

Documenting the World

Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record

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A Journey without Maps: Film, Expeditionary Science, and the Growth of Development

GREGG MITMAN

Almost a decade ago, I learned of a private collection of expedition film that had been digitally restored: approximately four hours of raw footage, documenting the travels and encounters of an eight-member scientific team from Harvard University in the interior region of Liberia and the Belgian Congo in 1926. It was a rare find—a phrase suggestive of how central collection and extraction are to the practices of history, science, and film. Rare enough, in fact, that the *New York Times* found it worthy of an article, published in the spring of 1999. “Oh, no, Uncle Hal! Not the expedition movies again!” opened the article, which described the attic-like hunt for documents, photographs, and motion pictures that a nonprofit filmmaking company had embarked on in their quest to make a film about Harold Jefferson Coolidge, a Boston Brahmin, Harvard primatologist, and leader in the international conservation movement. Among all the expeditions Coolidge had accompanied in the 1920s and 1930s, the Harvard African Expedition to Liberia and the Belgian Congo, where Coolidge bagged his first gorilla, was most cloaked in mystery.¹

Within a matter of months, I found myself asked to serve as a scholar-consultant on the film project. Twice I agreed; twice I washed my hands of it: all the ethical and political challenges that haunt expeditionary footage—including questions of collaboration, power, exploitation, objectification, and racism—seemed insurmountable. Yet, as I lost interest in the documentary to be made, I found myself drawn, more and more, to the film document itself.

“Every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably,” wrote Walter Benjamin.² While the ghosts of “cinema’s collusion with colonialism” haunt this footage, they are not the only spirits that live there.³ The footage, as archive, embodies more than the objectifying gaze of science, more than an indictment of anthropology,

and to this we might add, all field science, as, in the words of Jean Rouch, “the eldest daughter of colonialism.”⁴ In the reaction between chemicals and light, a material trace of life, in movement and abundance, is left. It is the abundance of life—of people and landscapes transformed by an expedition on the move—that haunts me. It is an abundance filled with potentiality: of a landscape to be transformed; of economies, material flows, and livelihoods set in motion; of a contested path to development; and of a film never made. The shooting and later viewing of this expeditionary footage altered—physically, economically, and socially—landscapes and lives. As an object, resurrected and put into circulation once again, after being dead to the world for more than fifty years, it has, in the words of philosopher Michael Polanyi, “the power for manifesting itself in yet unthought ways.”⁵

In the last decade, film historians have opened up the relatively uncharted territory of early nonfiction film. And, in doing so, they have broken free from the origin stories of past luminaries—Robert Flaherty, John Grierson, and Pare Lorentz, among others—in which the history of nonfiction film moved along a predetermined course to become the art of documentary.⁶ The sheer volume of newsreels, lecture films, and scientific footage, which Grierson condescendingly referred to as “plain descriptions of natural material,” that exists in archives around the world suggest that we haven’t quite grasped what drove this impulse to document the world. Already a part of the 1898 Cambridge Torres Strait Expedition, still and moving pictures had become thoroughly ingrained into the practices of expeditionary science by the 1920s. Indeed, almost every expedition undertaken on behalf of the American Museum of Natural History after the First World War, from William Douglas Burden’s 1926 expedition to the Dutch East Indies in search of the Komodo dragon to Roy Chapman Andrews’ hunt for fossil dinosaurs in the Gobi desert, included a film and photographic record of landscapes, wildlife, and the customs and daily life of people encountered along the way.⁷ Sometimes the aspirations of industrialists and scientists combined. Citroën sponsored three expeditions across the Sahara, central Africa, and Asia in motor cars, accompanied by geographers, archaeologists, and cameramen documenting on film the physical and economic geography, ancient monuments, and ethnic groups in remote regions of the world. As Sir Percy Cox, president of the Royal Geographic Society, observed, the films were advertisements and testimony to the combined power of science and industry in “bringing various remote and uncivilized portions of the world within the purview and reach of civilization, not only in the interests of” Citroën, but “in the interests of science generally.”⁸ Citroën’s expeditions, like the Harvard African Expedition, undertaken on behalf of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, are suggestive of film’s place

in expanding the global economic reach of science and industry in the wake of the First World War. This essay embarks on a cinematic journey that follows the extracts of an expedition and of the many lives of a film never made. It is a journey attentive to the structures of political economy, social relations, and scientific practices through which this expeditionary footage came into being and to the vitality of film as both a material object and cultural artifact, created for one purpose, archived for another, and resurrected yet again for quite different reasons.

Documenting the World

In preparing an eight-month expedition to Liberia and the Belgian Congo, Richard Strong, director of Harvard's Department of Tropical Medicine, faced the most practical of questions: how best to allocate time, resources, and labor? Expeditions are, quite literally, weighty affairs, and the Harvard African Expedition was no exception. Devoting one person out of an eight-member team exclusively to take motion pictures and photographs for almost an entire year was no inconsequential decision. Consider the weight of equipment alone. The film stock was transported in 100-foot lots, 500 feet to one large tin. Eight tins, 4,000 feet, packed in a wooden box made up a 60-pound load, the maximum weight for a single porter. Loring Whitman, the Harvard African Expedition's official photographer, shot over 7,500 feet of film and nearly 600 photographs in Liberia. Two porters were needed to carry the film stock alone. Furthermore, this was but a small fraction of the resources and labor required for shooting in the field. And labor was in short supply. The bulk of photographic equipment was in chemicals. Developing film would prove an immense challenge in a country where relative humidity ranges from 90 to 100 percent in the rainy season, and where average rainfall along the coast can reach 200 inches per year. Frogs and mud in developing trays, film hung out to dry for days on end, rusted and mildewed cameras were just a few of the obstacles Whitman would encounter. Why, then, the investment in a film document?⁹

By the 1920s, travel and film, as film historian Paula Amad notes, had become "two of the most modern forms of experiencing the world."¹⁰ In the wake of the Treaty of Versailles, the world appeared rich not only in experiences, but also in valuable natural resources, to enterprising Americans. The Great War had ushered in a new geopolitical era and placed the United States, more squarely than ever before, in the center of emerging international politics in a colonial world. Among members of the Council on Foreign Relations, and in the pages of its journal, *Foreign Affairs*, a liberal American foreign policy was

crafted in the 1920s that linked American global ascendancy, not to territorial expansion, but to economic and cultural dominance abroad.¹¹

Film helped to usher in this new global economic reach. The consumption of the world through images and through natural resources went hand-in-hand. The popularity and commercial success of travelogue-expedition films in the '20s—from *Chang* to *Simba*—offered middle-class white Americans a tourist experience of foreign lands and peoples, and a thinly veiled justification of what "backward" countries might become through the investment of American capital, science, and medicine. "Marshaling the objective facts about places, regions, and countries," geographer Neil Smith argues, became a central strategy of a liberal internationalism in the 1920s that would "facilitate efficient policies of resource development, social and economic change, foreign policy, and the like."¹² In this geoeconomic view, which imagined the globe, in the words of geographer Mona Domosh, "as borderless, enabling the smooth ride of capital around the world" and American commercial expansion as benevolent, "facts of the land" from which companies could glean information about regions, resources, and trade potential became paramount.¹³

