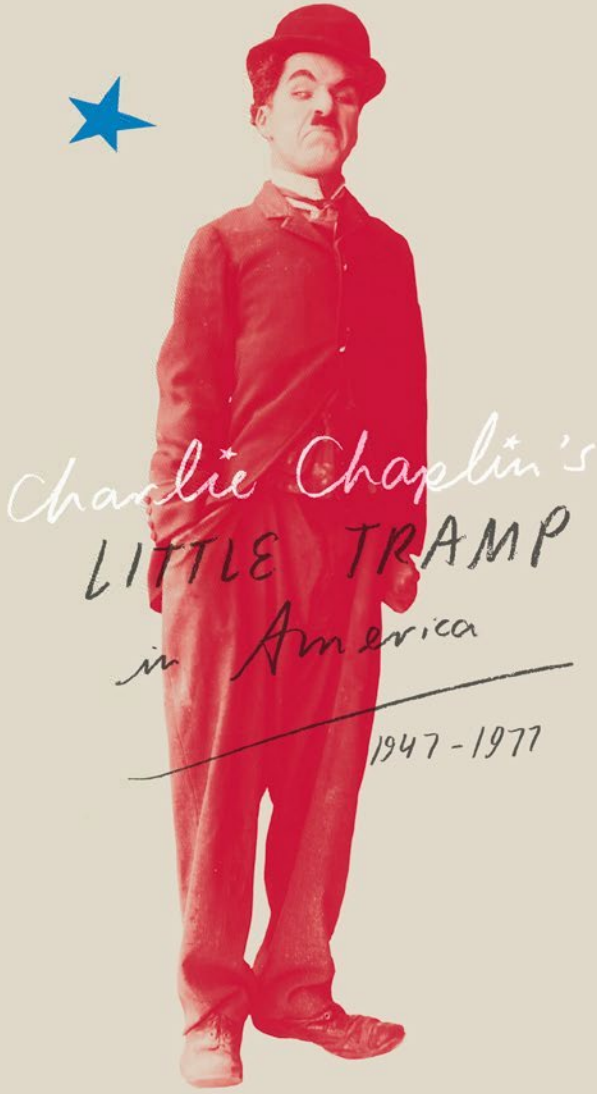

Charlie Chaplin's LITTLE TRAMP in America

1947 - 1977

LISA STEIN HAVEN

Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp in America, 1947–77

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Lisa Stein Haven
Ohio University
Zanesville, Ohio, USA

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To Chuck and David, without whom this book could not exist

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Cover photo of Charlie Chaplin in 1915, courtesy Roy Export S.A.S. Scan courtesy Cineteca di Bologna.

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Introduction: The Death of the Little Tramp and Chaplin in the Aftermath

Following the end of World War II, America became increasingly paranoid about anything remotely foreign or different, with this paranoia focusing itself more and more on political philosophies, such as communism, outside its comfort zone and realm of understanding. This paranoia resulted in the House on Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) begun in 1938, a committee that proved that the climate of hysteria in America at the time could and did lead to the loss of basic freedoms for suspected citizens and others, in what amounted to a twentieth-century witch hunt—one that separated wives and husbands, fathers or mothers from their children, and created a situation in Hollywood that led to the dismissal of actors, directors, writers, producers and others in the film industry. It was amidst this tense environment that Charlie Chaplin and his often naïve-seeming political pronouncements—a behavior he enjoyed and came to seek out more and more after his 1931–1932 world tour—began to result in problems for him in the media and later at the box office. With the last appearance of the Little Tramp persona in either his 1936 *Modern Times* or 1940 *The Great Dictator* (there is some contention in regard to this issue, which does not affect this investigation), Chaplin's American audience began to forget what it was that attracted them to this British filmmaker in the first place, or, as Richard Schickel suggests, a new generation of filmgoers inhabiting cinema seats never experienced the Little Tramp phenomenon firsthand, and so, owed him no loyalty:[1]

L.S. Haven, *Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp in America, 1947–77*,
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> The feeling of anyone born after, say, 1930 for The Little Fellow is bound to be rather abstract; we simply did not experience the excitement of discovery, that sense of possessing (and being possessed by) The Little Fellow that other generations felt. We knew who he was, of course, and our elders endlessly guaranteed his greatness to us. But he remained something of an abstraction: a figure to be appreciated, of course, but impossible to love in the way he was loved by those who had been present at the creation.[2]

Five years after HUAC's "Blacklist" hearings in 1947, Chaplin would leave America, never to reside there again.

