruise to the Mediterranean. Using her Kodak *Brownie* camera, she took a sequence of snapshots featuring not only the iceberg that sliced open *Titanic's* hull, but also groups of survivors huddled together on *Carpathia*.

On the liner's arrival in New York, there was huge press demand for first-hand accounts of the tragedy. An unidentified "newsman" working for Underwood learned of Miss Palmer's snapshots. The company then offered to develop, print, and return her pictures for \$10, a few hundred in today's terms. Unaware of the photographs' real commercial value, the Canadian teenager agreed to the arrangement and Underwood secured unique pictures of the *Titanic* disaster "for a pittance" (figures 148 and 149).<sup>540</sup>



Figure 148. "The Iceberg That Sank *Titanic*."  
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

---

<sup>540</sup> "Bernie Palmer's Story," National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, accessed October 16, 2020, <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/titanic-group/bernie-palmer-s-story>



Figure 149. "Titanic honeymooners Mr. and Mrs. George A. Harder."  
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

This account, supplied by the American Museum of American History, Washington, DC, portrayed Underwood in a mercenary light, given the young woman's age and the circumstances described. But it also captured how the company responded to cut-throat competition amongst those supplying the press with photographs and intent on getting the story first. Use of the term "newsman" is also interesting. Whether using its own staff or freelancers, it reflected Underwood's practice of employing photographers acting journalistically. It was a role well described by Horace Ashton when stereographing Mark Twain for the company referenced in Chapter 5.

Underwood's photographic scoop quickly found its way into newspapers across the United States and Europe. These included many daily and weekly titles regularly supplied with its stereographic work. Much of what the company had learned about press photography was epitomised in its *Titanic* photographs as published by *The Call* newspaper in San Francisco. Editorially, the company supplied the news angle of Bernice Palmer's role in taking the photographs. The paper then used this angle in its front-page story. Beneath a banner headline, a shot of honeymooners Mr. and Mrs. George Harder of Brooklyn, New York was referred to as "this unusually

interesting photograph,” and credited as “taken by Miss Bernice Palmer, a passenger on the *Carpathia*” (figure 150).



Figure 150. “First Photograph of Some of the Survivors....”  
*The Call*, San Francisco, April 24, 1912.

Inside the paper, *The Call* devoted the whole of page three to a lay-out of eight photographs, all credited to Underwood (figure 151).

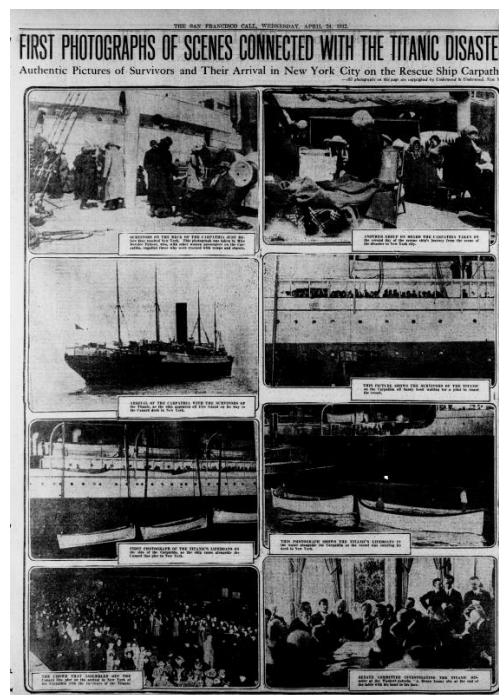


Figure 151. “First Photographs of Scenes Connected with the Titanic Disaster.”  
*The Call*, San Francisco, April 24, 1912.

Photographers had been despatched by the company to a variety of locations connected to the story. These produced shots of *Carpathia* at different points on its journey back to New York plus a large group of *Titanic* survivors queued on deck before disembarking. Some of the ship's lifeboats that took them to safety also featured. In contrast, the final photograph used by *The Call* captured a senate committee hearing at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, gathering evidence about the disaster. Among those sitting round a table in a crowded room, the accompanying caption pinpointed J. Bruce Ismay, Chairman of the White Star Line that owned *Titanic* and a survivor of the ship's sinking.

Also, readers learned how the paper obtained Bernice Palmer's pictures. Its front page, featuring honeymooners Mr. and Mrs. Harder, included a caption which stated:

This photograph was purchased for *The Call* and copyrighted by Underwood & Underwood, New York.

The term "purchased" seems to be a reference to the \$10 Underwood paid its young camerawoman, though readers were unaware of details of the deal. As to copyright, the company moved quickly to register the snapshots she had taken. Ten days after the sinking, the United States Copyright Office in Washington, DC, received an application from Underwood in New York. This reflected the questionable circumstances in which Bernice Palmer's photographs came into the company's possession.

The Copyright Office index card for "U140432," the Underwood catalogue number assigned to the shot of Mr. and Mrs. Harder, included a section marked "nationality of photographer" which it noted "must be stated." Tellingly, the section remained blank (figure 152).

Underwood & Underwood, New York, Write nothing here J2 1 c. rec'd MAY 27 1912  
 U-140432 Name of claimant XXc. ©ClJ169606  
 Title 8 50¢  
 Leave all above these words blank 21022 MAY 27 1912 Cash No.  
 APPLICATION FOR COPYRIGHT—PHOTOGRAPH NOT REPRODUCED FOR SALE  
 REGISTER OF COPYRIGHTS, WASHINGTON, D. C. New York, MAY 1 1912  
 Of the PHOTOGRAPH named herein, ONE perfect copy is hereby deposited to secure  
 copyright registration according to the provisions of the Act of March 4, 1909. \* 50¢  
 (see below) (statutory fee for registration) is also inclosed. The copyright is claimed by the  
 undersigned:  
 Name and address of { Underwood & Underwood  
 copyright claimant { 12 & 14 W. 37th St., New York, N. Y.  
 MAY 27 1912 U.S.A.  
 Nationality of photographer [Must be stated]  
 \* If certificate is desired, the fee is \$1; if no certificate, 50 cents. [Please turn this over]

Figure 152. Underwood application for copyright for “U140432.”  
 US Copyright Office, Washington, DC.

In another piece of evidence, the Underwood memoranda book featured an entry in April 1912 listing the “Illustration Department” with the negative numbers “140172-671.” These included those numbers assigned to the snapshots taken by Bernice Palmer, but nowhere in the document does the word “Titanic” feature or is her name recorded.

Without access to the relevant financial records, the value of Underwood’s \$10 investment in Bernice Palmer’s snapshots cannot be accurately quantified. But another document gives further insight into the company’s behaviour. Titled “Assignment of Copyright,” it was a legal agreement between the two parties made on February 8, 1913. As this was several months after the tragedy, it would be reasonable to assume the bulk of the financial benefit to be gained by Underwood from the snapshots’ immediate circulation had already been obtained. The document listed five photographs, “140430” and “140432-35” along with their detailed descriptive captions, whose copyright was to pass from Underwood to “Bernice Palmer of Galt, Ontario, Canada.” The assignment, entitling her to “all the profit or benefit of advantage which shall arise from printing, publishing and vending the same in the United States of America or any other country,” was signed by Bert Underwood as company president on behalf of its board (figure 153).

