



The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands

The Great War at sea

A film by Walter Summers

This dramatic reconstruction of two decisive naval battles from the Great War is one of the finest films of the British silent era. Filmed in 1927 on real battleships supplied by the Admiralty, scenes of naval warfare have rarely been captured with such a degree of authenticity. After its premiere at this year's BFI London Film Festival and a theatrical release, *The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands* will be released on both DVD and Blu-ray by the BFI on 19 January 2015 with numerous extra features.

The Battle of Coronel, off the coast of Chile, was a triumph for German Admiral von Spee and the first defeat of the British navy for a hundred years. The retaliatory strike was instigated six weeks later by Admiral Fisher, who sent two large battlecruisers, HMS *Invincible* and HMS *Inflexible*, to the South Atlantic to restore British supremacy.

In recreating the dramatic action, no models and no trick photography were employed, although some interiors were recreated in the studio and some animation was featured. It is an astonishingly effective piece of filmmaking, which glories, like Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, in the power and beauty of the machine.

Scrupulously fair in its treatment of the enemy, this stirring film has been restored by the BFI National Archive and is presented with a newly commissioned score composed by Simon Dobson and performed by The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines.

Additional special features on this release include short films looking at the creation of the new score and the restoration, and four complementary short films from 1914.

Special features

- *Scoring The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands* (2014, 12 mins): a consideration of Simon Dobson's new musical accompaniment
- *The Battles of Coronel and Falkland Islands Restoration Demonstration* (2014, 6 mins): some of the problems faced by the BFI restoration team
- *BFI London Film Festival Archive Gala Introduction* (2014, 3 mins)
- *Sea Dreams* (Lancelot Speed, 1914, 6 mins): animation mocking the German Navy
- *Naval Review* (Will Barker, 1914, 5 mins): King George V reviews the British fleet at Spithead in July 1914
- *Our Naval Losses* (1914, 1 min): moving eulogy to the British ships sunk in the early months of the war
- *England Expects* (1914, 1 min): scenes of Trafalgar Day at Nelson's Column
- Illustrated booklet with original essays and full credits

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Blu-ray product details

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIB1201 / Cert PG

UK / 1927 / black and white / silent with music / 106 mins / BD50 / 1080p / 24fps / Original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / DTS-HD Master Sound 5.1 (1509kbps) and PCM 2.0 stereo audio (48k/24-bit)

DVD product details

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIV2025 / Cert PG

UK / 1927 / black and white / silent with music / 102 mins / DVD9 / PAL / Original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / Dolby Digital 5.1 surround audio (448kbps) and Dolby Digital 2.0 stereo audio (256 kbps)

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Images are available at www.image.net under BFI DVD

BFI DVDs are available from all good DVD retailers or by mail order from the BFI Shop Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/shop

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