Documenting the world through photography and film was an instrumental part of this emerging geoeconomic view. In the 1927 film *General Motors around the World*, for example, made by seven camera crews who traveled more than 100,000 miles, dots on a map come to life, revealing to audiences the markets to be had—from the busy streets of Osaka, Japan, to the rugged roads of Lima, Peru—in the expansion of General Motors overseas trade.¹⁴ Similarly, when the physician and Harvard African Expedition member George Shattuck edited the 1935 edition of the Harvard Traveler's Club *Handbook of Travel*, which included a number of chapters on hygiene, natural history collecting, and other subjects written by Shattuck's Liberian travel companions, he included a lengthy chapter on still and motion picture photography with a focus on the tropics. Designed as an indispensable guide for the "intelligent" traveler, the *Handbook of Travel* was to make the "casual pleasure trip of permanent and real value" through the "gathering of objects and facts."¹⁵ With the introduction of Bell & Howell's spring-driven 35 mm Eyemo motion picture camera in 1925, the preferred choice of the Harvard African Expedition, the collecting of facts about people and the land became possible, even for amateurs like Whitman, a first-year medical student and head photographer for Harvard's student newspaper, *The Crimson*.

During the 1920s, before documentary as a self-defined genre had come into being, multiple ways of seeing were at play in the field. In shots that Whitman took of expedition members with their pets, we see stylistic conventions that had come to characterize the evolving tradition of commercial

travelogue-expedition films. We also know from correspondence that Strong sought out the advice of Terry Ramsey, who had edited and titled Martin and Osa Johnson's blockbuster, *Simba*, to further his hopes of turning the "raw" footage of Liberia into a "creative treatment of actuality."¹⁶

But Whitman's films never became part of either the economy or the history of the motion picture industry. In the late 1920s, they circulated among a network of white, wealthy, mostly Harvard-educated physicians, scientists, politicians, and business leaders—at luncheons of the Harvard Traveler's Club, trustee meetings of the American Museum of Natural History, and private gatherings of the Round Table in St. Louis, where travel, business, and adventure were subjects of the day.¹⁷ These networks of viewers were the same power networks that extended the reach of American business into Africa and Latin America in the 1910s and 1920s. Later, the films survived only as home movies. Loring Whitman's son recalls how his father would treat the family on special occasions to a showing of some of his African movies, before they were put into family storage for over fifty years. The footage is thus both artifact and evidence of how the logic and interests of commerce, science, and travel shaped observational modes of seeing as the expedition moved through the Liberian landscape.

Since its inception in 1913, Harvard's Department of Tropical Medicine was indebted to the financial backing of individuals like William Cameron Forbes, former governor general of the Philippines and chairman of the board of United Fruit Company, and Edward Atkins, a major investor behind the transformation of the Cuban sugar cane industry. Indeed, in a letter written to Forbes in 1915, Strong referred to the work of the department as "something in the nature of a trust."¹⁸ It was an apt description. Almost every expedition Strong led to Latin America in the 1910s and 1920s as department head and director of the Laboratories of the Hospitals and of Research Work at United Fruit was aimed at securing "exact information concerning tropical America, one of the few large areas of the world now awaiting development." And film was already becoming an instrumental part of American commercial and scientific expansion in the tropics. Oakes Ames, Harvard professor of economic botany, expressed his opinion to Strong in 1915 that the "moving picture machine" was the only way to satisfactorily educate students in the "operations of sugar production, the manufacture of tea," and other commercial processes in the tropics that they hoped to teach in courses that would eventually become part of Harvard's Institute of Tropical Biology and Medicine.¹⁹ The documentation of "raw materials into consumable goods," as Tom Gunning notes, had become a staple of actuality films prior to World War I, and enacted a basic narrative of industrial capitalism. Such subjects

continued to be important in scientific and industrial film, long past the elevation of documentary to a high art form by Grierson and others in the 1920s.²⁰

Even before Strong and his colleagues set foot in Liberia, before Whitman picked up his camera and exposed the first roll of film to the tropical sun, certain ways of looking structured how the expedition moved across the landscape and altered the lives of people in its path. And it was a view bound to a new geoeconomic imagination made possible by the opening of the Panama Canal and the ascendancy of American economic expansion in the aftermath of the Great War.

Surveying the Field

In the fall of 1923, in a confidential memo now located in the Strong archives, C. F. Baker, dean of agriculture at the University of the Philippines, alerted the Hon. W. Cameron Forbes to a situation that would set in motion the Harvard African Expedition: "The United States is now using more than a billion dollars gold worth of tropical products per year, and many of these products are essential in basic industries . . . The most important of all these products . . . is rubber."²¹

Americans owned 85 percent of the world's automobiles in the early 1920s, and consumed 75 percent of the world's rubber supply, 80 percent of which went into automobile tires. Yet the United States grew only 1 percent of the world's rubber under its flag. Britain, which controlled 77 percent of the world's rubber production, had a virtual monopoly on the industry. In 1923, under pressure from Harvey Firestone, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$500,000 to survey and find suitable growing areas in the world to break American dependence on Britain's control of the world rubber trade. "American oil men had been prospecting and operating in foreign lands for years," argued Firestone, "but the rubber industry has been backward in caring for its own needs."²² Although Firestone initially set his sights on the Philippines as the place to grow rubber under the American flag, immigration law and property restrictions there quickly dashed those hopes. Firestone subsequently turned to Liberia. By 1925, three separate agreements granting Firestone rights to an old British rubber plantation at Mt. Barclay for experiments in rubber production, a ninety-nine-year lease of up to one million acres of rubber-producing land, and a \$300,000 commitment by the Liberian government to improve the harbor in Monrovia were making their way through the U.S. State Department. It was at that moment that Richard Strong, on his own initiative, showed up at Firestone's doorstep.²³

Significant natural, cultural, and political obstacles stood in the way of Firestone's success in Liberia—not the least of which included endemic human and plant diseases that threatened labor production and the healthy survival and growth of imported rubber plants. Strong had spent the better part of a decade studying tropical diseases in Latin America in the interests of United Fruit. Africa proved a new challenge to American commerce and medicine. Within six months after his meeting with Firestone, Strong had organized an eight-member team that included some of the best minds in medical entomology, tropical medicine and botany, mammalogy, and parasitology to conduct a four-month biological and medical survey of Liberia, along with travel to the Belgian Congo for comparative purposes.