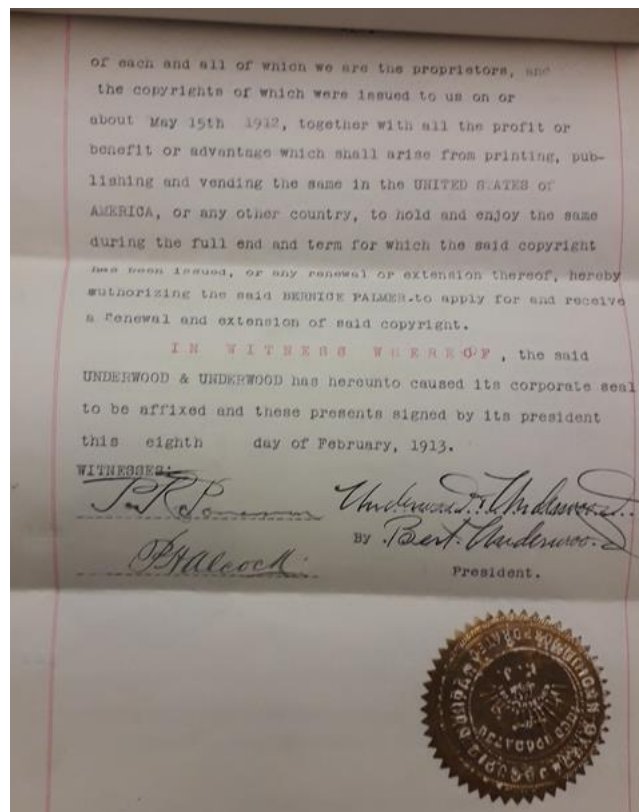


Figure 153. "Assignment of Copyright" for *Titanic* photographs to Bernice Palmer. National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

Whatever sharp practice may have been at work during this sequence of events, Underwood's reputation as a significant player in the field of press photography took another leap forward thanks to its *Titanic* scoop. Not only did the snapshots it secured from Bernice Palmer make front pages all over the world.<sup>541</sup> It was also able to back these up with a range of other images that helped tell an unprecedented news story photographically. As articulated by C. R. Abbott in its Illustration Department, the company's stated ambition at this point, to be to pictures what the Associated Press was to news, would offer a suitable topic for another study. As revealed by this thesis, it was an aspiration that could only have been contemplated with the benefit of the skills and expertise accumulated during Underwood's decade-and-a-half of dealings with the press as a stereoscopic photography company.

<sup>541</sup> In 1986, Bernice P. Ellis, née Palmer, donated her camera, *Titanic* photographs, legal agreement plus other materials to the National Museum of American History, Washington, DC. See <https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/object-groups/titanic-group/bernie-palmer-s-story>

## Conclusion

This study has revealed another dimension to the photographic history of the press in America and Britain in its formative years either side of 1900. By investigating and analysing the role played by stereoscopic photography, it has argued for a richer and more nuanced portrayal of the origins and development of press photography. In these concluding pages, the implications of my findings are considered, drawing on the detailed case study of the Underwood company that is the core of this thesis. These affect the historiography of press photography as well as wider visual culture and business practice. How future scholarship might build on this research will contribute to the growing body of knowledge about photography and its role in visualising news.

### *Core Findings*

Based on new evidence revealing stereoscopy's extensive role in the history of press photography, I have identified four core findings.

#### *1. Stereoscopic photography actively shaped early press illustration*

By tracing Underwood's commercial relationship with the press, what was happening more widely can be related to two significant moments. In 1890, the company with its origins and roots in the United States set up an office in Britain in the transatlantic port of Liverpool. Four years later, it centralised its European operations in London. These business decisions acknowledged Liverpool's role as a regional press centre and London as the picture capital of the world. Close to Fleet Street, Underwood found itself working alongside other American and European stereoscopic photography companies with similar commercial goals.

A calculated sequence of events brought this situation about. A wider market for photographs existed far beyond the one for stereocards. In terms of this case study, it was no coincidence that the company's founding partners, Elmer and Bert Underwood, chose to base themselves in London at this point. The decision followed their first stereoscopic *Travel System* trip to Egypt and Palestine in 1896. In tandem with the company's team of trusted managers in both London and New York, Underwood was well placed to exploit photographic opportunities provided by the press as titles with a variety of formats reported on newsworthy events and items both at home and abroad.

Initially the illustrated weekly press offered such opportunities. Key customers included *The Graphic*, *ILN*, and *Black and White* in Britain, *L'Illustration* in France, and illustrated weeklies such as *Harper's*, *Collier's*, and *Leslie's* in America. After 1900, the daily newspaper market increasingly offered a regular outlet.

Representative titles willing and able to use stereoscopic sources of supply were the *New York Tribune* with its Sunday supplement, and *Daily Mirror* as Britain's first tabloid daily. Magazines too, as the chapter on Underwood's contribution to the evolution of *National Geographic* proved, were actively involved in further widening the medium's influential customer base during the first decade of the twentieth century.

## *2. Stereographers were integral to the press corps covering news events*

The argument that photographs for the press were merely a commercial by-product of stereoscopic companies' core activity overlooks new evidence about the press corps and how it functioned. By the mid-1890s, news events were routinely stereographed. Stereographers found themselves working in the field alongside correspondents, special and war artists, and a range of professional and amateur photographers. This situation applied not only to domestic events, but to the preponderance of overseas conflicts resulting from tensions caused by increased nationalism and imperial ambitions. Whenever a big news story broke, Underwood



was an integral part of the press corps. This was clear from its first foray into supplying the international press with photographs taken from its stereographs, the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. The following year, its sister company Strohmeyer & Wyman serviced the press with a similarly comprehensive range of images captured stereoscopically during the Spanish-American War.

By the time of the South African War of 1899 to 1902, Underwood had taken this integrated role within the press corps a step further. As revealed in Chapter 1, the company's stereographer, H.F. Mackern, was simultaneously working for *Scribner's Magazine* of New York. His press accreditation enabled him as a stereographer to join the international corps of correspondents endeavouring to report on events. It also engendered relationships on the ground with leading journalistic figures of the day that informed Underwood's day-to-day operations. Far from being a separate yet complementary entity, stereoscopic photography was increasingly at the heart of press activity. This pattern continued during the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 as exemplified by the work of Underwood's stereographer James Ricalton.

Based on this new evidence, stereoscopic photography's role went far beyond creating views of locations and people around the world to sell to a clientele exemplified by Underwood's *Travel System*. Instead, the medium was an active participant in shaping the photographic reporting of events within and beyond the existing news agenda. By 1906, when the company's Illustration Department began work, a stereoscopic perspective characterised a wide variety of stories and features covered by the press in its various incarnations.

### *3. Stereoscopic photography helped create newsworthy celebrities for the press*

Stereoscopic photography first engaged a mass audience in the 1850s and 1860s, went out of fashion for two decades before re-emerging at the start of the twentieth century. This trajectory delineated its long-term impact on the public imagination and

enduring appeal as a visual format. Middle-class families who owned stereo viewers and sets of cards passed on their enthusiasm for the medium down the generations. These characteristics were important in fuelling stereoscopy's contribution to press illustration. Stereoscopy as a form of photographic representation continued to generate spectacle and arouse fascination. Stereoscopic companies, whether first-generation like London Stereoscopic or later adopters such as Underwood and Keystone, found ever more enterprising ways of using the novelty of three-dimensional images to engage a worldwide audience. This produced a ready supply of images that the press could utilise to meet existing needs, and prompt fresh ideas about what readers might want to look at.

