

# S.O. to Bexhill's Filming Locations, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 2:00pm

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Welcome to the Stepping Out walk on filming locations. I'm Alex, one of the museum's volunteers and today I'll be assisted by John and others.

Today we're going to be looking at the history, stories and places behind some of the televisual and movie productions in Bexhill. The walk is just over a mile distance, looking to finish close to Galley Hill.

It's all on the flat but as usual please be careful when crossing roads and be aware of other users on busy promenade.

## Introduction

Over the last century, a number of films have been made in Bexhill. The town's period architecture, accessible beaches and surrounding countryside were compelling features for producers looking to set the scene. On the small screen, we've been part of various drama's, music videos, documentary's, comedies and reality TV.

We will be visiting several filming locations today. If you are interested to see a map listing of all places where these scenes were shot and links to watch them, you may check out my website [Bexhill OpenStreetMap](#).

## Route

### *Bexhill Museum*

**The Star Inn.** [\[PHOTO 1\]](#) Quiet Woman, 1951.

Film based on a story by Ruth Adam; directed by John Gilling; starring Derek Bond, Jane Hylton and Dora Bryan. A young woman's past comes back to haunt her when she attempts to build a new life at an inn. Although the film is set in Romney Marsh, The Star Inn was used for external shots of the public house.

**Cooden Beach Station** [\[PHOTO 2\]](#) Piece of Cake, 1988.

A six-part television serial produced for ITV; directed by Ian Toynton; starring Neil Dudgeon, George Anton and Boyd Gaines. Based around the lives of a Royal Air Force fighter squadron during the early days of WWII and the Battle of Britain. A small segment in episode 5 shows two pilots leaving Cooden Beach Station by taxi.

### *Bexhill Museum – Clock Tower*

**West Parade.** [\[PHOTO 3\]](#) Keane, 2012.

Alternative-rock music video; directed by Lindy Heymann; starring the band Keane and many local people of Bexhill. The band members stroll along the promenade as they are surrounded by various entertainers, dancers, acrobats and bicyclists. Inspiration was drawn as this was where members of Keane spent their childhood.

### *Clock Tower – Metropole Lawns* ❶

**Metropole Lawns.** [PHOTO 4] Potter of the Yard, 1952.

First of three short films; directed by Oscar Burn and John Wall; starring John Laurie and Avis Scott. A Scotland Yard clerk poses as a mechanic to catch an escaped bank robber. From the 19<sup>th</sup> April 1952 edition of the Bexhill-on-Sea Observer filming was mostly in Brighton and a large bomb-damaged building was required in one scene – The Metropole Hotel. John Laurie was said to be wearing a Homburg hat, a rolled umbrella and a kitten tucked inside his overcoat! [bombed sep 1940] [no record]

**Sackville Road.** [PHOTO 5] A Set of Six, 1990.

A six-part television comedy series produced for Channel 4; directed by Gerald Scarfe and John Stroud; starring and written by Rowland Rivron. Six spoof documentary films were made following the lives of sextuplets who fell out with each other on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Episode 2 features David "Top Shot" Scrote, the most creative of the sextuplets, who is a staff photographer on the Bexhill-on-Sea Observer. The papers' office and staff all appeared in the programme. [john dowling]

### *Metropole Lawns – The Colonnade* ❷

**The Colonnade.** [PHOTO 6] Richard III, 1995.

Film based on the classic Shakespearean play; directed by Richard Loncraine; starring Ian McKellen, Annette Bening, Christopher Bowen and Robert Downey Jr. The murderous and deceitful 15th-century king is re-imagined in the setting of 1930s England. About 40 minutes into the film a scene is shown from the top of The Colonnade, where royal family members have a garden meeting at their seaside retreat, when the camera changes to face the house, the Royal Pavilion in Brighton is shown, hence why the domes were stylised to Mughal-Gothic architecture.

**De La Warr Pavilion.** [PHOTO 7] Double Confession, 1950.

Film adapted from a novel "All On a Summer's Day" by John Garden; directed by Ken Annakin; starring Derek Farr, Joan Hopkins and Peter Lorre. After his wife is murdered, the husband tries to divert suspicion from himself to someone else. Unfortunately, his scheme winds up getting him mixed up with some real murderers. Various scenes show Bexhill's seafront and Marina, with shots of the De La Warr Pavilion. [wrong staircase direction, filmset]

**De La Warr Pavilion.** Antiques Roadshow, 1995, 2007, 2008. Question Time, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2023.