Although territorial maps, wedded to a geopolitical view of empire, had been central to the surveying enterprises of nineteenth-century scientific expeditions, their production and usefulness were becoming antiquated to the field sciences and to an emerging view of economic imperialism.²⁴ Not a single accurate map existed for the interior of Liberia when Strong began organizing the expedition. The best the U.S. State Department could come up with was an unpublished, “unreliable” 1916 map prepared by the War College Division. It was a map the British novelist Graham Greene described in his own Liberian travelogue as so “inaccurate—large blank spaces were filled with the word ‘Cannibals’—that it would be useless, perhaps even dangerous, to follow.” No one on the expedition was trained in geography, and not a single person had extensive mapping or survey experience. And yet they journeyed for more than seven hundred miles in Liberia through dense tropical jungle on foot and along trails and uncompleted roads with but a compass, pedometer, and porters as surveying instruments and guides, yet burdened themselves with cameras, tripods, and film.²⁵

The motion picture camera had displaced the surveyor's theodolite on the Harvard African Expedition, as it had elsewhere across the globe. In the creation of Britain's Empire Marketing Board in 1926, for example, films, not maps, were the tools enlisted to promote scientific research and economic development in the British colonies. They were evidence of a changing world. As Thomas Baird, of the EMB's film unit remarked, “Schools were teaching geography very well with maps, globes, and wall pictures,” but they had “no instrument of observation which could provide the basis for discussion of the vital issues of modern life.”²⁶ “The patient and laborious accumulation of facts, the skillful enlistment of scientific research, and economic investigation” were all critical, argued the secretary of the EMB, to a new “biological conception of government” emerging in the interwar years that saw living people, not “in terms of machinery and organization,” but in “terms of growth

and nurture.” Ecology and tropical medicine—aided by the motion picture camera and the microscope—became the new agents of economic empires.²⁷

The survey of tropical environments, and their transformation into productive lands, required a different cartography from the mapping of territory and conquest. This was a cartography of populations and processes. Surveying economy, both natural and human, dictated a different mode of observation than mapping physical space. The expedition moved through particular landscapes, surveying, sampling, and transforming them. Movement was, after all, the principle of development that guided expanding economies, living organisms, and, one might add, film technology. The motion picture camera, like the expedition, and American capital, was always on the move. Journeying up the Du River, or panning across the landscape—and such pans are numerous in the surviving footage—the viewer becomes part of an unfolding landscape.

In this journey without maps, a view of a movement forward in time, rather than backward, prevails. The mission of the camera on the Harvard African Expedition is not one of salvage ethnography. If it is a record of the past, it is only out of service to the future. A discourse of development, of envisioning what a landscape and people will become, is pervasive in Strong's diaries and official record of the expedition. Through the vision of Harvey Firestone and the promise of science and medicine, “a new era of prosperity in the development of the country and the welfare of its people as a whole” awaited Liberia, wrote Strong.²⁸ The motion picture camera captured more effectively than any static map or still photograph this anticipation of what lay ahead. When Whitman climbed atop a “hill in back of camp” at Firestone Plantation #3 to get a “bird's eye view of things,” he was witness to a landscape in transition (figure 6.1). “It is rather remarkable to realize that this whole clearing was virgin forest in November,” he wrote in his journal. In the juxtaposition of Plantation #3 footage against similar panoramas of the Liberian jungle, the viewer senses what Liberia will become.²⁹ At about the same time, Firestone sponsored its own motion picture expedition to provide “educators and students” a “moving panorama” that was a “living record” of Liberia's “changing world.”³⁰

By the 1920s, film had come to play an instrumental role in the visualization of life, from the cellular features of the microscopic world to the panoramic view of ecological communities. We should be careful, as Hannah Landecker reminds us, not to decouple scientific, cinematic, and, I would add, economic practices from one another. Film's affinity for life itself became a focus of attraction and contemplation.³¹ Henri Bergson's vitalism, which so informed Siegfried Kracauer's association of film with the “flow of life's rendition of the



FIGURE 6.1. Large-scale clearing for the Firestone plantations, capturing a “birds-eye view” of a landscape in transition. Loring Whitman. 6 August 1926. Courtesy of Indiana University Liberian Collections.

everyday,” was itself beholden to turn-of-the-century life sciences, and to a philosophy, not of machines, but of living beings.³² Bergson rejected a mechanical notion of time as a series of discrete, divisible moments—captured in the still plates of Étienne-Jules Marey’s chronophotograph. Time was instead an endless flow. “Duration,” Bergson wrote, “is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances.”³³ Here was an organic notion of time and development, one that echoed across the human and life sciences. This penchant for organicism was coupled, I suggest, with what visual anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards describes as “expansive visualizations” where the control of excess in the visualization of the object of study gave way to an engagement with abundance, the scientific potential of the messiness of everyday human existence.³⁴

The practices of looking at work on the Harvard African Expedition give us a glimpse into a vision of development coming into view. Reordering the abundance of life in the tropics into a new path of development and into a new integrated economy of nature and nation through tropical biology and medicine was Strong’s mission. But while he saw the luxuriousness of life in Liberia as its greatest asset, it was also, in his view, its greatest impediment to progress. As they moved from village to town, Strong and his colleagues were continually on the watch for tropical diseases. The following account from Strong’s diary is a description of a typical day:

I went to Congotown Saturday . . . The inhabitants live in either mud thatched houses or palm thatched houses in groups of a dozen or so or scattered singly. I had Whitman take some pictures. I made an important finding from a medical standpoint. Among a group of people gradually collecting around us, some forty people, I noticed one girl of some 8 years of age who appeared sickly to me and I asked a woman who proved to be her foster mother (really a slave child) what was the matter with her. She said she had gravel. I gave the woman a clean bottle and told her to take the child away and get me a specimen of her urine, as from her history I suspected she might have Schistosomiasis. The woman returned several times without the specimen but finally by persistence one was obtained. This morning, after centrifuging the specimen and examining microscopically, numerous motile miracidia which had just hatched from the ova, as well as numerous lateral spined ova were found. This is our first official case in Africa and the first definite knowledge of the disease in Liberia. . . . I have asked George to get this child into one of the mission hospitals and cure her with one of our new antimony compounds. . . . In another part of the town George called my attention to a disease of the Mandioca (cassava) plants growing about the houses. . . . I took Whitman back yesterday afternoon and had him make some photographs of the diseased and healthy plants.³⁵

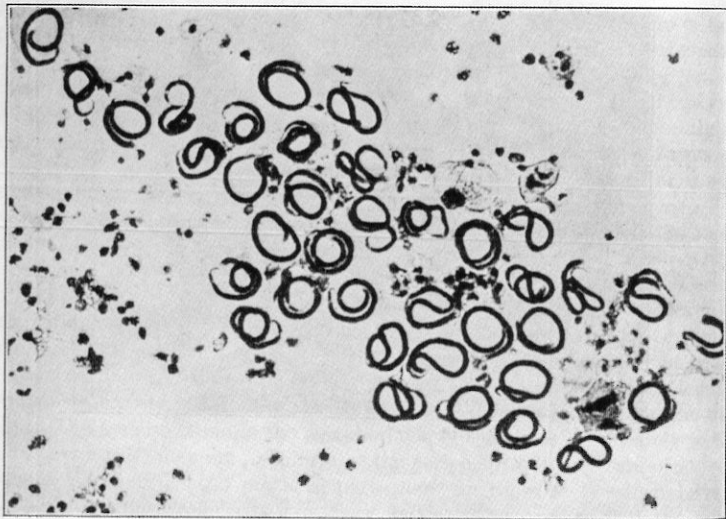
The passage from Strong’s diary and Whitman’s accompanying still photographs offer a look into the medical gaze at work on the expedition, one that foregrounds the ecology of disease in the landscape (figure 6.2).

