EXPLANATION of a View of the BATTLE of SOBRAON, with the DEFEAT of the SIKH ARMY, now exhibiting at the PANORAMA, LEICESTER SQUARE.

1. Outer Intrenchment of the Sikhs.
2. Part of Brigadier Major Cureton's Division.
3. Guns.
4. Zumboornuks.
5. General Sir H. Smith's Division.
6. A Chief.
7. Ghorab Singh Koopla.

8. Sham Singh.
9. Esir Singh Toga.
10. Sirdar Kishen Singh.
11. Brigadier Campbell's Division.
12. Village of Rhikiloo.
13. Chola Sobraon.

14. Village of Killee.
15. Village of Jikeville.
16. Major-General Gilbert's Division.
17. Sikh Guns.
18. Irregular Sikh Cavalry.
19. Boderwalk.

20. Sikh Infantry.
21. Lord Gough and Staff.
22. Prince Waldemar of Prussia.
23. Ghoorkas.
24. Sappers.
25. 43rd and 59th Native Infantry.

26. Lord Hardinge.
27. General Dick.
28. 10th Brigade.
29. Seventh Brigade, 10th and 53rd Regiment, Brigadier Stacey.
30. Aliabee.
31. Sixth Brigade, Brigadier Wilkinson.

32. Lieutenant-Colonel White, C.B.
33. Sikh Village.
34. Third Dragoons.

35. British Artillery, Colonel Lane.
36. River Sutlej.

37. Sikh Battery and Encampment.
38. Ninth Lancers.

39. Fourth Bengal Light Cavalry.
40. Bridge across the Sutlej.

41. The Ford.
42. Flight of the Sikh Army.
43. British Artillery.

Fig. 6. Explanation of *A View of the Battle of Sobraon*, 1846.

following. The events unfolding in the panorama seem to represent the battle as it played out in its entirety; the labelling of background features which are almost too small to discern on the map also gives the impression of lateral as well as horizontal action. Identifying important Sikh and British personages by name, the panorama offers a narratively complex, even chaotic, representation of the battle, with Sikh and British artillery forces conjoined in episodes of conflict along both horizontal and lateral planes. While the panorama's brochure identifies scores of specific features in numbered sequence, the numbered items do not appear to follow any logic beyond their spatial arrangement on the canvas. For those spectators who had purchased an orientation guide *before* (or even after) entering the panorama, identifying all the features on the painting would have been quite an onerous task (there are forty-three in total), although as a keepsake of the panorama visit the brochure itself was probably designed to be perused at home as much as serving as a visual aid during the actual viewing.

This ordering and labelling of locales and personages within the battle panorama indicates that such panoramas were intended to be seen in a particular sequence rather than viewed haphazardly, a point that has significant bearing on this discussion of the panorama's proto-cinematic qualities. The pull-out orientation map of Robert Burford's *Description of a View of the City of Nanking, and the Surrounding Country*, which appeared at the Panorama in Leicester Square in 1845, serves both to orient the spectator to the general location and direct her/his gaze left-to-right (clockwise) across the painting. Without stretching the analogy too far, one might argue that the spatial and temporal sequencing indicated on the map is in some ways analogous to early travelogues' use of establishing landscape shots, followed by closer shots of architecture and metonymically rendered native peoples. In Burford's painting, after presenting the landscape and buildings, the artist moves on to represent numerous dignitaries such as The Chief (29 on the orientation), Chinese Gamblers (30), Nieu Kien, Governor of Nanking (33), and so on, until we finally arrive at the principal event, a meeting between 'Her Britannic Majesty', the commanders in chief of the army and navy, and the three Chinese imperial commissioners. While a cinematic rendition of these sights would have been marked by cuts indicating spatial and temporal ellipses, the panorama is marked by a similar textualization which must have made sense to audiences at the time. In other words, panorama audiences would have clearly realized that this painting was a composite view of Nanking, rather than a 360-degree view of an event taking place in a unified space and time. In case they were left in any doubt, a disclaimer published in the booklet acknowledged that 'no such meeting [had taken] place precisely on the spot represented'. Burford defended his composite strategy by arguing that the technique afforded 'an opportunity of

31 *Description of a View of the City of Nanking, and the Surrounding Country, Now Exhibiting at The Panorama, Leicester Square,* brochure of panorama painted by Robert Burford, 1845, British Library.

presenting portraits of the principal persons engaged in the negotiations, and, at the same time, a characteristic and lively picture of the costume and customs of this singular people. . . . It has been introduced on a portion of the Panorama, not otherwise occupied by an object of particular moment.'[31] To imbue his panorama with life and topicality, Burford brought the spectator in for a closer view of Nanking life, identifying key personages by name with reportorial diligence.

