

Woking Mosque events covered in newsreel films

Footage Provided by British Pathé
Licensed for screening at the Woking Muslim
Mission Centenary Event,
4th May 2013

Recognition of Woking Muslim Mission

- The coverage of events at the Woking Mosque in the media of the time indicates its recognition as the national centre of Islam in the U.K.
- Its Imam was considered as head of the Muslim community of Britain.

Coverage in newsreel films

- The British Pathé news organisation filmed more than a dozen occasions at the Woking Mosque between 1914 and 1958.
- These film clips can be viewed on the British Pathé website. Here we show five of them.
- The BBC and ITV also filmed some events at the Woking Mosque in the 1950s and 1960s.

1. Eid-ul-Fitr, 3rd June 1954

- Reported in *The Islamic Review*, August 1954:
- More than 1500 visitors came.
- Muslims represented all nationalities.
- Ambassadors and embassy officials of Iraq, Korea, Liberia, Pakistan, Malay, Jordan and India, came.
- Imam was Dr S.M. Abdullah.

Eid-ul-Fitr, 3rd June 1954: Film clip



2. Eid-ul-Fitr, 15th December 1936

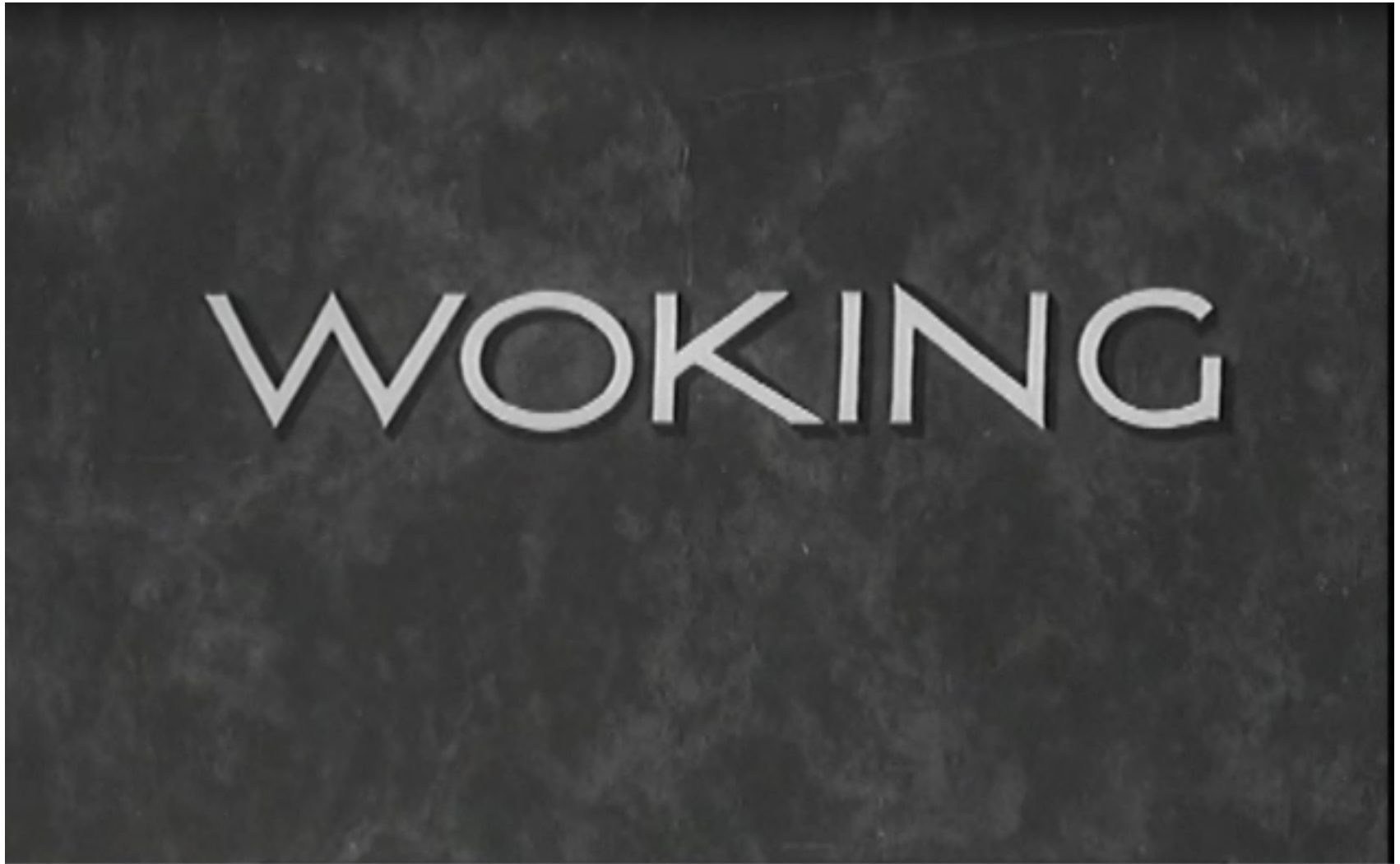
- Reported in *The Islamic Review*, February 1937:
- 500 people came — English converts to Islam and Muslims from Turkey, Iran, Russia, Nigeria, Egypt and India.
- Ambassadors and diplomats of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and India also attended.
- Imam was Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad.