Underwood's *Travel System*, offering customers of all ages the chance to virtually travel the globe without leaving their home or classroom, remained at the heart of its commercial activities. This concept proved very adaptable in photographic terms as it helped create a global network of contacts the company could harness when covering news events. These connections went beyond dragomen and assistants with the necessary knowledge to organise a stereoscopic expedition in remote and inaccessible locations. Underwood's business network extended into all classes of society, particularly elites.

From the mid-1890s, the company's offices in London and New York were hubs through which it organised its press photography. Underwood stereographed those making the news from presidents and royalty to those figures, both men and women, who were actively changing the face of western societies. Meeting this challenging brief required a diverse range of business skills practised by its founders, managers, and stereographers. The active participation of its subjects and those charged with managing their public image was also necessary. This study reveals that stereoscopic photography continued to be a medium recognised and valued by those setting and participant in the latest editorial agendas.

#### *4. Trained stereographers influenced how press photographs looked*

The emergence of a market for press photographs prompted not only the creation of specialist firms and photographic agencies to meet its demands. Training was vital if photographers were to deliver a saleable product. As illustrated in Chapter 3, this became a commercial imperative as companies built up libraries of stock photographs for sale and re-sale to a variety of press customers. Photographs of all types could have commercial appeal even after their topicality had passed.

Underwood manifested this strategy in its stereoscopic academy at Arlington, New Jersey. Though training manuals are not extant, examination of company photographs supplied to the press confirms that its stereographers adhered to a corporate mantra. This became a slogan that distilled the key ingredients in a successful stereograph, namely “position, foreground, perspective, lighting, life.” As noted by Crary and emphasised throughout this thesis, pronounced stereoscopic effects depended upon the presence of objects or obtrusive forms in the near or middle ground of the stereograph. The fact that Underwood trained its stereographers to achieve this effect had a direct consequence. Because the company became a high-volume supplier of press photographs during this formative period, titles in a wide range of news genres adopted and fully embraced images with a stereoscopic appearance.

Once noticed, this visual trait is present in press photographs credited specifically to Underwood or labelled “from stereographs.” It also extends to the work of other stereoscopic companies, and even photographers servicing the press with pictures that bear evidence of techniques rooted in three-dimensional composition. From research undertaken for this study, stereoscopy’s aesthetic qualities became inherent in wider press photography as it looked to forge a distinctive visual signature. This has a consequent effect in fully understanding not only the early formative years of photography for the press, but also in interpreting later decades when photojournalism was born.

## *Challenges and Opportunities for Future Research*

This study has argued that the early photographic history of the press has overlooked the role played by stereoscopy. To prove this, my thesis has relied heavily on research findings yielded by its case study of Underwood. Even though the company was a global player, the focus of my project's research has concentrated on the medium's impact on the press in the United States of America and Britain. In part, this was a strategic choice that made the resulting survey and analysis achievable. As a result, the remainder of the world's press is available to verify or challenge the study's findings. Such research projects would add perspectives from different societies and cultures.

To successfully pursue this goal, the research model followed by this study might be instructive. It has been informed by access to digital archives such as *Chronicling America* at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, the British Library's *British Newspaper Archive*, and publishing platforms such as the *Haithi Trust Digital Library*. These offer searchable online access to a plethora of titles, primarily originating in America and Britain though not exclusive to those countries. Physical archives based in libraries, museums, and public and private collections also play a vital part. They offer similar opportunities to explore the effects of stereoscopic photography on surviving parts of the press that remain undigitized, and to examine extant copies to extract full value in terms of their materiality. The same principles apply to the stereocards, glass plate negatives, and photographic and contact prints taken from them.

In adopting this model or a modified version of it, researchers based in a different country or region of the world, or with an interest in it, are free to explore this study's findings in the context of the press or branch of it in a chosen location. Like other stereoscopic photography companies, Underwood set up an extensive worldwide network of branch offices to further sales of its products. As a result, the outlets for photographs taken from stereographs in particular territories may offer specific

cultural and societal insights that did not travel back to head office. These may add perspectives far beyond the western forms highlighted throughout this study.

Another aspect of press history that has previously remained out of reach involved the photographers who first created pictures for news and feature stories. Who were these pioneers? What were their names? How did they become involved with press photography? What happened next in their careers? A handful of star photographers referenced during this study have merited biographical studies or offered the chance to pursue a particular strand of research based on a surviving archive of their work. As a result, understanding of the field has skewed, so that the hero photographer has taken a firm and unrepresentative hold.

Where recognised, this study has taken opportunities to celebrate stereographers involved in shaping the medium's contribution to the press. Details came from Underwood company records verified by occasional credits or passing references in newspapers or magazines. As a result, further knowledge has been identified about established canonical figures such as Herbert G. Ponting, James Ricalton, and the Underwoods themselves, in particular Elmer, given that younger brother Bert has previously overshadowed his photographic contribution to the business. The study has also helped rescue others from the margins of photographic press history, notably Horace D. Ashton, Chas. H. Baker, Clarence L. Chester, Peter Dutkewich, James Edward Ellam, Edward E. Leadbeater, H. F. "Harry" Mackern, Henry A. Strohmeyer, and N. Dwight Wyman. However, there is still much work to do in this area.

The challenge of naming even more stereographers, as well as early press photographers on the staff of picture agencies or named titles, is a tantalising one. In Underwood's case, its memoranda book lists only surnames of those responsible for taking a sequence of stereographs, but little else by way of clues as to their identity and background. Even census, birth, marriage, death, and other public records, prone to human error when compiled, offer little by way of verification. This is

especially the case when a surname is common or mis-spelt or handwriting is illegible. Copyright records, such as those held by the US Copyright Office in Washington, DC, the National Archives in Kew, Surrey, and their equivalents in different jurisdictions, represent a treasure trove of data and photographs that offer potential for future projects in this field.

Tracking down these forgotten or neglected figures is detective work that requires patience, persistence, and adequate funding to create time and space for such a task. Its importance though as a scholarly goal lies in what these figures and their photographs add to a historiography that is partial and overwhelmingly biased to a western male perspective. The Royal Photographic Society's "100 Heroines" initiative in 2018 honouring women in contemporary photography has prompted other research projects. Rose Teanby's doctoral research at De Montfort University, Leicester, into early women photographers working commercially in the first few decades of the medium's existence between 1839 and 1860, has triggered international responses. Such projects offer a collaborative model. They also raise the prospect of identifying women stereographers and other marginalised contributors such as the Persian photographer in Chapter 4. Though men have largely determined the existing narrative, more remains to be learned about those at work supplying the early press with photographs but have yet to reach the radar of the worldwide research community.

What is intriguing about stereographers that this study has restored to the narrative of early press photography is they are interesting not only because of their biographies and back stories. They also reveal a great deal about Underwood as the company that employed them, revealing more than previously known about its business practices and networks. Similarly, many of these figures were able to adapt as representational technologies changed with the advent of cinema and motion pictures. Again, this is of biographical interest, but also suggests ways in which the development of new industries is dependent on transferrable technical know-how as well as new technological advances.

