

## CONTENTS

Settling Down in the Chair Richard Crangle	2
Gustave Doré Magic Lantern Slides Dan Malan	3
The True Inventor of the Magic Lantern Deac Rossell	7
Cataloguing and Researching Slide Collections: An Archive's Experience Ine van Dooren	9
Apropos 33 James Cook Lantern Slides Pierre Levie	11
Review of <i>The Great Art of Light and Shadow</i> Stephen Herbert	13
1880-81 and All That: A Slice of lantern Life Stephen Herbert	14
Review of <i>Living Pictures</i> Richard Crangle	15
Bits and Pieces	16

## Cover picture:

'Ritter und Urenkel', an engraving from *Buch der Welt*, an illustrated annual published by Hoffmann of Stuttgart from 1842 onwards. This image is from Jahrgang 30, i.e. 1871. The title translates as 'The Knight and the Great-Grandson': the magician shows the knight a view of the future, and he reacts in horror at the appalling sight of his great-grandson's (1870s) taste in fashion. Can anyone shed more light on the origin of this image – does it relate to a folk tale or published story? If so, is the lantern a feature of the original tale, or was it added for this 1871 view?

Edited by Richard Crangle

Design and layout by Dennis Crompton assisted by Annie Bridges and Zuzanna Lipinska

Thanks for assistance with this issue go to all its contributors, everyone involved with its design, editing and production, and Mark Butterworth, Ian Christie, Will Vaughan and Hans-Wilhelm Vleugels for invaluable help with the contributions.

© The Magic Lantern Society 2001

Material from this publication may not be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without the prior written permission of the Editor.

Origination and printing for the Society by Dave Morgan, London

Published by the Magic Lantern Society,  
South Park, Galphay Road, Kirkby Malzeard,  
Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 3RX, UK.

<http://www.magiclantern.org.uk>

Editorial address: Richard Crangle,  
17 Dean Street, Exeter EX2 4HH, UK.  
e-mail: R.Crangle@ex.ac.uk

# SETTLING DOWN IN THE CHAIR

Richard Crangle

**WHEN HE TOOK OVER** as Editor in 1984, David Henry began his editorial by quoting Alfred H. Saunders, Editor of the original *Optical Magic Lantern Journal*, as he took over that journal in 1902:

*In settling ourselves down in the editorial chair so ably filled by our predecessor ... we find our corporate capacity is not so ample, and to be thoroughly comfortable we require a little padding which we hope our contributors will supply with their usual generosity ...*

Maybe 'corporate capacity' and abilities to fill chairs are best left alone, but in taking over as Editor myself, I too must begin by paying tribute to my learned predecessors. The volumes of *NMLJ* produced by Tony Dugdale, then by David Henry, and most recently by David Robinson – aided by the wonderful efforts of Dennis Crompton as designer throughout – are a credit to our Society and a standard reference source on our subject. If my own efforts as Editor can be half as effective, I shall be a very happy Editor indeed.

Times change, and even magic lantern journals move on. The changes to the appearance of *NMLJ* from this issue do not indicate any kind of break with the past: it is vital for the Journal's traditions (especially its standard of content and visual layout) to continue undimmed. But at the same time, it is important for the Journal to evolve. The new cover design in particular maybe indicates that *NMLJ* is an established publication in its own right, rather than an echo of our predecessor, the *OMLJ*, whose masthead has previously graced our cover.

In the very first *NMLJ* in 1978, Tony Dugdale made this prophetic comment:

*Until the availability of an encyclopaedic volume on the lantern, it is only through the sharing and exchange of information that our knowledge of this over-neglected quarter of our entertainment, scientific, artistic and technological history can be expanded.*

That is still true, although one fantasy has now been realised with the publication of our *Encyclopaedia* this year. But the *Encyclopaedia* only increases the need for information and exchange of ideas. Wide-ranging as it is, it is consciously a starting-point rather than an ending-point for many of the subjects it covers. It will enable and generate new work and ideas. The need for a regular quality journal, in which those ideas can be expressed, has never been greater.

As interest in the lantern increases in academic circles (as suggested by the 'Lantern Projections Colloquium' held at the British Academy this year, or the new journal *Living Pictures*), it is important for the Society to retain the leading position it has occupied for so long, and to continue to set the agenda for how the lantern is studied. Most of the known material on the lantern is, still, in the great and small collections of Society members. Even academic research (sometimes noted for not letting the evidence get in the way of a good theory) will not progress far without being properly involved in, and informed by, the community of collectors and enthusiasts and the work they have done to keep interest in the lantern alive.

So the *NMLJ* will aim to be a learned publication, but a lively one: that is, it will continue the pattern of varied and unconventional items established by my predecessors, and will continue to take a broad and inclusive view of 'lantern scholarship'. Articles of every type and length; illustrations with an explanation; discoveries presenting a puzzle to be solved – all these are just as valuable as the scholarly treatise which covers every aspect of its subject. But above all there are three main approaches to this wide-ranging brief:

1. It is important to speculate, to take pieces of evidence and wonder about what they might mean. The best research raises questions, rather than supplying all the answers; it opens up a subject rather than closing it off. Two articles in this issue – Deac Rossell's speculation about possible lantern inventors, and Pierre Levie's 'what-if' question arising from a single lantern reference – fit this bill very well.
2. It is important to consider how lantern practice related to things which we now see as 'other' media – especially photography, art, literature, moving pictures, and all the various 'optical recreations'. Dan Malan's article on Gustave Doré is a good example of this approach, looking at slides as just one of many ways of reproducing already-popular imagery.
3. It is also important to look at practical questions of how and why lantern material is collected. Our understanding of lantern history is only possible because collectors – mainly individuals – have gathered knowledge about the artefacts they have found. But we might have a better understanding if we could coordinate our work more. In different ways, Ine van Dooren's article (an insight into her archive's acquisition of a slide collection) and Stephen Herbert's piece on the Society's new research project (a fascinating idea to gather information on the lantern in use) both reflect this aspiration.

One contribution to this, which will start to appear from the next issue, will be a detailed index of the *NMLJ* itself.