In the surveying, sampling, and objectification of life on the expedition—be it people, plants, or animals—photography and film served different ends. The medical photographs that Strong instructed Whitman to take hark back to the disciplined eye and control of visual excess so characteristic of nineteenth-century anthropometric photography.³⁶ Whitman’s medical photographs were beholden to a static taxonomy of tropical diseases, in which the outward signs of pathology were connected visually, often on a single page, with the hidden, interior spaces of bodily tissue, where parasites such as *Onchocerca volvulus* dwelled. It constitutes a gathering of facts, not about the living, but of the soon-to-be-dead. The photographs reveal an eye searching for diseased landscapes, whereby tropical pathologies would have to be overcome, in order for Liberia’s natural resources—people, plants, and animals—to be fully realized.³⁷ Indeed, Strong regarded the high rate and severity of malaria infection along the coast, and the prevalence of tropical diseases such as yellow fever, schistosomiasis, and onchocerciasis, among others to be among the greatest obstacles to development.

Maintaining a healthy population of workers was the greatest impediment to the commercial expansion of American industry in the tropics. This would



No. 182. — Tumor produced by *Onchocerca volvulus*, Case 498



No. 183. — Photomicrograph of larval form of *Onchocerca volvulus*; moist film preparation made from cut section of tumor

FIGURE 6.2. Whitman's still photography disciplined excess in rendering a visual taxonomy of tropical disease. From Richard P. Strong, ed., *The African Republic of Liberia and the Belgian Congo, Based on the Observations Made and Material Collected During the Harvard African Expedition, 1926–1927* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), vol. 1, p. 246.

be the payoff of tropical medicine. And still photography offered a catalogue of the diseases that would potentially threaten Firestone's foreign investment.

The moving pictures Whitman took, in contrast to his still photography, served quite different ends. Unlike photography, film captured the movement of life in all its diverse forms. Movement is inherent to life and development. It is also inherent to labor and capital. But without labor, the material flows necessary to set Liberia on a new path of economic growth could not be set in motion. Strong understood this well. Although raw materials were abundant in the tropics, labor was not. Liberians at work—constructing roads, weaving cotton, pounding rice—dominate the images contained in the expedition films. Why the preoccupation with people at work on a “biological and medical survey of Liberia”?

Documenting labor in the field figured into Strong's assessment of the merits of different populations as a potential workforce for Firestone. In the official published record of the expedition, Strong included a lengthy discussion of the ethnological groupings of interior Liberian peoples—Mandingo, Kru, and Gola. His valuation of different ethnic groups within what was an explicit hierarchical classification scheme was dependent on blood relations, dress, literacy, religion, and craft skills. The Vai, a subgroup of the Mandingo, were, Strong reasoned, “superior intellectually” and “one of the most progressive groups in the native population.” Their knowledge of Arabic, their own written language, their skills in farming and weaving all made them, Strong wrote, “an important civilized and important civilizing element in Liberia.”³⁸ Compare this description to what Strong had to say about Americo-Liberians, who ruled the country and lived on the coast: “the Americo-Liberians are not good agriculturalists or gardeners. Physically they are lazy . . . Nothing of any importance has been done by [them] to improve the conditions of the natives. On the other hand, much has been done which has actually retarded their development. Liberia,” Strong concluded, “cannot be successfully developed without the aid of interior tribes.”³⁹

The visual survey of labor amassed by Whitman did more than offer up evidence for Strong's subjective valuation of ethnic groups and their potential worth for Firestone. (By 1928, 20,000 Liberian men were working 35,000 acres of Firestone rubber plantations.) The footage, taken as a whole, also offered a record of labor as a scarce commodity in the Liberian interior.

Male labor *was* in short supply. In the eastern and southern sections of Liberia, the expedition resorted to the use of women porters because of the absence of men in the villages. Thousands of men from Sinoe and Maryland counties in the southeastern part of Liberia were being shipped through coerced labor recruitment in the 1920s to work the cocoa plantations on the



FIGURE 6.3. The motion picture footage and still photographs that Whitman took of road building in the interior became part of a documentary record Strong began to collect of forced labor practices. Loring Whitman, 28 September 1926, still photograph. Courtesy of Indiana University Liberian Collections.

Spanish island of Fernando Po. Extensive road building using *corvée* labor drew another estimated 6,000 men from their local villages during the same decade.⁴⁰ Marcus Garvey, leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the back-to-Africa movement, lambasted the military and political supremacy of black Americo-Liberians “who keep the Natives poor, hungry, shelterless and naked, while they parade themselves in the tropical sun in English frock coats and evening dress.”⁴¹ Strong himself was accumulating evidence of conditions of oppression by the Americo-Liberian government on interior ethnic groups. The footage of road crews, women working on government farms, women in pawn, and portage of district commissioners became part of the increasing weight of documentary evidence Strong amassed to convince U.S. government officials to take a more active stand against labor abuses in Liberia (figure 6.3).

The cascade of events, and the complex racial politics and motives that led to a 1930 investigation by the League of Nations into the existence of slavery and forced labor in Liberia, are beyond the scope of this essay.⁴² Suffice it to say that Strong was deeply troubled and moved into action by these

encounters of labor abuse documented on film. Before departing from Monrovia in November 1926, Strong wrote to Assistant Secretary of State William Castle: “The original purpose of my visit to Liberia was solely to make a biological and medical survey of a little known country. The distressing conditions found to exist here, particularly in the interior, . . . have been a very great surprise to me, and I feel it has become my duty upon my return to take up with the Department of State a discussion of the situation.”⁴³ Strong followed through on his plan. His friend and patron William Cameron Forbes arranged for Strong to be an overnight guest of President Coolidge at the White House in February 1928. It was on that occasion that Strong impressed upon President Coolidge the conditions of the people living in the interior of the country and the “excessive abuses” inflicted upon them by the government’s Liberian Frontier Force, without any “redress.”⁴⁴ Castle replied shortly after the meeting that the “President was most interested and that those talks have very much roused his concern for that country.”⁴⁵ At the same time, Strong went public with his accusations, publishing an editorial in the *Boston Herald*, arguing that the conditions of forced labor “are not such as would receive either the approbation or the respect of the civilized world.”⁴⁶ Eighteen months later, on 8 June 1929, the U.S. State Department dispatched a memorandum to the American minister in Liberia for delivery to the president of Liberia that would set the League of Nations inquiry into motion. It read: “I am directed by the Secretary of State to advise your Excellency that there have come to the attention of the Government of the United States from several sources reports bearing reliable evidence of authenticity which definitely indicate that existing conditions incident to the so-called ‘export’ of labor from Liberia to Fernando Po have resulted in the development of a system which seems hardly distinguishable from organized slave trade, and that in the enforcement of this system the services of the Liberian Frontier Force, and the services and influences of certain high Government officials, are constantly and systematically used.”⁴⁷ As the League of Nations investigation into slavery heated up, Strong released still photos from the documentary footage of forced labor practices to the press, resulting in exposés in the *Boston Sunday Post* and the *Boston Globe* (figure 6.4).⁴⁸