Before we leave, can anyone tell me what TV show has been filmed here three times? One of the most valuable finds was a 1923 painting bought for its frame for £1, it was actually worth £1,000.

**Beach off Colonnade.** [\[PHOTO 8\]](#) Poirot: The ABC Murders, 1991 and 2018.

TV series based on the novel by Agatha Christie. Christie got to know Bexhill when her daughter Rosalind enrolled in Caledonia School for Girls in Cooden in 1928. First filmed for television in 1991 with David Suchet as Hercule Poirot, and a second adaptation 2018 where John Malkovich was cast. A retired detective is targeted by a taunting killer who sends letters signed "ABC", which must be decoded in order to discover the identity of the murderer. 'B' is set in Bexhill during the 1930s, with various scenes of The Colonnade and beach. [\[1991 groyne, 2018 beach hut\]](#) [\[the covert, clavering walk\]](#)

*The Colonnade – Coronation Bandstand* [📍 \[1895\]](#)

**Kursaal.** [\[PHOTO 9\]](#) Sherlock Holmes, 1912.

The first official Sherlock Holmes films were made in Bexhill; starring Georges Tréville. Of the eight silent 'two-reelers' filmed, only two survive. The interiors for the series were shot inside the Kursaal (now the location of Bexhill Sailing Club). When a move had to be made outdoors, Auckland House in Sidley was one chosen location. [\[opp pelham, wellington house, auckland close\]](#) [\[kursaal 1896-1936\]](#) [\[the copper beeches, the musgrave ritual\]](#)

**The Granville Hotel.** [\[PHOTO 10\]](#) The Only Hotel, 2003.

Short independent film. Arriving in England from America in search of her father, Courtney Francis, a young, insecure woman, finds her hopes of being able to start a new life with him in pieces when she discovers he has long since started a new family. Without care she runs away and soon finds herself lost in the deserted back streets of London where she is immediately in danger as two muggers attack her. She escapes them and finds refuge hiding in a large rundown hotel. Here she is offered accommodation if she works to pay the rent and with seemingly no more choices she resigns herself to living there. [\[fire 2003\]](#) [\[no record\]](#)

??? [\[PHOTO 11\]](#) Children of Men, 2006.

Film based on P. D. James' 1992 novel by the same name; directed by Alfonso Cuarón (kwah-ROHN); starring Julianne Moore and Clive Owen. In 2027, in a chaotic world in which women have somehow become infertile, a former activist agrees to help transport a miraculously pregnant woman to a sanctuary at sea. The sanctuary is a refugee camp in Bexhill, although it was never filmed here. Perhaps it will be recreated later this year...

??? [\[PHOTO 12\]](#) Six Minutes to Midnight, 2020.

Film based loosely on a true story of the Augusta-Victoria College, a finishing school for daughters of the Nazi elite, located in Bexhill. Directed by Andy Goddard, starring Eddie Izzard, Judi Dench and Nigel Lindsay. Although set in Bexhill, nothing was actually filmed here, although there are photos of the actual school, classrooms and girls before the end credits roll. [\[128 Dorset Road\]](#)

*Coronation Bandstand – Shelter No.2* 4 [1896]

**Marine Mansions.** [PHOTOS 13 & 14] Never Let Me Go, 2010.

Film based on a novel by Kazuo Ishiguro (KAH-zoo-oh ish-ih-GUHR-oh); directed by Mark Romanek; starring Keira Knightley, Carey Mulligan and Andrew Garfield. Set in an alternative dystopian timeline where three friends become entangled in a love triangle. In the latter half of the film, De La Warr Parade, Shelter No. 2 and Marine Mansions make an appearance. [japanese novel] [doors and gates] [berkeley mansions]

*Shelter No.2 – Shelter No.3* 5 [1921]

**Shelter No.3.** [PHOTO 15] Double Confession, 1950.

Another scene from Double Confession. It's interesting to note that the film was believed to be lost until a 35mm print was discovered in 2013, which was the first time anyone had seen it since a television broadcast in 1962. [henry edwards, shelter man]

