

Children Paddling at the Seaside

UK : 1897 : dir. G. A. Smith :

Silent : 50 sec

prod: G. A. Smith : scr: : dir.ph.:

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Cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	ⓧ	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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The British Film Catalogue 1895-1985 listing:

"Comedy. Southwick. "Comic fat old lady and lovers"."

[no listing in "Classics of the Silent Screen", "A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen", "Silent Movies: A Picture Quiz Book", "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Bloomsbury Foreign Film Guide", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Evidently the paddling children were a supporting cast in their own feature (a trend which did not die out in the 1890s). Essentially documentary footage then, with a bit of pantomime thrown in to liven up proceedings, so attention would not flag across the fifty seconds of its running time. There is something mysterious also (to my mind at least) in looking at any piece of footage in the certain knowledge that every living soul on screen is now dead. These fragmentary glimpses of Victorian life are a rare privilege, one we quickly grow blasé about. We are the first people to look into the eyes of the living past – even if only in long shot, and at the wrong frame rate – and it is a strangely moving experience.

Denis Gifford's *British Film Catalogue* is a staggering work of research, listing virtually every live action film shot in the UK over the first ninety years of the cinema, but uniquely valuable for information on these earliest silent pieces, the great majority of which we must assume to be lost.

See subject index under **COMEDY**, **SEASIDE HOLIDAYS** and [SILENT CINEMA](#).