But before we resurrect this footage as a document of human rights abuses, we also need to remind ourselves of the conditions of its production. Firestone had overestimated the ease with which he could recruit a labor force to work on the plantations. His success in securing workers depended greatly upon whether the Liberian government could be pressured into abandoning its lucrative export trade in, and practice of, forced labor.⁴⁹ Strong was in Liberia, in part, to help Firestone secure a healthy labor force. He was also keenly aware of

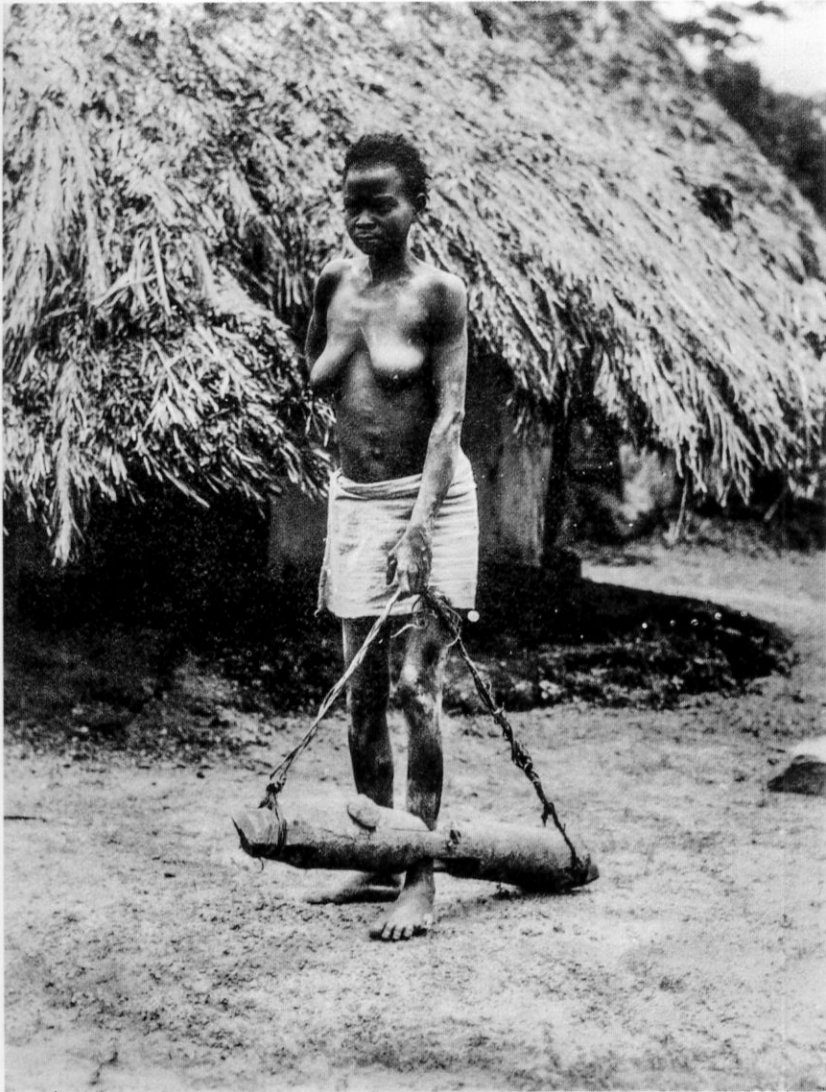


FIGURE 6.4. This still photograph of a woman in pawn, also captured on film, found its way into the *Boston Sunday Post* in Strong's effort to mobilize American support for the League of Nations investigation into slavery in Liberia. Loring Whitman, 6 September 1926. Courtesy of Indiana University Liberian Collections.

Firestone's labor needs. Although Strong may have been moved to action by what he believed to be humanitarian intentions, he himself resorted to forced labor practices. As the expedition reached Towya, a town near the southeastern Liberia coast, expedition members became desperate. Few men could be found in the villages, and those hired often ran away, abandoning their cargo.

At times, Whitman alone transported the loads across rivers that proved unmanageable for shorter women and children. When they finally secured a group of men, they tied them up with strings or vines. "It was quite a merry caravan," Whitman wrote in his diary. "Eighteen men in chains (I mean ropes) with three white men armed to the teeth—ready to shoot to kill—a pretty picture." Whitman couldn't help but reflect on how the image was not unlike "years ago when many such scenes took place," where "whites with whips and crude guns drove their way thru the forests: the slave traders."⁵⁰ But it was an image he chose not to document on film.

Intimate Resistances

Surveying the landscape for disease and labor was but a first step in the projected transformation of Liberia's people and economy. The motion picture camera documented the world of Liberia as it was—or so expedition members believed—and projected into the future an anticipation of what it might become. The narrative of development was intrinsic to the expedition's mission; it sought more than just a record, more than just a survey; it also sought to intervene. The expedition sometimes slowed its movement. At stopping points along the journey, observation and intervention intertwined. In Kru-town on the outskirts of Monrovia, on Plantations # 2 and #3, in Gbarnga, and in Tappita, among other villages, medical clinics were set up, populations were sampled, and experimental drugs were given.

In these close-up encounters, where something needed to be extracted from another's life—blood, urine, tumors, or even a simple photograph—the mapping of population and processes that so informed the visual and disciplinary logic of the expedition broke down. And it broke down because "the magical fact of the camera is," as Grierson noted long ago, "that it picks out what the director does not see at all, that it gives emphasis where he did not think emphasis existed."⁵¹ Unlike Whitman's medical photographs, so reminiscent of practices in nineteenth-century visual anthropology, where the excessive inscription of the photograph was tightly controlled to render it a scientific document, in his moving pictures, Whitman documented life in all its abundance, contingency, and resistance. Whitman's diary is full of descriptions where the expedition had to cajole people into getting pictures or samples taken. In Kru-town, "we had to coax our subjects to have their spleens palpated and their ears pricked," recorded Whitman.⁵² The inquiring looks of children, the fleeting stare of a woman, are reminders that extraction always entails some form of resistance (figure 6.5). And there were many layers of extraction at work on the expedition: from the taking of photographs to the harvesting



FIGURE 6.5. The fleeting stare of a woman is a reminder of the intimate resistances and lives of individual subjects present in Whitman's motion picture record. Loring Whitman, Monrovia, n.d.. Still from 35 mm Eyemo camera. Courtesy of Indiana University Liberian Collections.

of blood, tumors, and latex. The Harvard African Expedition was in Liberia, after all, in the service of American extractive industry.