Eid-ul-Fitr, 15th December 1936

- Report says:

“with the exception of Mecca, nowhere but at the Woking Mosque is there presented the opportunity of seeing as many different nationalities assembled and united by the sole bond of Islam — the religion of peace and amity”.

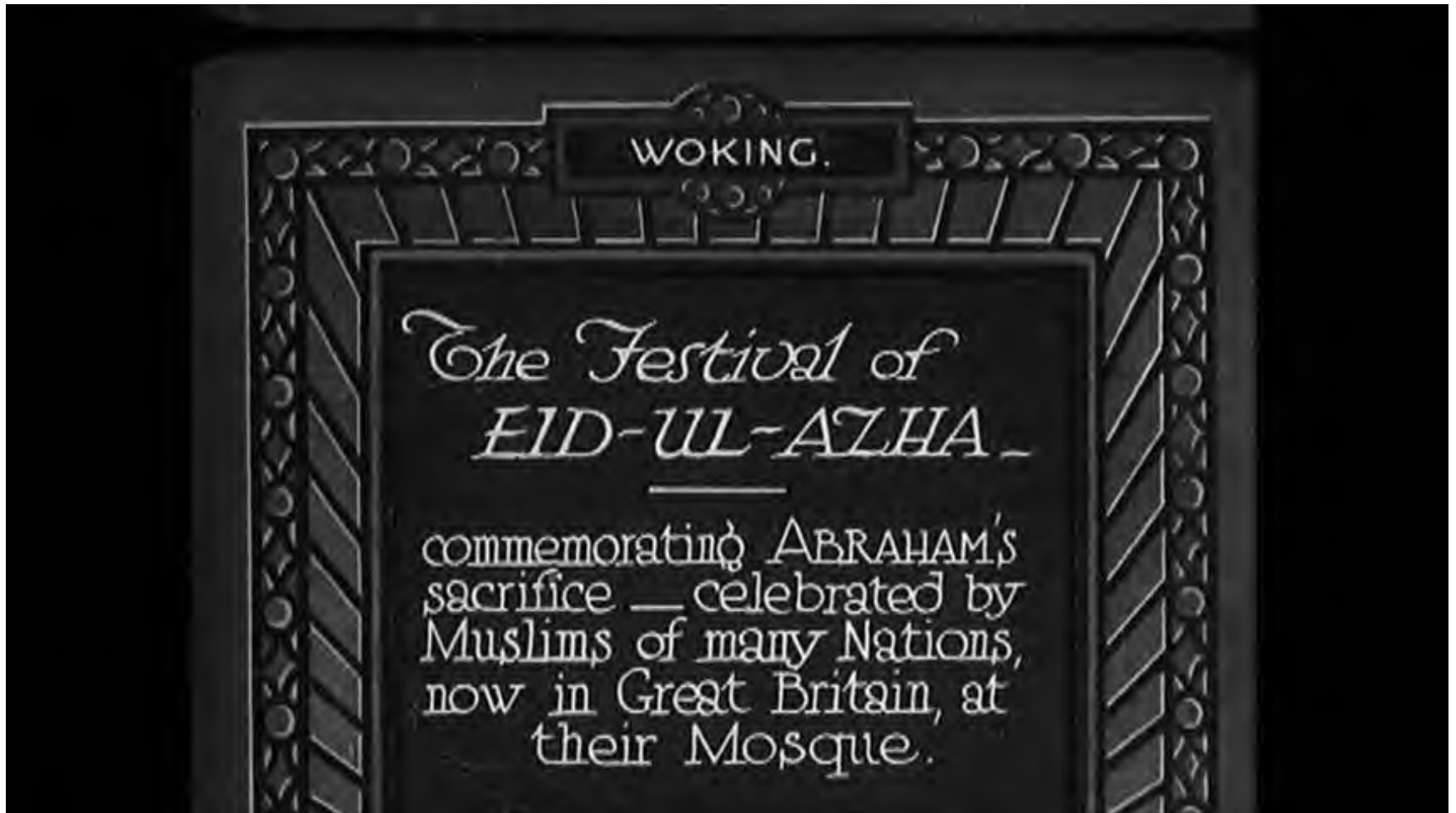
Eid-ul-Fitr, 15th December 1936: Film clip



