



## Longford film found



A major find has just been made in *The Last Film Search* – the Australia-wide search being made for early films. A vast number are still undiscovered, and every day means further deterioration in their quality.

Films used to be produced on cellulose nitrate, which is subject to gradual decomposition. The rate varies according to storage conditions, but by now almost all films from the silent era would be reaching the end of their life span. Once such films have been recovered they are copied on to cellulose acetate film and placed in cold storage vaults.

The latest find is a particularly exciting one – a Raymond Longford film. Longford was a major director of the silent film era who received international recognition. He made 29 films in all – and this is the fourth to be found.



guessed it – the brother we first started with.

The woman who did all the suffering was played by Lottie Lyell, one of Australia's top silent screen stars. Only a few years after making the film she died of TB and little more is known of her life. Her relationship with Longford was both professional and personal and the affection he felt for her lasted for the rest of his life. He lived until 1959 – more than a quarter of a century after her death – but they are buried side by side in a Sydney cemetery.

Ironically, despite his brilliance as a director and the recognition he achieved in his prime, Longford ended his days working as a tally clerk on Sydney's wharves.

The film, now held in the National Film Archive, is not complete, and the National Library wonders if anyone knows the end of the story.

A dramatic moment in the film, with Lottie Lyell on the left. Below is a poster advertising the film and below left is Lottie Lyell again. She was one of the most popular Australian actresses of her day.



Raymond Longford

Entitled 'The Woman Suffers', it was part of the collection of an Adelaide film buff, Mr Murray Mathews, who hadn't realised it was a Longford film. Made in 1918, it has been described as Australia's first feminist film, though at the time it received only a limited showing because it was quickly banned by State Parliament from being shown in New South Wales. Presumably its storyline was considered too salacious for audiences of the time.

Its full title is 'The Woman Suffers – while the man goes free' and this is the theme. A young woman is seduced and her outraged brother seeks revenge on the seducer – only to find that the villain of the piece was himself seeking to avenge the wrong done to his own sister, by – you



### Lost!

—Her good name gone—her respect of herself—the respect of others—the love of a man she had trusted too much!

Gone because she was a woman! Because her brother had ruined another girl—and that girl's brother had wreaked his vengeance upon her!

An eye for an eye, life for life, honor for honor!



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