And yet the panorama's blending of the topographical with the anecdotal threatened to undermine the very laws of verisimilitude by which it was governed. While Burford was sensitive to issues of historical realism underpinning the panorama, he nevertheless saw in the composite view the potential for greater audience engagement and interest, and, with this in mind, created what I would argue is a more cinematic depiction of life in Nanking and its environs. As the panorama form evolved, it prepared spectators for a more fragmented way of seeing the world, a more modern perception, that was influenced by illustrated newspapers and the public's interest in seeing the key players and places making history; as theatre historian Martin Meisel has argued, 'a temporal element might come into play through the discrete incorporation of successive phases in the scene, in spite of the presumption of synchrony'.[32] Constructing a composite rather than a geographically accurate 360-degree view, Burford rejected the panorama's foundational premiss, the idea of a circular view of a single location; but Burford must have considered this a reasonable trade-off, given that audiences would have enjoyed the panorama *experience*, even if what they were seeing did not propose a single continuous perspective.

32 Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton, MA: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 61.

A similar example of narrative and human interest deforming the spatial logic of the panorama can be seen in Burford's *Description of a View of Baden Baden* (1843), in which the second half of the painting represents a single scene, a view of the 'Hut of Sighs', a ceremony rich in ethnographic detail. Committing nearly half of the painting to a single event certainly anticipates the shot trajectory of countless early ethnographic films, where opening images of the surrounding topography give way to extended views of native peoples. Rather than representing an event grounded in a single time and place, this panorama rejected the mimetic obligation to the unified view and in so doing edged closer to the cinematic. Of course, the date of these panoramas (1840s) suggests the changes within the form; facing competition from moving panoramas and dioramas, circular panorama painters may have felt compelled to introduce more narrative incident and dynamism into their work, since the medium had been around for over fifty years and audiences might be expecting more than a single hyperrealist view for their money. Yet again we see a situation that mirrors the transition from early static views in early cinema to multishot films. Despite the

33 Flier for Waterloo panorama playing at the Westminster Panorama, nd., Regent Street Theatres scrapbook, Westminster Panorama file, Guildhall Library Corporation of London, hereafter GLCL. Emphasis mine.

34 Peter Paret, *Imagined Battles: Reflections of War in European Art* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 68.

35 Flier for the Rotunda Great Surrey St. and Blackfriars Bridge, Regent Street Theatres scrapbook, GLCL.

36 *Mr Charles Marshall's Great Moving Diorama Illustrating the Grand Route of a Tour Through Europe.*

37 Van Eekelen, 'The magical', p. 16.

inescapable stasis enveloping these scenes, reviewers nevertheless often pointed to the representation of 'action' as a benchmark of quality panorama painting, as suggested in this review of a panorama of the Battle of Waterloo from the London *Globe*: 'Few spectators can stand on the Central Platform and look out, without occasionally fancying themselves spectators of a *real action*.[33]

Anecdotal battle scenes thus assumed a metonymic relationship to the battle as a whole, with the common soldier and a heightened attention to realist detail assuming greater significance; as art historian Peter Paret notes, 'changes in warfare, changes in aesthetic theory and taste, the new importance of the common soldier, all affected and gradually altered the character of battle paintings'.[34] A more metonymic representation of the events of the battle was called for, and the solution was either to paint a segment that would stand in for the whole, or to synthesize important events taking place in the battle into a composite view. Moving panoramas had fewer problems condensing events into a continuous sequence, given their linear structure. For example, a 'peristrephic or moving diorama' that played at the Rotunda in Great Surrey Street, London represented 'all the Great Events that have occurred during the Greek War' (books providing a history of the war were on sale for 6d and music began playing fifteen minutes before the start of each exhibition),[35] whereas in *Mr Charles Marshall's Great Moving Diorama Illustrating the Grand Route of a Tour Through Europe* that appeared at Her Majesty's Concert Room, audience members were informed that the purpose of the diorama was to 'reproduce in a series of pictures . . . the most striking and memorable scenes which are thus so frequently visited and well known'.[36]

