



So one day Griffith came up to me and said: "You know about the San Francisco Exposition?"

"Yes," I said. "I was up there."

"Do you remember the interior of the Doge's Palace in the Italian section?"

"Yes, I remember it very well."

"I want you to go up to San Francisco—see if you can find any of the people who worked on it. See if you can get them down here."

The exposition was long since over, and the people who worked on it had left. I noticed a number of plaster shops around town—shops which made art objects in plaster of Paris—and here I got most of my leads. The shops were run by Italians, and eventually I tracked down three of the craftsmen who had worked on the Italian section. I made a deal with them: "You're going to come to Hollywood," I said. "I'll pay you so much a week, I'll pay your fare, and I'll guarantee you so many months' work."

I brought down two sculptors and a painter. I was warned before I left that the painter was an awful lush—but, boy, what an artist! He was the man who had done some of the beautiful aging work that Griffith had noticed. He wasn't an Italian; he was actually a Frenchman and became known as Frenchie.

...

One of the other guys I brought down from San Francisco was put in charge of our plaster workshop. We didn't have a plaster shop when he arrived, but he developed one, and he developed lots of people to work in it. He was a wonderful sculptor, and he used to make models in clay to show Griffith what he had in mind. All those things in *Babylon*—the lions, the elephants, and all the other statuary—were the work of these men.

Griffith was very keen on those elephants. He wanted one on top of each of the eight pedestals in Belshazzar's palace...

Joseph HENABERY¹

6 - From *Birth of a Nation to Intolerance / The Parade's Gone By...*, Kevin BROWLOW, 1968
© University of California Press, Berkeley • Los Angeles, 1996 [p. 53]

¹ "Henabery played Abraham Lincoln in *The Birth of a Nation* and was an assistant director and actor on *Intolerance*" K. B. *Interviewed in Hollywood, Dec. 1964*