



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Walter Link travel films, circa 1930-1969

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Human Studies Film Archives
Museum Support Center
4210 Silver Hill Road
Suitland 20746
hsfa@si.edu
<http://www.anthropology.si.edu/naa>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Contents.....	1
Names and Subjects	1
Container Listing	3
Footage of Indonesia, 1928-1934.....	3
Travel Footage: Caribbean and South America.....	6
Travel Film Footage and Home Movies.....	8

Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Walter Link travel films
Date:	circa 1930-1969
Identifier:	HSFA.2004.22
Creator:	Link, Walter, 1902-1982
Extent:	22 Film reels (black-and-white silent; 16,447 feet; 16mm)
Language:	No linguistic content; Not applicable .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Received from Katharine Coles in 2004.

Preferred Citation

Walter Link travel films, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Scope and Contents

Amateur film footage shot by geologist Walter O. Link of oil exploration in Indonesia and Borneo and amateur travel films shot in Brazil, Peru, Caribbean, China, Europe, United States, North Africa, Australia and the Arctic. Collection also contains home movies.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or Anthropology Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Types of Materials:

Travelogs
silent films

Places:

Africa
Arctic regions
Asia
North America
South America

Container Listing

Footage of Indonesia, 1928-1934

Film reels (black-and-white silent; 4,697 feet; 16mm)

[Video: Walter Link's Footage of Indonesia, 1928-1934](#)

Scope and Contents: Footage taken by Walter Link, a geologist employed by the Standard Oil Company, during his expeditions to Indonesia in search oil deposits. Footage contains various modes of travel to the interior by boats, rafts, walking, and wading; "native" guides, porters and laborers, camp life with a portable Victrola and documentation of indigenous groups and village life.

General: Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-1), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (44 minutes; black-and-white silent; 1,247 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with added intertitles, shot in Borneo in the Mahakam Basin by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records various aspects of Dajak daily life and ceremonies. Depicted are a wide range of everyday tasks including farming, stamping rice, cooking, weaving baskets and cloth, bathing and washing clothes, delousing, hunting for python and larger game, and piloting several types of boats, including prauws, rafts, and motorboats, along the Mahakam River. Also included are shots of homes elevated over water, as well as footage of villagers building a model of this type of house for a museum; temples with close-ups of intricate stone carvings and footage of a man producing similar carvings; and "war dances" performed by tribal elders. The film ends with a long record of a ceremony, including shots of men playing percussion instruments as well as several different dances performed by young women, people in dragon costumes, and men seated in a circle several rows deep. A significant portion of the film consists of close-up portraits of human subjects, illustrating a wide variety of ages and clothing; many interact with camera or cameraman by making eye contact or smiling and laughing (at apparent prompting).

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-1

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-2), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (14 minutes; black-and-white silent; 400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with added intertitles, shot in Sumatra by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records aspects of travel, work, and camp life along the Moesi River. Link shot both fellow oil explorers and locals at work engaged in oil work, including digging pits and bringing in wells; in camps, hobbing shoes, cutting hair, and resting, including a view of a "coolie camp"; transporting goods and possessions by carrying them through forest or along river in prauws, covered canoes, and rafts; and a lengthy documentation of lumbering with oxen in the Semanggoes Region. Also included are panoramic landscapes such as the bay at Palembang and the "Kaiser's

Helmet" formation near Lahat, as well as scattered scenes of daily life in Palembang (workers on large cargo boats as well as a man selling food out of a prau) and a village called Kampoon Pagarkaja (portraits of inhabitants, including the village chief). This reel includes substantial documentation of Link's fellow oil explorers working with local laborers.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-2

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-3), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (34 minutes; black-and-white silent; 900 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with added intertitles, shot in Java by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records various aspects of Javanese daily life. Filming locations move from port city of Merak to Batavia (Jakarta) and the highlands of central Java (Indonesia). Depicted are a wide range of everyday tasks including bathing and washing clothes in river; fishing with nets and baskets; rafting and floating produce down river; cutting rock floor tile; building a dam with rocks; scraping salt from drying racks; gathering firewood; preparing sawahs for planting; harvesting, sorting, and hulling rice. Shots of the highlands include mountainous landscapes and stone carvings of the temple at Burubodur. Also recorded are extensive scenes of city life, including the fish market of Batavia; transportation of goods in wagons and on boats; infrastructure including paved streets, bridges, canals, multistory houses, and larger structures including a stone gate and buildings with columns.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-3

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-4), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (71 minutes; black-and-white silent; 1,400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with intertitles, shot in Celebes and the surrounding islands by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records various aspects of local daily life. The record of Celebes begins with port cities around the coast including Makassar and Kendari and moves up to the highlands through Loewoek (Luwuk). Footage was also filmed on other islands, including Lombok, Boeton (Buton), Moeton, and Wowoni (Wawonii). Depicted are a range of daily activities for both oil explorers and locals. Footage of native Indonesians tend to be accompanied by explanatory intertitles, and include: port markets, boats, and traders; several styles of local houses; women planting, harvesting, and storing rice; men harvesting and hulling coconuts; fishing with baskets; and various quotidian markets and crowds, including portraits of a diverse selection of locals. Link captures his fellow explorers and the local laborers they hired sailing praus; carrying packs through streams; constructing rafts; clearing jungle and building camps; and camp life, including tending to equipment, maps, and foot fungus. Also included are several landscape panoramas and mentions of local domesticated animals.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-4