The viewing platform was an important element in the hyperrealism of the nineteenth-century panorama; the journey from the darkness of the corridor and staircase that led up to the brightly lit belvedere signalled the start of a perceptual shift in which spectators measured the success of a painting against a set of preconceived ideas (whether or not they had ever witnessed the depicted scene in real life or had seen representations of it). While contemporaneous reports of the experience of spectators looking across the vast painting are obviously difficult to generalize upon, van Eekelen argues that for some spectators, the illusion may have become 'unbearable', forcing them to leave the painting sooner than they had intended. There are numerous accounts of nineteenth-century spectators becoming faint or dizzy when looking at a panorama – a foreshadowing of apocryphal accounts of spectators ducking in their seats at the sight of an oncoming train in the Lumières' *Arrival of a Train* (1895) – even suffering from airsickness, as in the still extant *Panorama of Thun*.[37] Newspaper accounts went so far as to advise ladies of a nervous disposition to be on their guard when viewing panoramas lest the experience

become overwhelming, although men, too, were not immune from the effects of motion sickness, as seen in a cartoon entitled *Le Panorama du 'vengeur'* which shows what looks like a naval officer and other aristocratic dignitaries suffering from seasickness atop a viewing platform which resembled the deck of a ship (figure 7). If the gendered nature of panorama reception is suggested in these scraps of historical ephemera, it may be worth posing some more specific questions about gender, war and vision. For example, was the elevated point of view, the immensity of the canvas (the *Siege of Acre* was reportedly painted on three thousand square feet of canvas)[38] and the spectator's sense of mastery in surveying such a scene, experienced in the same way by both men and women? Would female spectators (and many men for that matter) with no first-hand experience of the battlefield have responded to the reenactment genre in the same way as male veterans? Would the

38 George Clinton Densmore Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage,* Volume II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927–49), p. 239, cited in Oettermann, *The Panorama,* p. 360, fn. 53.

LE PANORAMA DU "VENGEUR,,
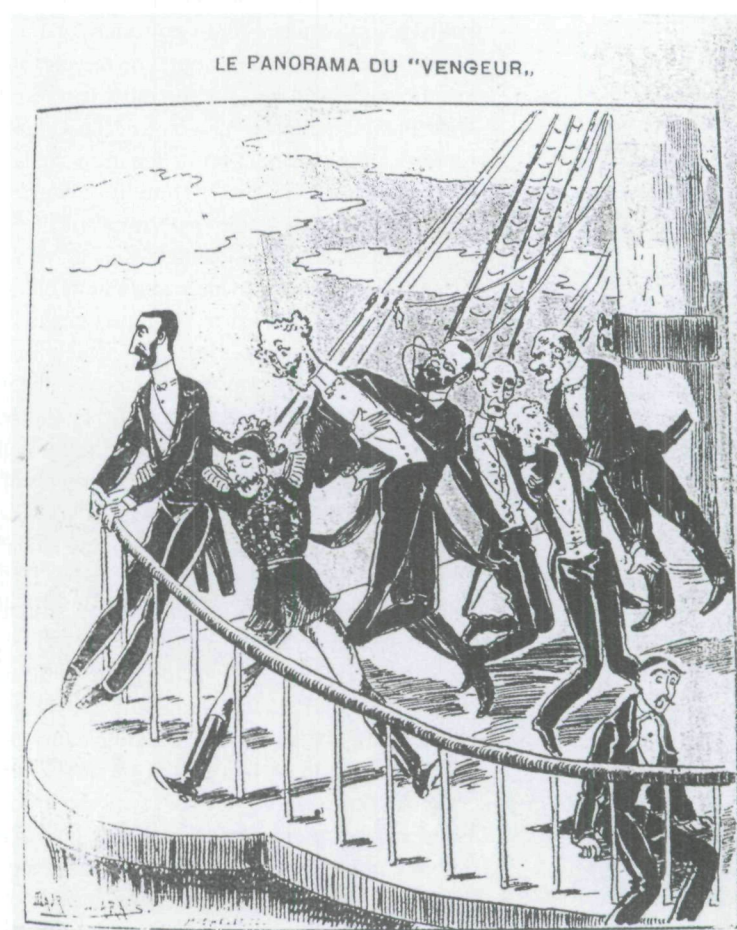
Fig. 7. *Le Panorama de Vengeur* cartoon, c. 1880s.

epic and aesthetic qualities of the battle reenactment have resonated as much (or perhaps even more) for women viewers than men (if the above cartoon is anything to go by, men it would seem were suitable targets for parody)? Was the battle subject itself a male-oriented genre, or was the viewing platform a social space little marked by gender?