In these intimate resistances, the logic that treats humans as capital—as biological reserves of rare diseases or cheap labor—is unsettled. Strong saw biological abstractions where the camera captured elements of individual human lives. The camera, as Deborah Poole suggests, had introduced “the twin menace of intimacy and contingency” in early ethnographic, and I might add, expedition film. Consequently, it also introduced “the possibility (however remote) of acknowledging the coevalness and, thus, the humanity of their [the scientists’] racial subjects.”⁵³ Whitman never achieved, and never really tried, effacing himself from behind the camera lens. He never searched for complete transparency; the countless exchanges of looks between Whitman and his photographed subjects make that clear. Indeed, his footage resembles home movies more than an official documentary record of the Harvard African Expedition. Like other travelogues of the period, Whitman's footage often “captured moments in which interacting in the traffic of daily life takes precedence over acting in an official capacity.”⁵⁴ It leaves open the possibility of recovering the stories of those individuals whose lives and the places they called home were recorded on film.

Among the 476 still photographs of people, customs, crafts, diseases, and landscapes in the published account of the expedition, only one contains a caption with an actual person's name (figure 6.6). The caption reads, “Plenyono Wolo, son of a Vai chief, and his wife.” In the Harvard University archives, another photograph exists. It too, is of Plenyono Wolo, not dressed in allegedly Vai garb, but in Harvard graduation robes (figure 6.7). In the juxtaposition of these two shots—one of the basic elements of film grammar—a story, quite different from the photo caption, is set in motion.



FIGURE 6.6. Plenyono Gbe Wolo dressed by Strong in a different life. Loring Whitman, 23 July 1926, still photograph. Courtesy of Indiana University Liberian Collections.

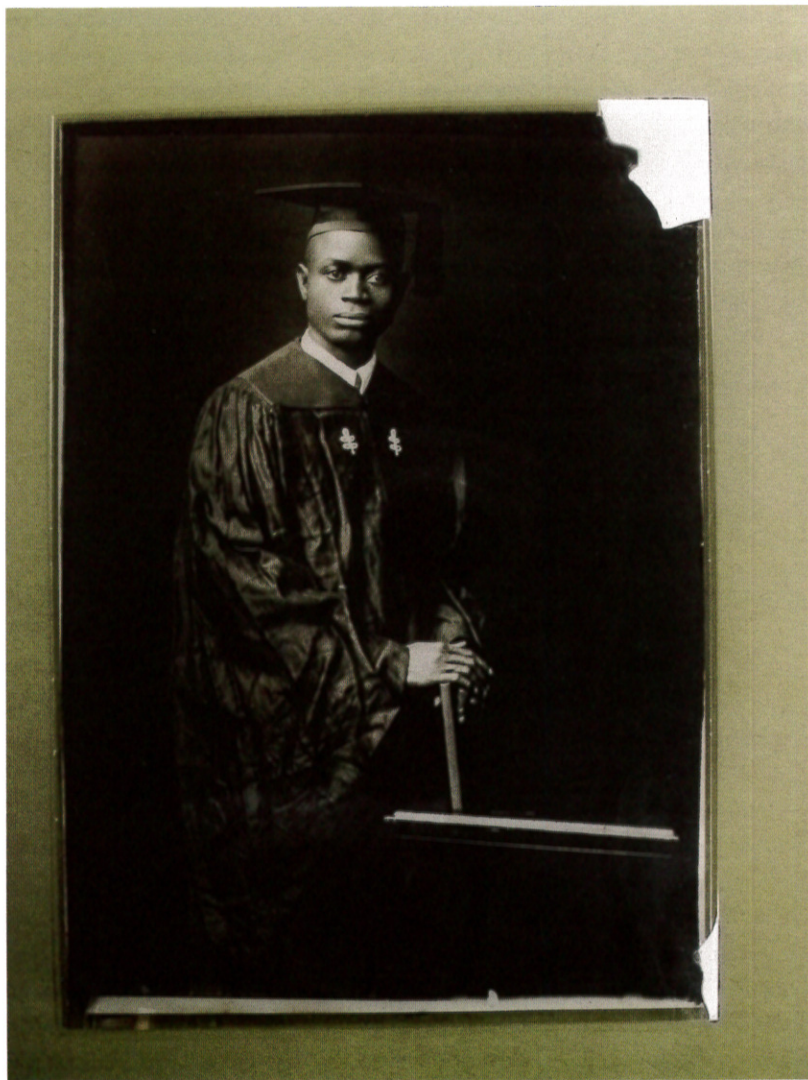


FIGURE 6.7. Plenyono Gbe Wolo in Harvard graduation robes. 1917. Plenyono Gbe Wolo Papers. Courtesy of Harvard University Archives.

Wolo was not the son of a Vai chief. He was the son of an esteemed paramount chief of the Kru people. He was educated by American missionaries, worked his way on a boat to America, completed a B.A. with honors from Harvard University in 1917, earned an A.M. in 1919 from Teachers College, Columbia University, and received a B.D. degree at Union Theological Seminary

in 1922. In 1919, he helped conduct an economic survey in Liberia for American commercial interests. Three years later, he returned to Liberia, with financial backing from a number of American patrons, including Harvard president Abbott Lawrence Lowell, to open a day school in his home village of Grand Cess. His patrons believed that Wolo, like his Harvard brethren in science, or American missionaries in finance, had returned to Liberia as an emissary of American education and religion to guide “his people” into the “acceptance of such elements of . . . civilization as are adapted to his people’s psychology and situation.”⁵⁵ But neither Wolo’s patrons nor Strong displayed much, if any, respect or appreciation for Wolo’s own motives and aspirations in returning to Liberia. To them, he was an instrument of American commercial and educational interests abroad. Correspondence among his American patrons reveals their fears that he had, upon his return, “succumbed to the drag of native inertia” or “reverted” to the ways of witch doctors and devil spirits.⁵⁶

But Wolo had hopes and desires of his own. He had already navigated a difficult road. The Methodist missionaries he was educated by looked upon him, and other indigenous peoples of Liberia, as “children.”⁵⁷ He worked his way through Harvard as a waiter in hotels and dinner clubs, reminded that the upper-class white men he served were his classmates but never his equal in their eyes. Intrigued by the plight of blacks in America, he traveled to North Carolina, working for a summer as a common laborer, to see and experience the realities of segregation in the Jim Crow South. He returned home to Liberia to confront the harsh reality that the “moral attitude of the United States toward” his country worked “chiefly for the advantage of” those in power and not for the welfare of his people. The Kru had been locked for over a century in conflict with the Americo-Liberian government, whose ruthless treatment and repressive native policies led to a Kru rebellion in 1915. The revolt was violently suppressed by the Liberian Frontier Force, backed by an American gunboat. Despite, or perhaps because of, this history, Wolo worked hard to enlist the interests of the United States government and industry in ways that would leverage greater power, educational opportunities, and economic security for the interior peoples of Liberia.⁵⁸