This thread, from one visual media format to another that succeeds it, is a recognisable pattern in contemporary media history encompassing the analogue and digital eras. As an observation, it holds out the potential to join up some of the dots, connecting stereoscopic photography and its three-dimensional elements to other parts of the wider history of visuality. It also underlines the value of talent-spotting and corporate training that has been a theme of this study and the importance of providing an entry point into emerging industries for those with the necessary vision and skillset needed to prosper.

As an illustrative example, Clarence L. Chester, analysed in Chapter 3, graduated from stereoscopy to become a camera operator, first with the Edison Film Company and later with Paramount. In 1916, he set up Chester Films, creating travelogues and “scenics” in conjunction with *Outing* magazine. This project was followed in 1920 by Chester Comedies who produced a series of shorts telling the adventures of “Snooky the Humanzee” in the mould of Rin-Tin-Tin.<sup>542</sup> When Chester died in 1958, his *New York Times* obituary noted that the photographer and author was “one of the first producers of short comedies using children and animals.”<sup>543</sup>

Beyond the biographical stories of these talented and entrepreneurial figures, the impact of stereoscopic photography on the visual grammar created during the period analysed by this study also offers further research challenges and opportunities. An unexplored question that arises is did the customers of stereoscopic companies, schooled either by textbook or well-drilled door-to-door sales staff, carry a virtual three-dimensional mode of viewing into their newspaper and periodical reading, and even their wider life?

The suggestion that a person could train their eyes to process three-dimensional visual information in this way was very much in vogue at the turn of the twentieth

---

<sup>542</sup> See National Film Preservation Foundation, San Francisco, California, accessed October 21, 2020, <https://www.filmpreservation.org/preserved-films/screening-room/mules-and-gob-talk-1920#>

<sup>543</sup> “Clarence L. Chester,” *New York Times*, December 30, 1958, <https://nyti.ms/3oq2EPp>

century. As a company, Underwood promoted and actively encouraged adoption of such a technique. Under the headline “Seeing Stereoscopically Without A Stereoscope,” it published an article in 1901 in its quarterly magazine, *The Stereoscopic Photograph*. In a piece attributed to the *Birmingham Leader* newspaper, Herbert Cook Page, a writer on photography, offered a step-by-step guide to achieve this effect, describing it as “almost like the possession of a sixth sense, and once acquired is never lost.”<sup>544</sup>

The promotion of this optical technique may have been partly in response to the fact that some customers found viewing stereographs through a stereoscope to be a frustrating experience. Various eye conditions such as astigmatism meant that some people were unable to experience three-dimensional effects. “Stereoscopic spectacles” invented by Duboscq in Paris in 1852 offered a solution. They were a device that half a century later was still “used for viewing stereoscopic photographs in books and at times when the prints cannot be placed in a stereoscope.”<sup>545</sup> The availability of these self-help and technical approaches to help achieve three-dimensional vision may yet offer a fresh perspective. It is another dimension that offers the potential to extend far beyond the realm of stereoscopic photography and the press.

---

<sup>544</sup> “Seeing Stereoscopically Without a Stereoscope,” *Stereoscopic Photograph*, December 1901, <https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1ellib/page/96/mode/1up>

<sup>545</sup> Jones, ed., *Early Photography*, 524-25.



## Bibliography

Abramson, Howard S. *National Geographic: Behind America's Lens on the World*. New York: Crown, 1987.

Alland, Alexander. *Jessie Tarbox Beals: First Woman News Photographer*. New York: Camera/Graphic Press, 1978.

Altick, Richard D. *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Anand, Sushila. *Daisy: The Life and Loves of the Countess of Warwick*. London: Piatkus, 2008.

Anderson, Ralph H. "We Will Pitch Camp at Bridalveil." *Yosemite Nature Notes*, May 1951, 43-46. [https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite\\_nature\\_notes/30/30-5.pdf](https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite_nature_notes/30/30-5.pdf)

Arnold, AJP. *Photographer of the World: The Biography of Herbert Ponting*. London: Hutchinson, 1969.

Ashton, Horace Dade, Marc Ashton, with Libby J. Atwater. *The Spirit of Villarosa: A Father's Extraordinary Adventures, A Son's Challenge*. Minneapolis: Two Harbors, 2016.

Aughton, Peter. *Liverpool: A People's History*. Liverpool: Carnegie Press, 1990.

Bain, George Grantham. Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/022.html>

Baker, Chas. H. "Three Nights with the Shepherds on Mt. Parnassus," *The Traveller*, December 1902, 133-43. <https://archive.org/details/traveller2elli/page/132/mode/2up?q=Baker>

Baker, Chas. H. "The Russian Pilgrimage to the Jordan," *The Traveller*, March 1903, 236-41. <https://archive.org/details/traveller2ellia/page/236/mode/2up>

Baker, Nicholson, and Margaret Brentano. *The World on Sunday: Graphic Art in Joseph Pulitzer's Newspaper (1898-1911)*. New York: Bullfinch Press, 2005.

Barker, T.C. *Three Hundred Years of Red Lion Square, 1684-1984*. London: London Borough of Camden, Libraries and Arts Department, in association with Red Lion Square Residents and Tenants Association, 1987.

Banfield, Arthur C. "The War in Toyland," *The Royal*, September 1900, 397-99, British Library.

Bara, Jana. "Through the Frosty Lens: William Notman and his Studio Props, 1861-1876." *History of Photography* 12, no. 1 (1988): 23-30. <https://doi:10.1080/03087298.1988.10442092>

Barnes, James. *The Great War Trek with the British Army on the Veldt*. New York: D. Appleton, 1901.

Barnes, James. *From Then till Now: Anecdotal Portraits and Transcript Pages from Memory's Tablets*. New York and London: D. Appleton-Century, 1934.

Barnhurst, Kevin G, and John Nerone. "Civic Picturing vs. Realist Photojournalism: the Regime of Illustrated News, 1856-1901." *Design Issues* 16, No. 1 (2000): 59-79. EBSCOhost.

Baynes, Ken, ed. *Scoop, Scandal and Strife: A Study of Photography in Newspapers*. London: Lund Humphries, 1971.

Bedding, Thomas. "Leaves from a Stereoscopist's Note Book," *Stereoscopic Photograph*, March 1902, 179-81.  
<https://archive.org/details/stereoscopicphoto1ellic/page/178/mode/2up>

Beegan, Gerry. *The Mass Image: A Social History of Photomechanical Reproduction in Victorian London*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Bennett, Terry. *Photography in Japan, 1853-1912*. Tokyo: Tuttle, 2006.

Benson, Richard. *The Printed Picture*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008.

Bingham, Adrian. "The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians." *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 2 (2010): 225-231. <https://doi-org/10.1093/tcbh/hwq007>

Bingham, Adrian, and Martin Conboy. *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015.

Blaschke, Estelle. *Banking on Images: The Bettmann Archive and Corbis*. Leipzig: Spector Books, 2016.

Brested, James Henry. *Egypt Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Through the Land of the Pharaohs*. New York / London: Underwood & Underwood, 1905.

British Library. Catalogues and Collections. London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire.  
<https://www.bl.uk/catalogues-and-collections/catalogues>

British Newspaper Archive. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

Brown, Charles H. *The Correspondents' War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War*. New York: Scribner, 1967.

Bullen, Jennifer. *Media Representations of Footballers' Wives: A Wag's Life*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Buzard, James. *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Byatt, Anthony. *Picture Postcards and their Publishers*. Malvern: Golden Age Postcard Books, 1978.