What is known about nineteenth-century panorama exhibition is that women and children made up a large part of the audience, especially during the working-week daytime when attendance was generally lower. Almost all the extant panorama promotions list a child's entrance fee, indicating that children accompanied by women – or possibly attending alone if older – were considered an important viewing constituency. There is also some evidence of women's perceptions of war, especially during the Crimean War of 1853–56. Women were not only central catalysts in ushering in new standards of medical hygiene and hospital management during this war (Florence Nightingale was pivotal in this respect), but they were also first-hand witnesses of some of its major battles, climbing up hillsides to obtain a bird's-eye view of the front line, direct correlatives, one might argue, of the elevated vision facilitated by the panorama.[39] And yet, for the most part, women have been denied first-hand experience of war, as Jean Gallagher has argued in her study of the construction of female visuality in the two World Wars. According to Gallagher, vision has always been one of the 'crucial elements that has traditionally marked the gendered division of war experience: men "see" battle; women, as non-combatants *par excellence*, do not'.[40] One cannot help but wonder, then, how women's status in war as 'non-participants' inflected their experience of the battle panoramas of the nineteenth century. There is a suggestion that the presumed interests of female viewers were addressed by the subject matter of smaller panoramas that were occasionally exhibited in an upper rotunda in the same building (see figure 2). For example, perhaps as a way of catering to the differing tastes of male and female panorama-goers, Barker exhibited in the upper circle of the Panorama building (located directly above the Battle of the Nile panorama [see figure 1]) a much more innocuous painting, that of Margate, the then-fashionable seaside resort which had gained notoriety in the newspaper gossip columns.[41] While suggesting a forerunner of the short film preceding the main feature, in the case of Barker's rotunda it is unclear whether audiences would have had a choice in viewing the smaller of the two panoramas first. Nevertheless, there is a striking contrast in the subject matter of the two paintings, suggesting that panorama impresarios were not only sophisticated promoters of their artistic wares (placing a more prosaic subject in the same building as an epic one may have heightened audience reaction to the more spectacular of the two paintings), but may also have been designed to accommodate the gendered

39 Paul Kerr et al., *The Crimean War* (London: Boxtree Press, 1998). For more on Nightingale, see pp. 78–95; for women's first-hand accounts of the war, see pp. 61–2.

40 Jean Gallagher, *The World Wars Through the Female Gaze* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), p. 3. Gallagher argues that 'vision has functioned . . . not only as a mark of and basis for authenticity and authority in writing [and imaging] about war but has played an important role in the developing and gendering of cultural discourses about war'.

41 'Zweytes Panorama. Seeansicht von Margate. Blick auf die Stadt', *Journal London und Paris*, vol. 4 (1799), pp. 3–5, cited in Oettermann, *The Panorama*, p. 107.

composition of their audience. Panoramic paintings may have been held to different standards of social and moral propriety when it came to graphic imagery than other art forms such as the theatre; in other words, women and children may have had fewer qualms viewing battlefield carnage in a painting than they would have in less salubrious surroundings. Without making sweeping claims about panoramas and the female spectator, there is a surprising gendered dimension to the melodramatic structure of feeling shaping a great deal of writing about panoramas in the early nineteenth century. Submitting oneself to the *trompe l'oeil* effects, while not strictly gendered as an activity, nevertheless invites a cognitive dissonance that one might assume women would have negotiated with greater ease than men.

However, while genres of fantasy and escapism have been traditionally associated with women, panoramas invited men as well as women to submit themselves to the panorama's spell. At the same time, if this description of Robert Barker's 1799 recreation of *The Battle of the Nile*, depicting a decisive battle between Napoleon's French fleet and the Royal Navy under Admiral Nelson in Abukir Bay at the mouth of the Nile (see figure 1) is anything to go by, women may have had a harder time than men dealing with the graphic violence represented in some paintings:

> As soon as you enter a shiver runs down your spine. The darkness of night is all around, illuminated only by burning ships and cannon fire, and all is so deceptively real ... that you imagine you can see far out to sea in one direction and the distant coastline in the other. ... And if the whole scene is terrible, still it is the fate of the *Orient* that arouses the greatest horror: a ship with 120 guns ... filled with gunpowder and flammable material, with its entire crew on board. ... Perhaps no words can fully convey an impression of this inferno. ... Clinging to the masts and yardarms in desperate contortions are the poor sailors; some have been torn to pieces and catapulted into the air by the explosion; heads, limbs, cannon mounts, yards, masts, muskets, crates, shreds of ropes and all the other contents of the ship rain down on all sides.[42]