Although Wolo brokered many of the arrangements in Liberia for the Harvard African Expedition, walked with Strong through the streets of Monrovia, and sat among his Harvard “brothers” at a dinner organized by the Liberian president, Charles Dunbar King, Strong never acknowledged what the camera recorded: the traces of Plenyono Gbe Wolo’s individual life. Wolo’s biography did not quite fit with Strong’s mental and visual map of the ethnic groups of Liberia, in which the Kru people are “deemed not particularly

intelligent as a race,” and are only ever displayed photographically as medical subjects.⁵⁹ Perhaps Kru was not a lineage Strong believed suited to a Harvard alum, and so, whether purposefully or born of disregard, he dressed Wolo in a different life. Indeed, it is striking how absent Wolo is from the expedition footage: two still photos and a fleeting glance of him in footage of a medical clinic in Krutown, which Wolo helped arrange, are all that exist in the documentary record the expedition left behind. But such has often been the case in expeditionary records, where the critical labor of go-betweens, instrumental in the production of scientific knowledge, is all but erased.⁶⁰

The magic of the camera, revealed in the haunting expedition footage and still photographs, is not that it recorded an objective, scientific record of Liberia, as Strong had intended. The magic is that it recorded the expedition's own subjective valuation of life in the service of capital. And, in the abundance of life that Whitman captured on film lies the potential for multiple retellings of the lives and places silenced and erased from the official documentary record of the Harvard African Expedition.

Epilogue

What are the consequences of reanimating the life of the Harvard expedition footage, which had long been dead and forgotten? In 2012, I traveled to Liberia with the expedition footage on a laptop and an iPhone. I was accompanied by Emmanuel Urey, a member of the Kpelle people, who grew up in Liberia during a brutal fourteen-year civil war. Through a triangulation of the motion picture record with expedition diaries, we began retracing the expedition journey. We were eager to find what historical memory remained of people and places documented in the expedition footage, whose voices had been silenced, first by the expedition members themselves, and then by the ravages of war.

Everywhere we traveled, paramount chiefs, clan chiefs, elders, and local villagers clamored to watch the footage and share their stories with us. We met a paramount chief who cried upon seeing his father alive once more on film. “My heart is like my face smiling,” he explained to us in Kpelle. We met women eager to reclaim the scenes of traditional weaving practices documented by the Harvard expedition as they seek to revive craft traditions in their efforts toward cultural renewal and women's empowerment. We met communities of people, like the Bassa, evicted from their ethnic homelands with the arrival of Firestone, who spoke painfully upon watching traditional dances being performed by their great grandfathers and grandmothers, of the wounds yet to heal. Even Emmanuel's father, who was around sixteen years of age



FIGURE 6.8. The many lives of the expedition footage. Upon seeing the footage, Nyamah Yarkpawolo recounts to Emmanuel Urey a story about the dancing and singing of Kpelle songs that existed before the arrival of the radio. Sarita Siegel, 25 June 2013. Still from Canon XF300.

when the expedition passed within a day's walk to his village, relived in the memory of his body the scenes of building roads by hand.

The Harvard expeditionary footage of Liberia, once a valuable scientific commodity, has thus taken on a new life in post-civil war Liberia. It is a life imbued with new cultural and historical meanings. “Once unleashed from their historical moment and original intention,” as Faye Ginsburg notes in this volume, films and photographs “often promiscuously violate social and epistemological boundaries; they can move rapidly from the domain of scientific records to that of legal evidence or to the realm of personal narrative, accumulating a kind of biography in the process.”⁶¹ We do not yet know where this new life of the expedition footage will end. But we do know that in this second life, it will generate stories and future imaginings told for the first time by descendants of ancestors whose voices might come alive again and who were much more than mere objects of the expedition's scientific gaze.

Notes

1. Carey Goldberg, “Filmmakers Study a Man Who Studied Apes,” *New York Times*, 23 March 1999.
2. Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” in *Walter Benjamin Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 255.
3. Paula Amad, “Cinema's ‘Sanctuary’: From Pre-Documentary to Documentary Film in Albert Kahn's ‘Archives de la Planète’ (1908–1931),” *Film History* 13 (2001): 138–59.

4. Quoted in Mike Eaton, ed., *Anthropology-Reality-Cinema: The Films of Jean Rouch* (London: BFI, 1979), 33.
5. Quoted in Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, "Cytoplasmic Particles: The Trajectory of a Scientific Object," in *Biographies of Scientific Objects*, ed. Lorraine Daston (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 294.
6. See, e.g., Paula Amad, *Counter-Archive: Film, the Everyday, and Albert Kahn's Archives de la Planète* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Vinzenz Hediber and Patrick Vongerau, eds., *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009); Daan Hertogs and Nico de Klerk, eds., *Uncharted Territory: Essays on Early Non-Fiction Film* (Amsterdam: Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1997); Karen Ishizuka and Patricia Zimmerman, eds., *Mining the Home Movie: Excavations in Histories and Memories* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008); Hannah Landecker, "Cellular Features: Microcinematography and Film Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2005): 903–37; Kirsten Osther, *Medical Visions: Producing the Patient through Film, Television, and Imaging Technologies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Alexandra Schneider, ed., *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Patricia R. Zimmerman, "Geographies of Desire: Cartographies of Gender, Race, Nation, and Empire in Amateur Film," *Film History* 8 (1996): 85–98.
7. See, e.g., Gregg Mitman, *Reel Nature: America's Romance with Wildlife on Film*, 2nd ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).
8. Joseph Hakin, "In Persia and Afghanistan with the Citroën Trans-Asiatic Expedition," *Geographical Journal* 83 (1934): 361. On film and the Torres Strait Expedition, see Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology, and Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). On the Citroën expeditions, see Peter J. Bloom, *French Colonial Documentary: Mythologies of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 65–94.
9. Information on film stock and transport was calculated from notes in Loring Whitman's diary (hereafter LWD), courtesy of Randal Whitman, and Loring Whitman, "Photography," in *The African Republic of Liberia and the Belgian Congo, Based on the Observations Made and Material Collected During the Harvard African Expedition, 1926–1927*, ed. Richard P. Strong (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), v. 2, 1048–52. While Loring Whitman was the official photographer, Harold Coolidge also shot private "home" movies on the expedition.
10. Amad, "Cinema's 'Sanctuary,'" 143.
11. On this emerging geoeconomic view, see Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Emily Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900–1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
12. Smith, *American Empire*, 184.
13. Mona Domosh, "Geoeconomic Imaginations and Economic Geography in the Early 20th Century," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103 (2013): 944–66.
14. "Auto's Varied Uses Shown," *New York Times*, 27 January 1928. See also "Auto Film Shows World on Wheels," *New York Times*, 26 January 1928; Rick Prelinger, *The Field Guide to Sponsored Films* (San Francisco: National Film Preservation Foundation, 2006).
15. Glover M. Allen, ed., *Harvard Traveler's Club Handbook of Travel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917).