Campbell, Joseph W. *The Year That Defined American Journalism: 1897 and the Clash of Paradigms*. London: Routledge, 2006.

Carey, Craig. "Breaking the News: Telegraphy and Yellow Journalism in the Spanish-American War." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 26, no. 2 (2016): 130-148. Project MUSE.

Carlebach, Michael L. *The Origins of Photojournalism in America*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.

- Carlebach, Michael L. *American Photojournalism Comes of Age*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997.
- Carlebach, Michael L. *Bain's New York: The City in News Pictures 1900-1925*. New York: Dover Publications, 2011.
- Castillo, Susan, and David Seed, eds. *American Travel and Empire*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009.
- Chandler, Alfred D. *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism*. London: University of Harvard Press, 1990.
- Charney, Leo, and Vanessa R. Schwartz, eds. *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995.
- Chicago Manual of Style. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017.
- Christie, Ian. "'A Very Wonderful Process:': Queen Victoria, Photography and Film at the *Fin de Siècle*." In *The British Monarchy on Screen*, edited by Mandy Merck, 23-46. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.
- Church, Roy. "Salesmen and the Transformation of Selling in Britain and the US in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." *Economic History Review* 61, no. 3 (2008): 695–725. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40057607>
- Collier's Weekly. British Library, London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire.
- Conboy, Martin. *Journalism in Britain: A Historical Introduction*. London: Sage, 2011.
- Crary, Jonathan. *'Techniques of the Observer:': On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1992.
- Crary, Jonathan. *Suspension of Perception – Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture*. Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1999.
- Cresson, W.P. *Persia: The Awakening East*. Philadelphia & London: J.B. Lippincott, 1908.
- Daily Mail Historical Archive, 1896-2004. Gale Primary Sources.
- Daily Mirror, London. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/daily-mirror>
- Daily Telegraph, London. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/daily-telegraph--courier-london>
- Daston, Lorraine, and Peter Galison. *Objectivity*. New York: Zone Books, 2007.
- Darrah, William. C. *The World of Stereographs*. Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: W.C. Darrah, 1977.
- Davies, Caitlin. *Bad Girls: A History of Rebels and Renegades*. London: John Murray, 2018.
- Davies, Jude. *Diana, A Cultural History*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001.
- Davis, Keith F. *An American Century of Photography: From Dry-Plate to Digital*. New York: Hallmark Cards, Inc. in association with H.N. Abrams, 1995.

De Grenville, A. B. *Au Japon: The Memoirs of a Foreign Correspondent in Japan, Korea and China, 1892-1894*. West Lafayette, Indiana: Parlor Press, 2009.

DeLeskie, Robert. "The Underwood Stereographic Travel System: A Historical and Cultural Thesis." MA diss., Concordia University, Montreal, 2000.  
<https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/1264/>

De Montfort University Special Collections, Leicester.

DeWitz, Bodo von, and Robert Lebeck. *Kiosk: A History of Photojournalism 1839-1973*. Göttingen: Steidl, 2003.

Dimond, Frances. *Developing the Picture. Queen Alexandra and the Art of Photography*. London: Royal Collection Publications, 2004.

Dimond, Frances, and Roger Taylor. *Crown and Camera: The Royal Family and Photography 1842-1910*. London: Penguin, 1987.

Dixon, Robert. *Photography, Early Cinema and Colonial Modernity: Frank Hurley's Synchronized Lecture Entertainments*. London: Anthem Press, 2011.

Dominici, Sara. "'Cyclo-Photographers', Visual Modernity, and the Development of Camera Technologies, 1880s–1890s." *History of Photography* 42, no. 1 (2018): 46-60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2018.1423739>

Dove, Jane. "Geographical Board Game: Promoting Tourism and Travel in Georgian England and Wales." *Journal of Tourism History* 8, no.1 (2016): 1-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1755182X.2016.1140825>

Driberg, Tom. *Swaff: The Life and Times of Hannen Swaffer*. London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1974.

Dunn, Robert Lee. "Making Presidents by Photography," *Appleton's Magazine*, September 1907, 259-68.  
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015024219217?urlappend=%3Bseq=277>

Earle, Edward W., ed. *Points of View: The Stereograph in America – A Cultural History*. The Visual Studies Workshop Press: New York, 1979.

Egerton, David. *England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines*. London: Penguin, 2013.

Elliott, Jane. "American Photographs of the Boxer Rising." *History of Photography* 21, no. 2 (1997): 162-169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.1997.10443734>

Ellison, Daniel J., ed. *Stereoscopic Photograph / The Traveller*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1901-03.

Elmendorf, Dwight Lathrop. *Lantern Slides: How to Make and Color Them*. New York: E. & H.T. Anthony, 1894.

Emery, Mabel Sarah. *Russia Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Across the Land of the Czar from Finland to the Black Sea*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1901. <https://archive.org/details/russiathroughste00emeruoft>

Emery, Mabel Sarah. *Real Children in Many Lands*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1905.

Engel, Matthew. *Tickle The Public: One Hundred Years of the Popular Press*. London: Indigo, 1997.

Erasmus, H.J. "The Underwood & Underwood Stereographs of the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902," *South African Journal of Cultural and Art History* 26, no.2 (2012): 61-82. <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/82250>

Evans, Elaine. A. "In the Sandals of Pharaoh: James Henry Breasted and the Stereoscope." University of Knoxville, Tennessee; McClung Museum of Natural History & Culture, 2003: online <https://mcclungmuseum.utk.edu/2003/01/01/breasted-and-stereoscope/>

Evening Star, Washington, DC. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/>

Fels, T.W. *O Say Can You See: American Photographs, 1839-1939: One Hundred Years of American Photographs From the George R. Reinhart collection*. Pittsfield, Mass; Cambridge, Mass: Berkshire Museum; London: MIT Press, 1989.

Finnegan, Cara A. *Making Photography Matter: A Viewer's History from the Civil War to the Great Depression*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015.

Finnegan, Terence. J. *Shooting the Front: Allied Aerial Reconnaissance in the First World War*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2014.

Fitz-Gerald, William G. "Adventures and Perils of the News Photographer," *Woman's Home Companion*, May 1906, 14-15. British Library.

Foresta, M. A. *American Photographs: The First Century*. Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art with the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996.

Foulsham, Frank. "Short Weight: The Dodges of Dishonest Dealers," *The Leisure Hour*, June 1901, 644. British Library.

Forslund, Catherine. "'Off for the Ditch:' Theodore and Edith Roosevelt visit Panama in 1906." *White House History* 28 (Fall 2010): online. <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/off-for-the-ditch>

Freund, Gisele. *Photography and Society*. London: Gordon Fraser, 1980.

Frizot, Michel, ed. *The New History of Photography*. Cologne: Könemann, 1998.

Frosh, Paul. *The Image Factory: Consumer Culture, Photography and the Visual Content Industry*. Oxford: Berg, 2003.

Fyfe, Paul. "Illustrating the Accident: Railways and the Catastrophic Picturesque in the *Illustrated London News*." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 46, no.1 (Spring 2013): 61-91. <https://doi.org/10.1353/vpr.2013.0005>

Garai, Bert. *I Get My Picture*. London: Bles, 1938.

Garai, Bert. *The Man from Keystone*. London: Muller, 1965.