According to Paret, the shift from idealization towards topographical accuracy in easel paintings of battles of the early nineteenth century, meant that audiences were increasingly subjected to more realistic renderings of the events represented (Paret notes that, in portraits of both military heroes and mass combat, artists began to emphasize the human costs of war).[43] But while the death of a military hero was often seen as the perfect vehicle for nationalist fervour, verisimilitude alone could not produce the desired effect; as Benjamin West, who had painted *The Death of General Wolfe* in 1770, wrote: 'Wolfe must not die like a common soldier under a

42 'Modebelustigungen in London. Neues Panorama. Grausende Darstellung der Schlacht bei Abukir', *Journal London und Paris*, vol. 3 (1799), pp. 309–11, cited in Oettermann, *The Panorama*, p. 107.

43 Paret, *Imagined Battles*, p. 66.

44 From Helmut von Erffa and
    Allen Stanley, *The Paintings of
    Benjamin West* (New Hand/
    London, 1986), p. 222 cited in
    Paret, *Imagined Battles*, p. 50.
    Emphasis mine.

45 The duo-octagonal building
    housing the panorama cost
    $40,000 and was 134 feet in
    diameter and 96 feet high. The
    painting measured 400 feet in
    length and was 50 feet high.
46 The panorama was restored in
    1980–82. *The Battle of Atlanta*,
    another circular panorama, was
    painted by William Wehner and
    can be viewed in Atlanta. It too
    was restored at the same time
    as the Gettysburg panorama.
    For information on extant
    panoramas around the world,
    see Oettermann, *The Panorama*,
    pp. 345–7.
47 For a detailed discussion of the
    panorama's construction and
    special effects, see 'The
    Cyclorama', *Scientific American*,
    vol. 55 (1886), p. 296.
48 The panorama was open from
    9 am to 11 pm each day. For
    more information, see ibid.

bush, neither should Nelson be represented dying in the gloomy hold of a ship, like a sick man in a Prison Hole'. According to West, 'to move the mind there should be spectacle represented to raise and warm the mind. . . . A mere *matter of fact* will never produce this effect'.[44]

That battle panoramas were perceived as distinctly family affairs in the USA can be gleaned from their admission rate policies (fifty cents for adults and twenty-five cents for children). French artist Paul Philippoteaux's *Panorama of the Battle of Gettysburg* (figure 8), an example of what I call the national memorial panorama, opened in a purpose-built building in Chicago in 1884.[45] Promoter Charles Wiloughby commissioned a second rotunda in Boston in 1884, and the panorama also appeared in Union Square, New York (figure 9) and can now be viewed in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.[46] Unlike his English counterpart Porter, who rushed to bring images of the Indian, Egyptian and Napoleonic wars to the panoramic canvases of London, Philippoteaux approached his subject manner in a more leisurely fashion, spending several months on the battlefield of Gettysburg making sketches, tracking down official military maps in Washington DC, and obtaining first-hand accounts of the battle from Generals Hancock, Doubleday and others.[47] Philippoteaux's panorama was a much larger undertaking than Porter's: instead of three thousand square feet, Philippoteaux's measured twenty thousand square feet, and in addition to daytime operation, the panorama was illuminated at night by hidden electric lamps.[48] The vast canvas depicts Pickett's Charge, the decisive action which took place on the afternoon of 3
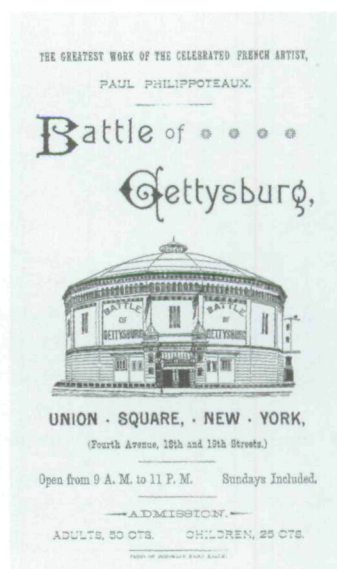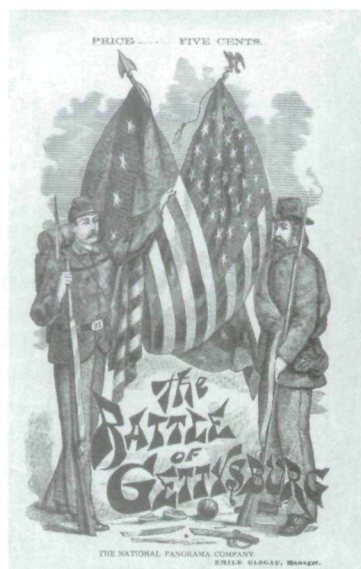
49 Philippoteaux, 'Panorama of the
    Battle of Gettysburg' brochure,
    New York Historical Society
    (hereafter NYHS). For a
    fascinating account of the
    construction of this panorama,
    see Theodore R. Davis, 'How a
    great battle panorama is made',
    St. Nicholas (December 1886),
    pp. 99–112.
50 'The Cyclorama', p. 296.