3. Eid-ul-Adha, 6th April 1933

- Reported in *The Islamic Review*, July 1933:
- “The gathering was large, and Muslims of all nationalities comprised the congregation and the assembly round the festive board.”
- Near end of clip, passing train can be heard.
- Lord Headley can be seen in the front row.
- Imam was Maulana Abdul Majid.

Eid-ul-Adha, 6th April 1933: Film clip



4. Her Highness Begum (Lady Ruler) of Bhopal visits Woking Mosque, 9th October 1925

- Reported in *The Islamic Review*, December 1925.
- Her name was Sultan Jehan. She was the daughter and successor of Shah Jehan Begum of Bhopal who had funded the construction of the Woking Mosque.

From *The Islamic Review* report

- A welcome address was presented by Lord Headley on behalf of the British Muslim Society, in which it was said:
- “We see in Your Highness a perfect example of the true Muslim lady, but besides that ... we welcome in the person of Your Highness, one who is second to none among men in wisdom, in culture and administrative ability.”

From *The Islamic Review* report

- In her reply, she said:
- “...even in the twentieth century ... there are people in Europe who entertain absolutely incorrect ideas about the teachings of the Islamic faith. They regard Islam as a militant creed which cannot be adapted to the requirements of modern civilization. They suppose it to be inimical to all progress ...”

From *The Islamic Review* report

- “Your Society claims to have undertaken the task of correcting these misconceptions and educating the British public in the right interpretation of Islam ... I wish you every success in this noble work. ...”
- “In conclusion, I congratulate Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the trustees of the Mosque and the members of the Society, on the noble work they are doing...”

About the film clip

- Film clip shows Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din accompanying Her Highness.
- Lord Headley can be seen with them at the beginning of the clip.
- The first man in the clip, in the foreground, is Habibullah Lovegrove, a leading British Muslim.

Begum of Bhopal visit, 9th October 1925: Film clip



Shah Jehan and Sultan Jehan



Acknowledgement: *The Begums of Bhopal* by Shaharyar M. Khan, year 2000

This book also says: “She formally discarded the burqa in 1928, at the age of 70. She reasoned that she had to set the example for Muslim women... to carry forward the torch of education and emancipation.”

5. Visit of the Indian *Khilafat* Delegation, March 1920

- Following the defeat of the Ottoman empire in the First World War, this delegation came to see the Prime Minister Lloyd George, on behalf of Muslims of India, to present the case for preserving the Turkish Caliphate as the Caliph was a symbolic, temporal successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Indian *Khilafat* Delegation, 1920

- The delegation was led by Muhammad Ali Jauhar (d. 1931), a famous Indian Muslim nationalist leader, journalist and orator, who is a household name in Indian subcontinent history.
- The meeting they held at the Woking Mosque is reported in *The Islamic Review*, April 1920.

From *The Islamic Review* Report

- “The three members of the Indian Khilafat Delegation paid a visit to the Woking Mosque on Sunday, 21st March, 1920. They drew a large gathering of British and Indian Muslims and non-Muslim English men and women. The Mosque being unable to hold the congregation, the meeting was held on the lawn on the premises of the Mosque. It was presided over by an English Muslim, Prof. H. M. Leon, Ph.D., LL.D.”
- The man called Prof. Leon is the same as the well known W.H. Abdullah Quilliam, who led a Muslim community in Liverpool from the 1890s to 1908.

About the film clip

- It first shows Muhammad Ali Jauhar addressing a meeting in the grounds of the Woking Mosque.
- Then a group led by him emerges from the Mosque.
- The Imam, Maulana Sadr-ud-Din, can be seen in the group emerging from the Mosque, wearing turban.

Khilafat Delegation visit, 21st March 1920: Film clip