Gawthorpe, Mary E. Papers, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archive, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, New York. [http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/tamwag/tam\\_275/bioghist.html](http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/tamwag/tam_275/bioghist.html)

Gervais, Thierry. "The 'Greatest of War Photographers,' Jimmy Hare - A Photojournalist at the Turn of the Twentieth Century." Trans. James Gussen. *Études*



*Photographiques* 26 (November 2010): online.

<http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/3452>

Gervais, Thierry, and Gaëlle Morel. *The Making of Visual News: A History of Photography in the Press*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

Getty, J. Paul. Museum, Los Angeles, CA.

<http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/artists/1266/underwood-underwood-american-founded-1881-dissolved-1940s/>

Gidal, Tim N. *Modern Photojournalism: Origin and Evolution, 1910-1933*. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

Gleason, Leigh. "Canvassed and Delivered: Direct Selling at Keystone View Company, 1898-1910." PhD diss., De Montfort University, 2018.

<http://hdl.handle.net/2086/16270>

Goldstein, Donald M. *The Spanish-American War: The Story and Photographs*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1998.

Good, G., comp. *The History of the Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association*. Liverpool: Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association, 1953.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *The Bully Pit: Theodore Roosevelt and the Golden Age of Journalism*. London: Viking/Penguin, 2013.

Gould, Lewis L., and Richard Greffe. *Photojournalist: The Career of Jimmy Hare*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977.

Graphic, The, London. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/graphic>

Gretton, Thomas. "Richard Caton Woodville (1856-1927) at the *Illustrated London News*," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 48, no. 1 (2015): 87-120. <https://doi.org/10.1353/vpr.2015.0006>

Griffiths, Andrew. "Literary Journalism and Empire: George Warrington Steevens in Africa, 1898-1900," *Literary Journalism Studies* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 60-81. <https://ialjs.org/spring-2017-vol-9-no-1/>

Grosvenor, Gilbert H. *Scenes from Every Land*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1907.

Grosvenor, Gilbert H. *Scenes from Every Land: Second Series*. Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 1909.

Guarneri, Julia A. *Newsprint Metropolis: City Papers and the Making of Modern Americans*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Haberstich, David E. "Souvenirs of Roads Not Taken: Virtual Travel with the Underwood & Underwood Travel System and the World Wide Web." In *Culture as the Tourist Product*, edited by Mike Robinson, Nigel Evans, and Paul Callaghan, 131-139. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1996.

Haithi Trust Digital Library. <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

Hall, Alfred B., and Clarence L. Chester. *Panama and the Canal*. New York: Newson, 1910.

- Hallburton, Richard. *The Royal Road to Romance*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925.
- Hallett, Michael. *Stefan Lorant: Godfather of Photojournalism*. Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2006.
- Hampton, Mark. *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004.
- Hannigan, William, and Ken Johnston. *Picture Machine: The Rise of American Newspictures*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2004. H
- Hare, James H. *A Photographic Record of the Russo-Japanese War*. New York: P.F.Collier, 1905.
- Hargreaves, Roger. *Daily Encounters: Photographs from Fleet Street*. London: National Portrait Gallery, 2007.
- Harper's Weekly. <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000061498>
- Harrington, Peter. *British Artists and War: The Face of Battle in Painting and Prints, 1700-1914*. Greenhill Books, London and Stackpole Books, Pennsylvania in conjunction with Brown University Library, Rhode Island, 1993.
- Harris, Neil. "Iconography and Intellectual History: The Halftone Effect." In *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Hartesveldt, Richard J. "Roosevelt and Muir - Conservationists," *Yosemite Nature Notes*, November 1955, 133-36.  
[https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite\\_nature\\_notes/34/34-11.pdf](https://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite_nature_notes/34/34-11.pdf)
- Harwood, Jeremy. *Victoria's Final Decade: 1890s*. London: Reader's Digest in association with Getty Images and Endeavour London, 2009.
- Heil, Douglas. *The Art of Stereography: Rediscovering Vintage Three-Dimensional Images*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2016.
- Heilprin, Angelo. *Mont Pelée and the Tragedy of Martinique*. Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott, 1903.
- Hill, Jason E., and Vanessa R. Schwartz, eds. *Getting The Picture: The Visual Culture Of The News*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Hobbs, Andrew. *A Fleet Street In Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900*. OpenBookPublishers, 2018. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5943-475X>
- Hogarth, Paul. *The Artist as Reporter*. London: Gordon Fraser, 1986.
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell. "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," *Atlantic Monthly* 3 (June 1859): 738-748. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1859/06/the-stereoscope-and-the-stereograph/303361/>
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell. *The Stereoscope and Stereoscopic Photographs*. New York and London: Underwood & Underwood, 1898.
- Horrie, Chris. *Tabloid Nation: From the Birth of the Mirror to the Death of the Tabloid*. London: André Deutsch, 2003.

- Hughes, Alice. *My Father and I*. London: Thornton Butterworth, 1923.
- Hyde, Francis Edwin. *Liverpool and the Mersey: An Economic History of a Port, 1700-1970*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971.
- Illustrated London News.  
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/illustrated-london-news>
- Jarché, James. *People I Have Shot: Reminiscences of a Press Photographer*. London: Methuen, 1934.
- Jay, Bill, and Margaret Moore. *Bernard Shaw on Photography*. London: HarperCollins, 1989.
- Jenkins, Lyndsey. "Annie Kenney and the Politics of Class in the Women's Social and Political Union." *Twentieth Century British History* 30, no. 4 (December 2019): 477–503. <https://doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwz021>
- Jensen, Kirsten M. "Seeing in Stereo: Albert Bierstadt and the Stereographic Landscape." *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 12, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): 143-61. <https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn13/jensen-on-albert-bierstadt-and-the-stereographic-landscape>
- John, Angela V. *War, Journalism, and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century: The Life and Times of Henry W. Nevins*. London: IB Tauris, 2006.
- Johnson, Todd M., and Gina A. Zurlo, eds. *World Christian Database*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020.
- Johnston, Frances Benjamin. "What a Woman Can Do with a Camera," *Ladies Home Journal*, September 1897, 6-7. British Library.
- Jones, Bernard E., ed. *The Encyclopaedia of Early Photography*. London: Bishopsgate Press, 1981.
- Kelly, Katherine E. "Seeing Through Spectacles: The Woman Suffrage Movement and London Newspapers, 1906–13." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 11, no. 3 (2004): 327-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506804044466>
- Kelsey, Robin. *Archive Style: Photographs and Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850-1890*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
- Kempler, Susan. "America 'Discovers' the World: James Ricalton's 'Travels on Next to Nothing,' 1844-1929." PhD diss., New Brunswick: Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1991.
- Kennan, George. "The Tragedy of Mount Pelée, I-VII," *The Outlook*, June 28 to August 9, 1902, 539-925. British Library.
- Keystone-Mast Collection, University of California Riverside/California Museum of Photography, CA.  
<http://ucr.emuseum.com/collectionoverview/3631#sthash.UMEqDX9y.dpbs>
- King, Andrew, Alexis Easley, and John S. Morton, eds. *The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals and Newspapers*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.



Klahr, Douglas M. "Traveling via Rome Through the Stereoscope: Reality, Memory, and Virtual Travel." *Architectural Histories* 4, no.1 (2016): 1–14.