July 1863, the third day of the battle.[49] The death of Lieutenant
Cushing was represented in the foreground of the panorama, the
viewing platform located in the centre of the Union line.[50]

That this panorama was represented as a reenactment of the
Gettysburg battle is clear from descriptions in the accompanying
booklet and in press reaction to its original Chicago exhibition. A
review in the *Chicago Tribune* makes explicit reference to the
panorama's organization of the visual field as dynamic, as capable
of representing an event *as it happened* and along several visual
planes:

> The battleground, with its dead and wounded soldiers, the smoke
> of cannon, the bursting of shells, the blood stained ground are all
> drawn with a realism that is almost painful. The spectator can
> almost imagine that he hears the rattle of musketry and the brave
> regiments as they charge upon each other to sink amid the smoke
> and carnage. . . . Standing on the little platform, the spectator
> seems to look out for miles upon a stretch of cornfields and farms.
> . . . [And yet] the countenance of some of the leading generals of
> both armies are veritable portraits, and the disposition of the
> contending regiments and the thrilling action of the great battle are
> reproduced as if by magic.[51]

51 Chicago Tribune, 2 December
    1883, n.p., cited in brochure for
    the 'Panorama of the Battle of
    Gettysburg, permanently located
    at the corner of Wabash
    Avenue and Hubbard Court,
    Chicago', c. 1884. Painted by
    Paul Philippoteaux. NYHS.

Even more striking is the protocinematic nature of the composition
itself – with its visual grammar of long-shots of cornfields and
closeups of generals – which seems to prepare spectators for
cinema's later signifying practices. Given that the painting could
never be regarded in exactly the same way as cinema – the
represented scenes were not viewed autonomously, and while the
guidebook accompanying the panorama encouraged spectators to
view the painting sequentially, this was by no means an iron-clad
requirement – it nevertheless gave spectators the impression of
different scenes from the action which had been seamlessly blended
into the painting's composition. Dominating the *trompe l'oeil* was the
faux terrain (under construction in figure 10), the horizontal space
between the canvas and the viewing platform which would be filled
with *attrapes* (hoax objects) appropriate to the subject matter of the
painting. *Faux terrains* were constructed by specially recruited
theatre designers who aimed to minimize the optical disjuncture
between three-dimensional foreground and two-dimensional painted
background, as seen in figure 11, an illustration of the *Battle of
Gettysburg*.[52] For example, the illusionistic success of the *Battle of el
Kebir* panorama, displayed at the National Panorama in London in
1883, was largely attributed to its *faux terrain*. According to the
critic of the *Daily Telegraph* 'the spectator is impressed by the
completeness of an illusion, sustained by a skillfully contrived
foreground, giving to a semblance of the horrors of war an aspect of
grim reality'.[53] In the case of Hendrik Willem Mesdag's 1881

52 The anti-war Bourbaki Panorama
    painted by the Swiss artist
    Edouard Le Castre in 1871 has
    a most impressive faux terrain
    in which a real railway wagon
    merges almost imperceptibly
    with the painted rails on the
    canvas. Fruitema and
    Zoetmulder, The Panorama
    Phenomenon, p. 65.
53 'War in Egypt' National
    Panorama guidebook, 1883,
    London Playbill Scrapbook,
    GLCL, p. 142.