*Shelter No.3 – Galley Hill* 6

**Galley Hill.** [PHOTO 16] It's a Bet, 1935.

Adapted from a novel "Hide and I'll Find You" by Marcus McGill; directed by Alexander Esway; starring Gene Gerrard, Helen Chandler and Judy Kelly. A young English reporter makes a bet with a wealthy publisher that he can disappear for a month. In his absence the publisher makes much of the mysterious disappearance in an attempt to boost the circulation of his newspaper. A scene about 15 minutes into the film shows the main character jumping from St Leonard's 'New Palace' Pier (dismantled in the early 1950s) and swimming to Galley Hill. Upon reaching the shore, Briggs steals another swimmer's clothes, is chased up the cliff and takes off on a waiting bus. [all in a few mins]

**Finish**

**Author: Alexis Markwick, 2023**

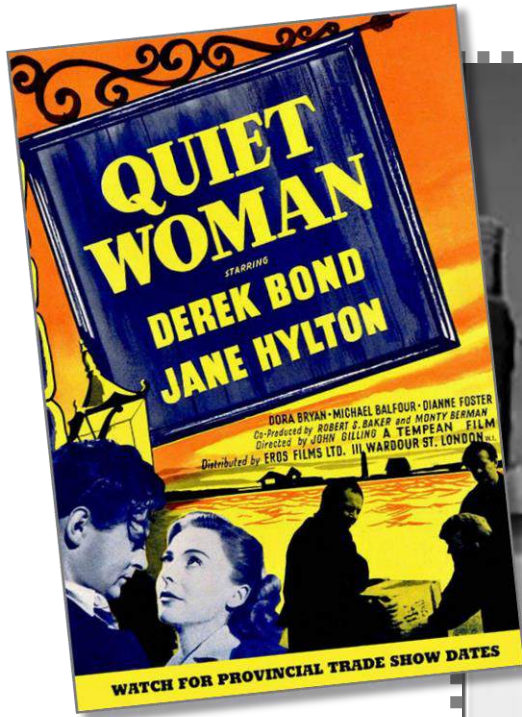
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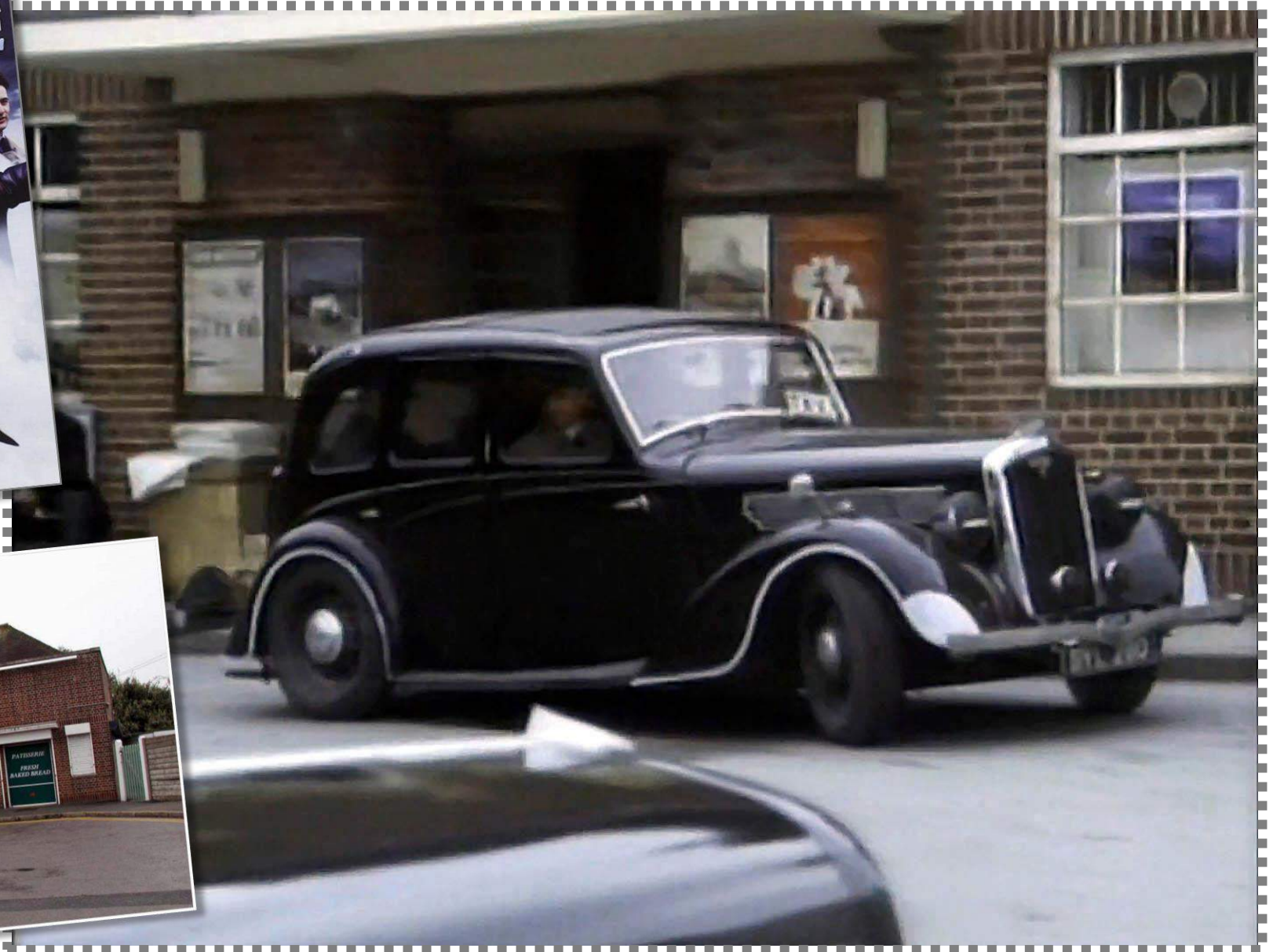
**Note: The tour was put together to raise funds for Bexhill Museum, so if you enjoyed it please consider sending them donation at <https://bexhillmuseum.org.uk>**



