

Palestine 1914-18 from the Steven Spielberg Film Archives

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This presentation looks at pre-Mandatory Palestine during the First World War (1914-1918) through the cinema lens as portrayed in films held by the Steven Spielberg Film Archive including films that are not Archive copyright. The films can be classified into three categories: films directly pertaining to the War, films from this period describing settlement and development in Palestine and films produced later about this period. These include both documentaries and dramatizations.

The position of the 85,000 Jews living in Ottoman Palestine was precarious and Jews served both in Turkish labor battalions and in the Jewish Legion corps of the British Army. Sara and Aaron Aaronsohn established the extremely controversial Nili spy ring which provided the British Army with the necessary intelligence to launch its main attack in November 1917 via Beer Sheva. The Archive holds rare footage of the Australian light horse campaign in Beer Sheva, film of the Jewish Legion and General Allenby's entrance into Jerusalem, filmed by pioneer filmmaker Yaakov Ben Dov, fighting by the Indian corps in northern Land of Israel and British and Indian troops marching through Jerusalem.

Non war films from this period include shots of Hadassah nurses working in the Rothschild Hospital, shots of Augusta Victoria building and two films made by Yaakov Ben Dov which includes film of settlement in addition to the shots mentioned above.



The Archive also holds features, dramatizations and documentaries produced after WWI on aspects of the War. These include a dramatization in Baruch Agadati's *This Is The Land* (1934), a feature on the Australian campaign made in 1940 and a documentary on the Nili spy ring.