Fig. 10. Philippoteaux directing artists working on the *The Battle of Gettysburg.*
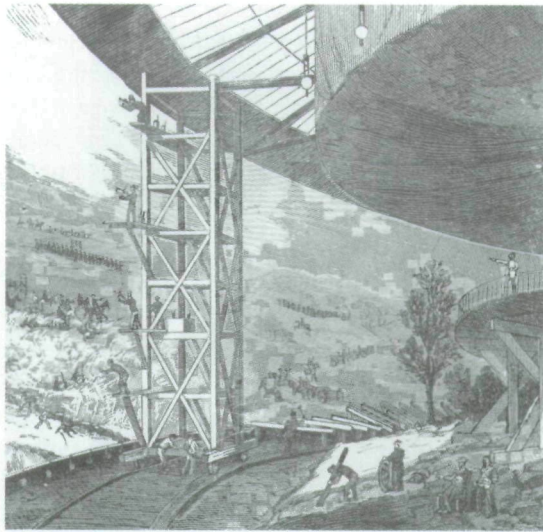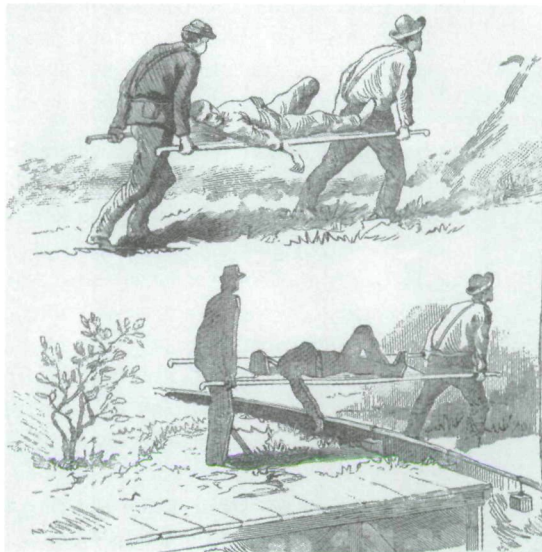

Fig. 11. Illustration of 3-D effect in Gettysburg panorama using wooden figures and props that merge with the painted canvas.
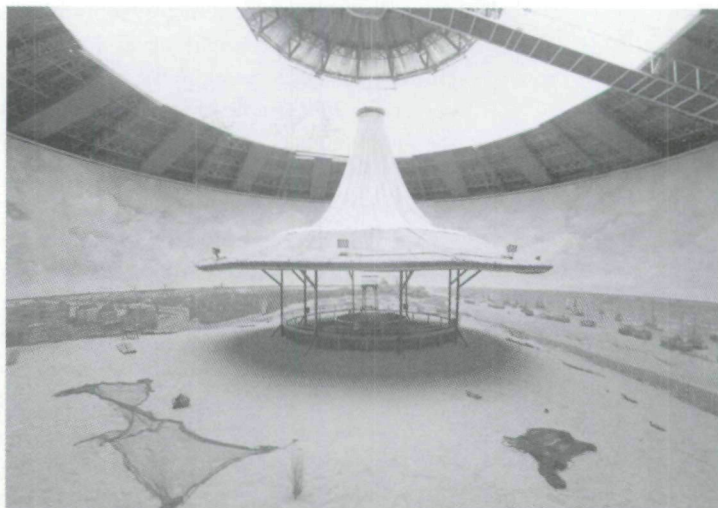
panorama of Scheveningen (figure 12), the heightened reality effect achieved by introducing three-dimensional foreground objects such as the sand dune, fishing baskets and tufts of wild grass, was reinforced by carefully framing the painting itself in such a way as to eliminate all signs of the presentational apparatus. As one author noted almost forty years before Mesdag painted his panorama:

[A]n attentive observer will see that everything is removed which can tend to break the spell, to dispel the illusion, under which the senses temporarily lie; we are not permitted to see the top of the

Fig. 12. Viewing platform and vellum of the Mesdag Panorama. The Hague, one of the few surviving 360-degree panoramas. © Mesdag Panorama, The Hague.

54 'On cosmoramas, dioramas, and panoramas', *The Penny Magazine*, vol. 11 (1842), p. 364.

55 'The cyclorama', p. 296.

56 Ibid.

57 Davis, 'How a great battle', p. 112.
58 R.B. Beckett (ed.), *John Constable's Correspondence, Volume II. Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs. Constable)* (Suffolk Records Society, vol. VI, 1964), p. 34. For more on Constable's sentiments on dioramas see Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology and Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p.19.

picture, nor the bottom of the picture, not the skylights; nor are any objects allowed to intervene between the spectator and the painted wall. We have therefore no standard with which to compare the picture, and thus it ceases to appear like a picture.[54]