<https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.185>

Krick, Jessa. "Charles Frederick Worth (1825–1895) and the House of Worth," Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: online.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd\\_wrth.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/wrth/hd_wrth.htm)

L'Illustration, Paris. British Library, London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire.

Lacayo, Richard, and George Russell. *Eyewitness: 150 Years of Photojournalism*. New York: Time, 1990.

Layer, Harold A. "Stereoscopy: An Analysis of its History and its Import to Education and the Communication Process." PhD diss., Indiana University, 1970.

Leadbeater, E. E. "Record Breaking Mt. Pelée." *Stereoscopic Photograph*, September 1902, 66-73.

Lee, Alan J. *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914*. London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1976.

Lee, Emanuel. *To the Bitter End: A Photographic History of the Boer War 1899-1902*. London: Viking Penguin, 1985.

Leslie's Weekly. <https://www.accessible-archives.com/collections/frank-leslies-weekly/>

Library of Congress Digital Collections, Washington, DC. <https://loc.gov/collections/>

Linkof, Ryan. "The Photographic Attack on His Royal Highness: The Prince of Wales, Wallis Simpson and the Prehistory of the Paparazzi," *Photography and Culture* 4, no. 3, (2011): 277-91.

<https://doi.org/10.2752/175145211X13068409556682>

Linkof, Ryan. "The Public Eye: Celebrity and Photojournalism in the Making of the British Tabloids, 1904-1938." PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2011.

<https://doi.org/10.25549/USCTHESES-C127-651218>

Linkof, Ryan. *Public Images: Celebrity, Photojournalism, and the Making of the Tabloid Press*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

Little, Emma H. "The Father of News Photography, George Grantham Bain." *Picturescope* 20 (Autumn 1972): 125-132. British Library.

Lubow, Arthur. *The Reporter Who Would Be King: A Biography of Richard Harding Davis*. New York: Scribner, 1992.

Lucas, Christopher J. *James Ricalton's Photographs of China During the Boxer Rebellion: His Illustrated Travelogue of 1900*. Lewiston, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990.

Lupton, Ellen, and J. Abbott Miller, eds. *Design Writing Research: Writing on Graphic Design*. London: Phaidon, 1991.

Lutz, Catherine A., and Jane L. Collins. *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Mackern, H.F. *Fort Sheridan at Attention ... And at Rest*. Chicago: H.F. Mackern, 1897.  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t6f198r3v&view=image&seq=9>

Mackern, H.F. *Side-Lights on the March*. London: John Murray, 1901.  
<https://archive.org/details/sidelightsonmar00mackgoog/mode/2up>

MacQueen, Peter. *In Wildest Africa*. London: George Bell, 1910.  
<https://archive.org/details/inwildestafricar00macq/page/n5/mode/2up>

MacQueen and Dutkewich Expedition. Royal Geographical Society, London.  
<https://rgs.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-search.pl?q=Peter+MacQueen>

May, Brian. Collection. <https://www.londonstereo.com/>

McCrachen, Donal P. "The Relationship Between British War Correspondents in the Field and British Military Intelligence During the Anglo-Boer War." *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies*, 43, no. 1 (2015): 99-126.  
<https://doi.org/10.5787/43-1-1111>

McNamara, Robert F. *The American College in Rome*. Rochester, New York: The Christopher Press, 1956.

Miller, Bonnie M. *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish-American War of 1898*. Malden, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.

Mirseyedi, Sarah. "Side by Side: The Halftone's Visual Culture of Pragmatism." *History of Photography* 41, no.3 (2017): 286-310.  
<https://doi-org/10.1080/03087298.2017.1353208>

Morgan, Kenneth O. "The Boer War and the Media (1899-1902)," *Twentieth Century British History* 13, no. 1 (2002): 1-16. <https://doi-org/10.1093/tcbh/13.1.1>

Murray, John. Archive & Publishers' Collections. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. <https://digital.nls.uk/jma/>

My Ancestry. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

National Geographic. Archives & Special Collections, Washington, DC.  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/>

National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.  
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/>

Nead, Lynda. *The Haunted Gallery: Painting, Photography, Film c.1900*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Nelson, Michael. *Queen Victoria and the Discovery of the Riviera*. London and New York: IB Tauris, 2001.

New York Daily Tribune. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/>

New York Public Libraries Digital Collections. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/>

New York Times. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/browser>

Nicholson, Bob. "The Digital Turn: Exploring the Methodological Possibilities of Digital Newspaper Archives." *Media History* 19, no.1 (2013): 59-73.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2012.752963>

Nicholson, Paul T. "Egyptology for the Masses: James Henry Breasted and the Underwood Brothers." In *Sitting Beside Lepsius: Studies in Honour of Jeromir Malek at the Griffith Institute*, edited by Diana Magee, Janine Bourriau and Stephen Quirke, 381-422. Leuven, Paris, Walpole, MA: Uitgeverij Peters, 2009.

Nicolson, Harold. *Mary Curzon: A Biography*. London: Phoenix Giant, 1998.

Ohmann, Richard. *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century*. London: Verso, 1996.

O'Toole, James M. *Militant and Triumphant: William Henry O'Connell and the Catholic Church in Boston*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992.

Osborne, Peter D. *Travelling Light: Photography, Travel and Visual Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011.

Pauly, Philip J. "The World and All That Is in It: The National Geographic Society, 1888-1918." *American Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1979): 517-32.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2712270>

Pearson, Andrea G. "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper and Harper's Weekly: Innovation and Imitation in Nineteenth-Century American Pictorial Reporting." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 23 (1990): 81-111. ProQuest.

Perkin, Harold. *The Rise of Professional Society*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

Peterson, Christian A. "The Photograph Beautiful 1895-1915." *History of Photography* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 189-232.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.1992.10442552>

Plunkett, John. *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Plunkett, John. "Celebrity and Community: The Poetics of the Carte-de-visite." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 8, no. 1 (January 2003): 55-79.  
<https://doi.org/10.3366/jvc.2003.8.1.55>

Plunkett, John. "Selling Stereoscopy, 1890-1915: Penny Arcades, Automatic Machines and American Salesmen." *Early Popular Visual Culture* 6 (2008): 239-255.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17460650802443027>

Plunkett, John. "'Feeling Seeing': Touch, Vision and the Stereoscope." *History of Photography* 37, no. 4 (2013): 389-396.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2013.785718>

Ponder, Stephen. "The President Makes News: William McKinley and the First Presidential Press Corps, 1897-1901." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1994): 823-836. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27551327>

Popple, Simon. "‘Fresh from the Front’: Performance, War News and Popular Culture During the Boer War." *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no.4 (2010): 401-418.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17460654.2010.513821>

Pritchard, Michael. *A History of Photography in 50 Cameras*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Purvis, June. *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Purvis, June, and Sandra Stanley Holton, eds. *Votes for Women*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Ralph, Julian. *War's Brighter Side: The Story of ‘The Friend’ Newspaper. Edited by the Correspondents with Lord Roberts's Forces, March - April 1900*. New York: D. Appleton, 1901.

Reed, David. *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States 1880-1960*. London: The British Library, 1996.