#1: Normans Bay | Quiet Woman | 1951 Film

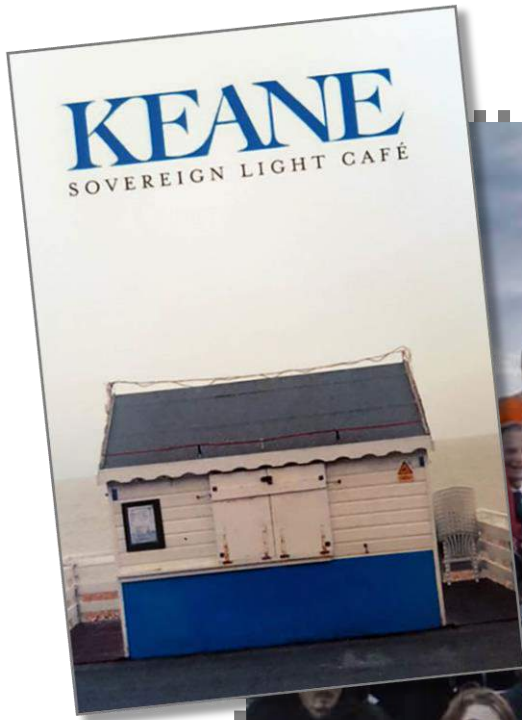


#2: Cooden Beach Station | Piece of Cake | 1988 Television





#3: West Parade | Keane | 2012 Music Video



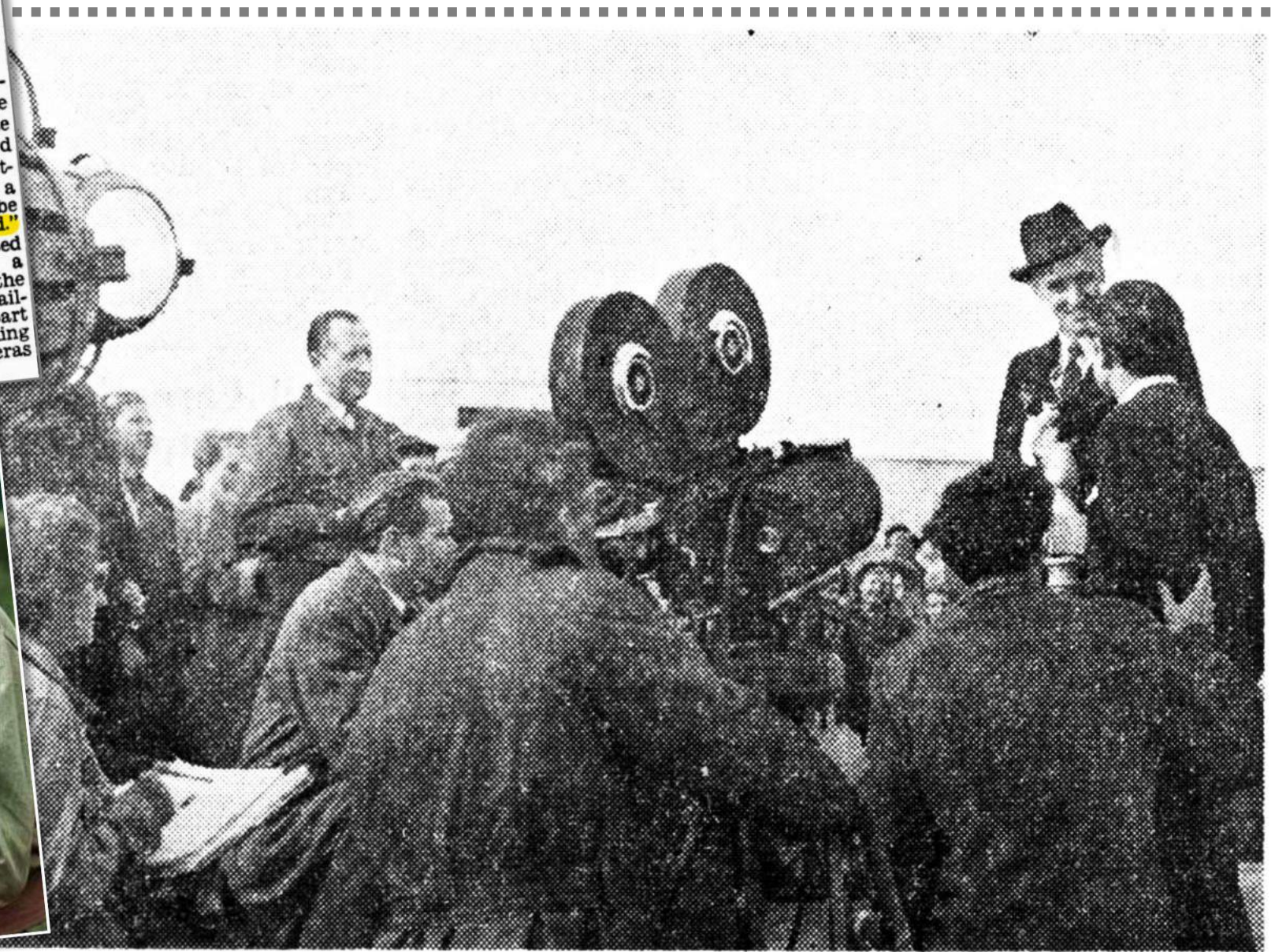
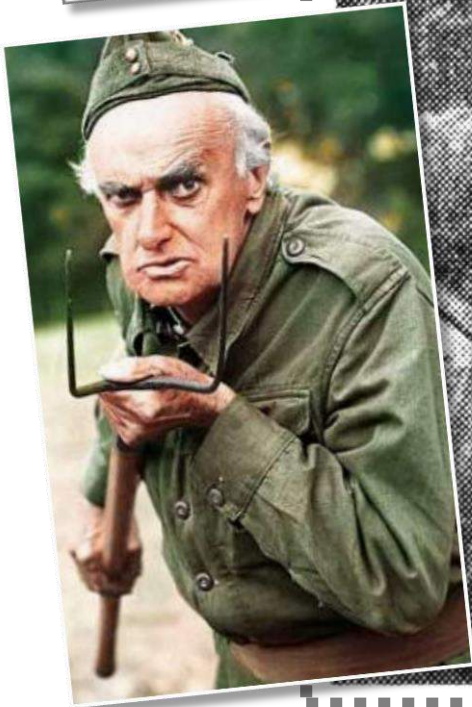


#### #4: Metropole Lawns | Potter of the Yard | 1952 Short Film

### Film-Making on the Sea Front

A SURPRISE awaited promenaders just west of the Colonnade on Tuesday. Quite unexpectedly they wandered into the middle of the "shooting" of film sequences for a new series of pictures, to be entitled "**Potter of the Yard.**"

The crowd grew, fascinated by the novel spectacle of a camera unit engaged in the business of film-making, entailing much rehearsal on the part of the actors before everything was just right and the cameras turned.