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-5), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (22 minutes; black-and-white silent; 600 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with no intertitles, shot in Indonesia by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records daily aspects of camp life for oil explorers. No geographic indications are given, but almost all footage is within various camps. Depicted are tasks such as cooking and eating game and fruit; repairing tools; constructing a house; and tending to personal hygiene, accompanied by several individual portraits of both Western and local camp inhabitants. In this reel Link also extensively documents the local wildlife, including a captured snake, a baby bear on a leash and several bugs shot on white backgrounds.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-5

Footage of Indonesia (2004.22.1-6), 1928-1934

1 Film reel (2 minutes; black-and-white silent; 50 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot in Indonesia by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records a market scene presumably in Indonesia although no geographic indications are given. Footage includes artisans, portraits of locals, and a shot of a white woman surrounded by children.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.1-6

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Obtaining Geological Information by Hand Auger and Oriented Core Barrel, 1930

1 Film reel (8 minutes; black-and-white silent; 200 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Edited film with added intertitles, shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link during his personal vacation, demonstrates geological surveying process. Steps include: putting down a hole, cleaning the cuttings, inserting coring pipe into the hole, extracting the core, and determining the strike and dip. Footage is of local crew directed by a geologist of Link's party, who perform each step as it is introduced by the intertitles.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.2

Travel Film Footage: United States to China, circa 1931

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels from the United States to China.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.3

Travel Footage: Caribbean and South America

General: Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.4

Travel Footage: Caribbean and South America (2004.22.4-1), circa 1940
1 Film reel (40 minutes; black-and-white silent; 1,000 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage, shot in the Caribbean and South America by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records daily life in a variety of locations as well as shots of tourist locations. Locations are not identified except by signs within the film marking Santo Domingo; footage appears to include Peru as well. Much of the footage is given to individual and group portraits of a diverse selection of locals, many of whom interact with the cameraman. Activities and scenes captured in a range of rural and urban locations include: dancing and drumming; river travel and activities such as washing, bathing, and fording; transporting goods on head and by pack animal; market scenes; the arrival of a cargo plane; and traditional rural homes as well as architecture of cities. Also included are panoramas of cities and villages, as well as several shots of tourist destinations including the Continental Church of the Franciscan Order, the Alcázar de Colón, and other grand structures.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.4-1

Travel Footage: Caribbean and South America (2004.22.4-2), circa 1940
1 Film reel (16 minutes; black-and-white silent; 400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage, shot in the Caribbean and South America by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link, records daily life in a variety of locations as well as shots of tourist locations. Locations are not identified, but footage includes: geological and geothermal features; harvesting and transporting bananas; field workers; fellow oil explorers traveling and resting in camps; river travel and river crossings; an attempt at a bullfight with a local animal; brief scenes of dancing; and local architecture as well as landscape panoramas. Much of the footage is given to individual and group portraits of a diverse selection of locals, many of whom interact with the cameraman.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.4-2

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Travel Footage: Indonesia to Europe, 1935

1 Film reel (16 minutes; black-and-white silent; 400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage moderately edited with added intertitles, shot in Ceylon, Egypt, Italy and Germany by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link during his personal vacation, records various tourist destinations. Landmarks include: the beach and harbor at Colombo, Sri Lanka (Ceylon); the Sphinx, pyramids, Mosque of Mohamed Ali and Egyptian Museum in and around Cairo, Egypt; Villa San Michele in Capri, Italy; St. Peter's, the Coliseum and Forum in Rome, Italy; the Arno and Piazza della Signoria in Florence, Italy; the Englischer

Garten, Hofgarten, and war memorials in Munich, Germany; Walchensee, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and a Tyrol village in the Bavarian Alps, Germany; the Fuggerei in Augsburg, Germany; and street scenes in Nuremberg, Germany. Footage consists mainly of sights and structures and shows little interaction with local inhabitants.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.5

Travel Film Footage: Peru, circa 1946

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 470 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels in Peru.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.6

Travel Film Footage: North Africa and Europe, circa 1947

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 1,500 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels in north Africa and Europe.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.7

Travel Film Footage: Brazil, circa 1960

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 1,200 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels in Brazil.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.8

Travel Film Footage: Australia and Asia, circa 1961

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 930 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels to Australia and Asia.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.9

Exploring the Arctic Islands, circa 1960-1961

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 800 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels in the Arctic.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.10

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies

General: Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies (2004.22.11 - 1), 1936-1969

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 1,100 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels and family (home) movies.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11 - 1

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies (2004.22.11 - 2), 1936-1969

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 1,500 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels and family (home) movies.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11 - 2

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies (2004.22.11 - 3), 1936-1969

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 800 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels and family (home) movies.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11 - 3

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies (2004.22.11 - 4-6), 1936-1969

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 450 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels and family (home) movies.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11 - 4-6

Travel Film Footage and Home Movies (2004.22.11 - 7-9), 1936-1969

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 300 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Film footage shot by oil explorer and geologist Walter Link of his travels and family (home) movies.

Local Numbers: HSFA 2004.22.11 - 7-9

[Return to Table of Contents](#)