Ricalton, James. *China Through the Stereoscope: A Journey Through the Dragon Empire at the Time of the Boxer Uprising*. New York and London: Underwood & Underwood, 1901. <https://archive.org/details/chinathroughster00ricaiala>

Richards, Jeffrey. "The Monarchy and Film, 1900-2006." Chapter 9 in *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, edited by Andrej Olechnowicz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Richardson, Rufus B. *Greece Through the Stereoscope*. New York and London: Underwood & Underwood, 1907.

Rinhart, George R. Collection. Palm Springs, CA.

Roosevelt, Theodore. Digital Library, Dickinson State University, ND.  
<https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library>

Roosevelt, Theodore. Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC. <https://www.loc.gov/collections/theodore-roosevelt-papers/about-this-collection/>

Rose, Jonathan. *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*. New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001.

Ross, E.R., comp. *A Specimen Canvass and Other Helps to the Sale of Underwood & Underwood's Stereographic Tours*. London: Underwood & Underwood, 1904.

Ross, E.R. *The Underwood Travel System and How to Sell It*. London: Underwood & Underwood, 1905.

Rouse, Kristen L. "Meat Inspection Act of 1906," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Meat-Inspection-Act#ref1204802>

Royal Collection Trust, London. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/page/1>

Royal Geographical Society, London. Collections. <https://www.rgs.org/about/our-collections/>

Rugg, Linda Haverty. *Picturing Ourselves: Photography & Autobiography*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

- Ryan, James R. *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*. London: Reaktion, 1997.
- Ryan, James R. "Placing Early Photography: The Work of Robert Hunt in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain," *History of Photography* 41, no. 4 (2017): 343-361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2017.1357268>
- San Francisco, The Call. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/>
- Savours, Ann, ed. *Scott's Last Voyage: Through the Antarctic Camera of Herbert Ponting*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1974.
- Scharf, Frederic A., and Peter Harrington. *The Boxer Rebellion, China 1900: The Artists' Perspective*. London: Greenhill, 2000.
- Schwartz, Joan M. "The Geography Lesson: photographs and the construction of imaginative geographies." *Journal of Historical Geography* 22, no. 1 (1996): 16-45. <https://doi-org/10.1006/jhge.1996.0003>
- Scranton, Philip, and Patrick Fridensen. *Reimagining Business History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2013.
- Scribner's Magazine. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
- Sharma, Brij Bhushan. "James Ricalton: An American Photographer in India." *History of Photography* 11, No. 1 (1987): 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.1987.10443768>
- Shattock, Joanne, ed. *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth Century Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Silberstein-Loeb, Jonathan. *The International Distribution of News: The Associated Press, Press Association, and Reuters, 1848-1947*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Sinnema, Peter W. *Dynamics of the Pictured Page: Representing the Nation in the Illustrated London News*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998.
- Sketch, The. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/the-sketch>
- Smith, John Talbot. *A Pilgrimage to See the Holy Father Through the Stereoscope*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1904. [https://archive.org/stream/MN5099ucmf\\_3#mode/2up](https://archive.org/stream/MN5099ucmf_3#mode/2up)
- Smithsonian Libraries, Washington, DC. <https://library.si.edu/>
- Snyder, Joel, and Neil Walsh Allen. "Photography, Vision, and Representation." *Critical Inquiry* 2, no. 1 (1975): 143-69. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1342806>
- Spellman, Susan V. "Trust Brokers: Traveling Grocery Salesmen and Confidence in Nineteenth-Century Trade." *Enterprise & Society* 13, no. 2 (2012): 276-312. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23701664>
- Taft, Robert. *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839-1889*. New York: Dover Publications, 1938.
- Taft, Robert. Photography Correspondence. Kansas Memory, Kansas Historical Society. <https://www.kansasmemory.org/item/221204/page/691>



- Taylor, Sally. J. *The Great Outsiders: Northcliffe, Rothermere and the Daily Mail*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996.
- Thomas, Nicola J. "Embodying Imperial Spectacle: Dressing Lady Curzon, Vicereine of India 1899-1905." *Cultural Geographies* 14, no. 3 (July 2007): 369-400.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/44251153>
- Thurlow, Max, and Clifford. *Making Short Films: The Complete Guide from Script to Screen*. London: A.C. Black, 2013.
- Times, The (UK). Digital Archive, 1785-2014. Gale Primary Sources.
- Turner, Charles Quincy. *Yosemite Valley Through the Stereoscope*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1902.
- Underwood, Bert. *A Stereograph Record of William McKinley as President of the United States*. New York & London: Underwood & Underwood, 1902.  
<https://archive.org/details/stereographrecor00unde/page/n5/mode/2up>
- Underwood, Elmer. Papers. Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, KS. <https://archives.lib.ku.edu/repositories/3/resources/682>
- Underwood & Underwood. Collection. Louis Walton Siple/American Museum of Photography Collection, Richard and Ronay Menschel Library, George Eastman Museum, Rochester, New York.  
<https://www.eastman.org/underwood-underwood-collection>
- Underwood & Underwood. Glass Stereograph Collection. Kenneth E. Behring Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.  
<https://sova.si.edu/record/NMAH.AC.0143>
- Underwood & Underwood. History of, Stereoscope, Photographs and Underwood Family History. Ottawa Public Library, KA, 1983. <https://www.ottawalibrary.org/>
- Underwood & Underwood. News Photo Archive memoranda book. George R. Reinhart Collection, Palm Springs, CA.
- Urry, John, and Jonas Larsen. *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*. London: Sage, 2011.
- Vincent, David. *Literacy and Popular Culture: England, 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Virga, Vincent. *Eyes of a Nation: A Visual History of the United States*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.
- Wallace, Aurora. *Newspapers and the Making of Modern America: A History*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2005.
- Warner, Mary Marien. *Photography: A Cultural History*. London: Laurence King, 2014.
- Washington Times, DC. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026749/>
- Waterhouse, Benjamin C. *The Land of Enterprise: A Business History of the United States*. Simon and Schuster: New York, 2017.

West, Nancy M. "Fantasy, Photography and the Marketplace: Oliver Wendell Holmes and the Stereoscope." *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 19, no. 3 (1996): 231-258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08905499608583425>.

Wiener, Joel H., ed. *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain 1850s – 1914*. New York: Greenwood, 1988.

Wiener, Joel H., and Mark Hampton, eds. *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-2000*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Wiener, Joel H. *The Americanization of the British Press, 1830s-1914: Speed in the Age of Transatlantic Journalism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Wiener, Joel H. "British and American Newspaper Journalism in the Nineteenth Century." Chap. 15 in *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth Century Britain*, edited by Joanne Shattock. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Werstein, Irving. *1898, The Spanish-American War: Told With Pictures*. New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966.

Wilder, Kelley. "Photographic Cataloguing." In *Documenting the World: Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record*, edited by Gregg Mitman and Kelley Wilder, 200-223. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Williams, Kevin. *Read All About It! A History of the British Newspaper*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Winter, Mitchell Arthur. "Optics of American Empire: James Ricalton and Stereoscopic Ethnography in Early Twentieth Century India, 1888-1907." MA diss., UC Santa Cruz, 2018. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5mv5s9zt>

Wright, Jeffrey. "The Origins and Development of British Press Photography 1884-1914." MSc diss., University College of Swansea, 1982.

Wright, Jeff. "The Myth in the Mirror." *British Journalism Review* 14, no. 3 (2003): 59-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F09564748030143013>

Yapp, Nick. *100 Days in Photographs: Pivotal Events That Changed the World*. Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 2007.