In the case of Philippoteaux's Gettysburg panorama, the space between the viewing platform and the canvas was carefully arranged with earth, lumber, trees, fence rails, bushes, logs and camp equipment, merging with the colour tones and depicted scene of the painting in an attempt to create a unified visual field. A report on the panorama in *Scientific American* described how through the use of 'real trees . . . shrubbery, portions of fences, and the like . . . a genuine landscape is produced'.[55] The effect, one reviewer argued, taxed 'the ingenuity of the looker-on to tell where the real ends and where the work of the brush begins'.[56] The deception of scale was so convincing that some spectators were surprised to discover that the largest depicted human figures, which appeared life-size, were in fact between three and four feet in height.[57] Vouching for the credibility of the foreground props, the *Scientific American* critic points up the higher truth quotient afforded objects versus images – a tension that plays out with striking alacrity in the natural history museum. Yet the theatricalism associated with this scenography mitigates against its status as high art; to add real objects to art nudges the representation over the edge, turning it into crass illusionism in the minds of contemporaneous artists such as John Constable, who believed that the hyperrealist effects elevated deception above art. According to Constable, the panorama painter viewed 'nature minutely and *cunningly*, but with no greatness or breadth'.[58] While

59 R.M. Hayes, *3-D Movies: a History and Filmography of Stereoscopic Cinema* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Co., 1998), p. 1.

60 Yvonne van Eekelen, 'The magical panorama', in *The Magical Panorama*, p. 16. For a discussion of the spectator's negotiation of the interaction between the represented image and the painted surface of the canvas, see Richard Wolheim, 'What the spectator sees', in Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey (eds), *Visual Theory: Painting and Interpretation* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 101–50.

61 The quote 'sublime triumphs of art' is from 'On cosmoramas', p. 363.

62 Henry Longfellow, *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow with Extracts from His Journals and Correspondence*, Volume II (Boston, MA: Ticknor and Co., 1886), pp. 67–8 cited in Hanner, 'The adventures', p. 68. Longfellow went to see Banvard's panorama on 16 December 1846 and wrote that 'One seems to be sailing down the great stream and sees boats, sandbars and the cottonwoods in the moonlight. Three miles of canvas of great merit.' Longfellow, quoted in Estelle V. Newman, 'The story of Banvard's folly', *Long Island Forum*, vol. 15, no. 5 (May 1952), pp. 83–4; 95–7 in BFP.

63 Leicester Square Panorama clipping file and 'London Playbills Scrapbook', p. 52, both housed at GLCL.

the inclusion of three-dimensionality into the optical field of the Gettysburg panorama may have represented a distinction from cinema, audiences would have been thoroughly familiar with perceiving the American Civil War in three dimensions as a result of the huge numbers of stereoscopic slides produced of the event, especially since by 1870 stereoscopes were present in most middle-class family parlours.[59]

Appreciating the symbolic monumentality of the Battle of Gettysburg was thus less of a challenge for audiences than deciphering the significance of the individual episodes which depicted highlights of the unfolding battle. As the preeminent US battle panorama, Philippoteaux's painting points up the reenactment's fundamental paradox; that notwithstanding how faithful a facsimile it claims to be, it can only ever produce a *rendition*, a version of the original that always runs the risk of slipping back into a fictional mode. As van Eekelen argues, 'no matter how convincing the spatial aspects of a panorama, or how irresistibly the horizon draws us toward infinite distances, we can never completely ignore the actual surface of the canvas, if only because all movement on it has been frozen'.[60] As an absent presence that shared many formal features with cinema, the panorama thus oscillated between being lifelike and drained of life as a result of its stasis; its mimeticism was always undercut by spectators' foreknowledge of its gimmickry, what we might call the 'panorama effect'.

'Sublime triumphs of art': river panoramas as metaphorical reenactment[61]

The river comes to me instead of my going to the river.[62]

Panorama exhibitors entertained their audiences in similar ways to itinerant motion picture travelogue lecturers of the late 1890s and early 1900s; like the typical presentations of panoramas, motion picture screenings were ephemeral events which often had lecturers present to contextualize the films and edit them together, provide commentary, and cue musical accompaniment. For example, announcements for two panoramas at the Great Globe in London's Leicester Square in 1857 (*A Panorama of St Petersburg and Moscow* and the *Coronation of the Czar*) make reference to explanatory lectures and appropriate music, and an undated programme for Hamilton's *New Overland Route to India* promises accompaniment by 'National Music and Descriptive Lecture'.[63] An anonymous contributor to *All the Year Round* in 1867 wrote that 'it is a law that the canvas can *only* move to music', thus suggesting the theatricalized nature of some panorama exhibitions. Noted American panoramist Banvard hired both composers and performers to create musical accompaniment for his Mississippi panorama (Banvard