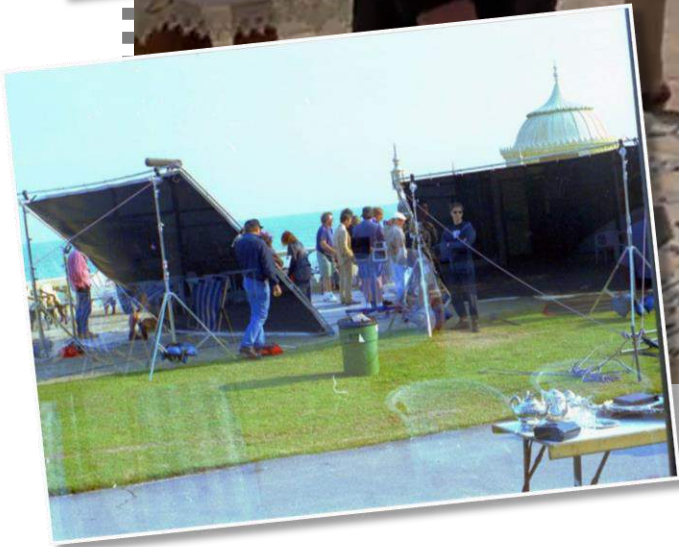




#5: Sackville Road | A Set of Six | 1990 Television



## #6: The Colonnade | Richard III | 1995 Film

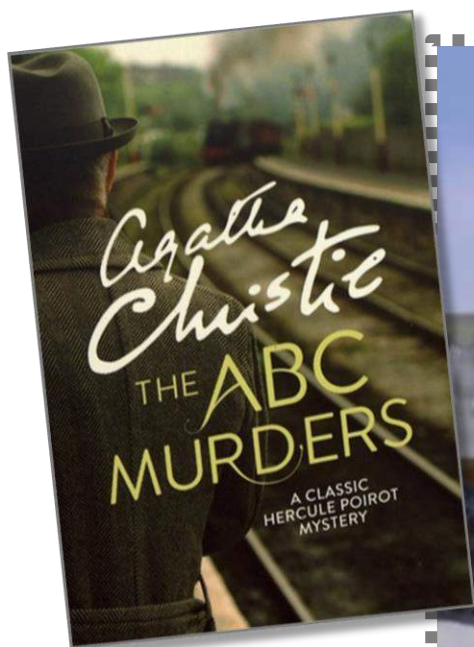




#7: De La Warr Pavilion | Double Confession | 1950 Film



#8: Central Parade | Poirot | 1992, 2018 Television





#9: Kursaal | Sherlock Holmes | 1912 Film





#10: Granville Hotel / The Grand Hotel | The Only Hotel | 2003 Short Film



#11: ??? | Children of Men | 2006 Film



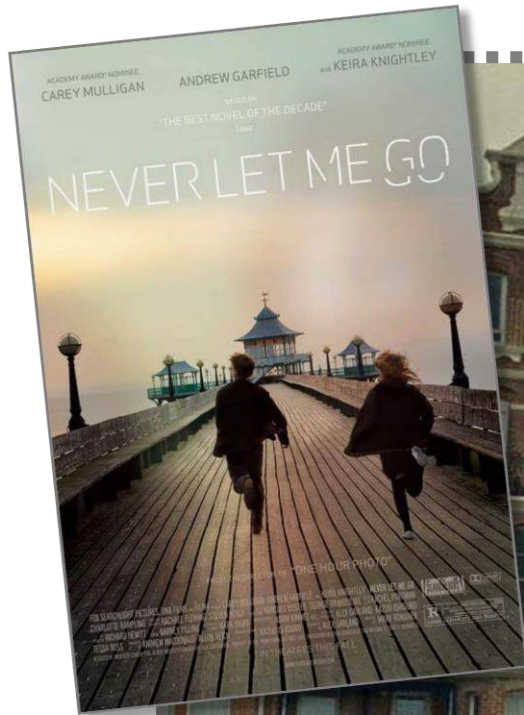


#12: ??? | Six Minutes to Midnight | 2020 Film





### #13: Marine Mansions | Never Let Me Go | 2010 Film







#15: Shelter No.3 | Double Confession | 1950 Film



#16: Galley Hill | It's a Bet | 1935 Film