16. The phrase comes from John Grierson's definition of documentary. John Grierson, in *Grierson on Documentary*, ed. and compiled by Forsyth Hardy (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 13.
17. See, e.g., George Shattuck to Richard Strong, 29 September 1927, E. Mallinckrodt to Richard Strong, 15 December 1927, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, box 2, Richard Pearson Strong Papers, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard University (hereafter RPSP).
18. Richard Strong to William Cameron Forbes, 1 November 1915, bMS AM 1364 (278), William Cameron Forbes Papers, Harvard University (hereafter WCFP).
19. Thomas Barbour to Richard Strong, 24 May 1922, "Institute for Research in Tropical America," box 20, RPSP; Oakes Ames to Richard Strong, 28 January 1915, box 20, "Ames, Oakes Folder," RPSP.
20. Tom Gunning, "Before Documentary: Early Non-Fiction Films and the View Aesthetic," in *Uncharted Territory: Essays on Early Non-Fiction Film*, ed. Daan Hertogs and Nico de Klerk (Amsterdam: Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1997), 17.
21. Baker to Forbes, 3 September 1923, "Ames, Oakes Folder," box 20, RPSP.
22. Harvey S. Firestone, *Men and Rubber: The Story of Business* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1926), 255.
23. Strong began considering an expedition to Africa in the summer of 1924, with the intent of testing Bayer 205, a German preparation against sleeping sickness, whose secret formula had recently been discovered by the French pharmaceutical firm, Poulenc Freres. See Strong to Forbes, 23 June 1924, bMS AM 1364, Folder 279, WCFP. On his meetings with Firestone, see Strong to Joseph Grew, 19 January 1926, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, box 2, RPSP.
24. On the importance of mapping to the geopolitics of empire, see, e.g., Mathew H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1834* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); D. Graham Burnett, *Masters of All They Surveyed: Exploration, Geography, and a British El Dorado* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
25. See Joseph Grew to Richard Strong, 24 March 1926, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, Box 2, RPSP; Graham Greene, *Journey without Maps* (New York: Penguin Classics edition, 2007), 42.
26. Thomas Baird, "Films and the Public Services in Great Britain," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2 (1938): 98. It was in the Empire Marketing Board's film unit that John Grierson got his start and the acclaimed British movement in social documentary began.
27. Sir Stephen Tallents, "Unpublished Memoirs," file 25, Stephen Tallents Papers, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London. My thanks to Paul Erickson for this reference.
28. Strong, *The African Republic of Liberia*, vol. 1, 11.
29. LWD, 12.
30. James C. Young, *Liberia Rediscovered* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1934), 70; "Tells Firestone Dealers About Liberian Rubber," *New York Times*, 3 April 1927, p. XX16; "Firestone Rubber on the Screen," *New York Times*, 10 March 1927, 40. Although 250,000 feet of film were shot, no lasting record of this film document seems to have survived.
31. Landecker, "Cellular Features."
32. Amad, *Counter-Archive*, 302.
33. Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1911), 7.
34. Edwards, chapter 5, this volume.

35. Richard Pearson Strong Diary, typescript, 1926–1927, GA 82.4, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard University (hereafter RPSD), 30–32.
36. See, e.g., Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001).
37. On visualizing the tropics as a landscape of disease, see Nancy Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).
38. Strong, *The African Republic of Liberia and the Belgian Congo*, 56.
39. Strong, *The African Republic of Liberia and the Belgian Congo*, 40, 46.
40. Ibrahim Sundiata, *Brothers and Strangers: Black Zion, Black Slavery, 1914–1940* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Sundiata, *Black Scandal: America and the Liberian Labor Crisis, 1929–1936* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1980).
41. Quoted in Sundiata, *Brothers and Strangers*, 79.
42. Cuthbert Christy, Charles S. Johnson, and Arthur Barclay, *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry into the Existence of Slavery and Forced Labor in the Republic of Liberia* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1931).
43. Richard Strong to William Castle, November 1926, RPSD, 159.
44. Richard Strong to the president, 21 February 1928, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, box 2, RPSP; Richard Strong to William Cameron Forbes, 4 February 1928, folder 280, bMS Am1364, WCFP.
45. William Castle to Richard Strong, 24 February 1928, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, box 2, RPSP.
46. Richard Strong, “Conditions in Liberia,” *Boston Herald*, 14 January 1928.
47. Christy, *Report of International Commission of Inquiry*, 4.
48. “Wives Pawned into Slavery!” *Boston Sunday Post*, 18 January 1931; “Slavery of Liberia Bared in Report,” *Boston Globe*, 27 September 1930.
49. Sundiata, *Brothers and Strangers*, 97–139. In 1928, Raymond Leslie Buell, director of the Foreign Policy Association, suggested that by establishing a Labor Bureau that agreed to supply “annually a total of 10,000 men to the Firestone Plantations,” a system would result that employed methods no different from those used to secure men for “road work or for Fernando Po.” Raymond Leslie Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*, 2nd ed. (London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1928), 834. Strong took great exception to Buell’s allegations and told Assistant Secretary of State William Castle that he seriously considered attending “The Problems of Africa” conference at the Institute of Politics held in Williamstown, Massachusetts, in August 1928 to rebut a speech Buell was planning to make indicting Firestone’s operations in Liberia. In the end, Strong thought his presence would only draw further attention to Buell’s talk, and so he stayed home. See Richard Strong to William Castle, 26 September 1928, African Expedition—Correspondence, State Department & White House Folder, box 2, RPSP.
50. LWD, 84.
51. John Grierson, “Flaherty,” in *Grierson on Documentary*, edited by Forsyth Hardy (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), 141.
52. LWD, 17, 91.
53. Deborah Poole, “An Excess of Description: Ethnography, Race, and Visual Technologies,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (2005): 164.
54. Nico de Klerk, “Home Away from Home: Private Films from the Dutch East Indies,” in *Mining the Home Movie*, ed. Karen Ishizuka and Patricia Zimmerman (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008), 154.

55. G. A. Johnston Ross to Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes, 18 April 1922, folder 4, P. G. Wolo Papers, HUG 4879.405, Harvard University Archives (hereafter PGWP). Biographical information on Wolo’s life has been gathered from PGWP. See also “Plenyono Gbe Wolo,” *Harvard Class of 1917: 25th Anniversary Report* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 1018–20.
56. A. B. Parson to President A. Lawrence Lowell, 7 August 1926, folder 433, UAI5.160 series 1925–1928, Harvard University Archives; Ross to Dickerson, 1 April 1929, folder 7, PGWP. See also Caroline Ross to Walter, 18 August n.d., folder 2, PGWP.
57. C. K. Bolten to C. E. Dickerson, 17 April 1922, folder 4, PGWP.
58. “Confidential: Memorandum for Conference with Hon. William Phillips,” n.d., 2, folder 1, PGWP. On the Kru rebellion, see Sundiata, *Black Scandal*, 18–19.
59. Strong, *The African Republic of Liberia and the Belgian Congo*, 50.
60. See, e.g., Simon Schaffer, Lissa Roberts, Kapil Raj, and James Delbourgo, eds., *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820* (Sagamore Beach, MA: Science History Publications, 2009).
61. Faye Ginsburg, chapter 7, this volume.