But this was not the end of the story of Chaplin's Little Tramp and American culture, for in fact, a resurgence of the endearing characterization was bubbling underground all during the postwar period. This investigation of that resurgence has to begin, of course, with Chuck Maland's seminal *Chaplin and American Culture: The Evolution of a Star Image* in which he asserts that: "In the 1960s, particularly between 1960 and 1964, Chaplin's star image began to take on more positive associations in the United States."[3] Maland spends an entire chapter, which he entitles "The Exiled Monarch and the Guarded Restoration, 1953–77," discussing this gradual turning of the tide in America, in a way that strongly suggests, as does this investigation, that Chaplin and his Little Tramp emerge at the end of this period having finessed a re-invigoration of his star image, "one much more positive, which emphasized Chaplin the virtuoso filmmaker and aging family patriarch, as well as, once again, the adorable Charlie."[4] My current investigation intends only to build upon the apparatus Maland has already constructed, not to destroy, change or undermine it. However, I will respectfully suggest here that Chaplin's restoration—the resurgence of his Little Tramp persona—had begun several years before this time period (at least by 1947) and amidst the upheaval surrounding Chaplin's politics. The Beat generation poets and their immediate forebears, the Bohemians, along with film screenings—both legal and illegal—a surge in Chaplin merchandising that included news coverage, biographies, and products bearing the copyrighted image, all contributed in this revitalization of the Little Tramp figure, thereby solidifying him once and for all in the minds and hearts of Americans as an important icon of American culture still recognized today.

Chaplin's Farewell to the Little Tramp

Charlie Chaplin describes his intentions and motivations behind this character in his 1964 autobiography: "I wanted everything a contradiction: the pants baggy, the coat tight, the hat small and the shoes large [...]. You know this fellow is many-sided, a tramp, a gentleman, a poet, a dreamer, a lonely fellow, always hopeful of romance and adventure."[5] Members of his audience, such as Wyndham Lewis, viewed the character as "always the little-fellow-put-upon—the naïf, child-like individual, bullied by the massive brutes by whom he was surrounded, yet whom he invariably vanquished."[6] A. G. Gardiner, in his book *Portraits and Portents* (1926) notes that Chaplin "comes into the great, big, bullying world like a visitor out of fairy land, a small, shuffling figure, grotesque yet wistful, a man yet a child, a simpleton who outwits the cunning, moving through an atmosphere of the wildest farce, yet touching everything with just that suggestion of emotion and seriousness that keeps the balance true. He is in the world but not of it, and the sense of his aloofness and loneliness is emphasized by the queer automatic actions that suggest a spritelike intelligence informing a mechanical doll" (Fig. 1.1).[7]

Also worth noting here, and something I devote more energy to in my introduction to Chaplin's 1933–1934 travelogue *A Comedian Sees the World*, is the phenomenon of the film-viewing public's frequent conflation of Chaplin the man with his Little Tramp persona. When word got out that Chaplin was to appear somewhere in person, the public thronged to see him, but expected to find his mustachioed, esoterically dressed but loveable tramp—and were always disappointed in that regard. However, in his publicity materials, Chaplin and his publicists took advantage of this propensity in his public to conflate the two "characters" and capitalized upon that whenever possible. Clearly, Chaplin's public post-1952 possessed this same propensity—one that facilitated his quick resurgence during the period.

In many ways, the innocence of the Little Tramp persona, though, made it difficult for Chaplin to return to him after his 1931–1932 world tour—a tour arranged to promote the silent *City Lights* (1931) several years after the onset of sound technology in film, but also a tour that changed Chaplin's relationship with politics that would shortly change his art as well. This situation suggests that, in fact, *Modern Times* (1936), Chaplin's first film after his return from the tour and essentially another silent, was his farewell to the familiar persona. Its gags are gags from other

Fig. 1.1 Chaplin's Little Tramp, 1915. From the archives of Roy Export Company Establishment. Scan courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna

beloved Chaplin films: the skating scene from *The Rink* (1917), the escalator scene from *The Floorwalker* (1916) and the café scene from both *Caught in a Cabaret* (1914) and again *The Rink* (1917), just to name a few. It is the first Little Tramp film in which he meets a friend, Paulette Goddard's Gamin, and leaves the film in his/her company. Others believe the goodbye to the Little Tramp begun in *Modern Times*, then, is completed in Chaplin's first talking picture, *The Great Dictator* (1940), which features dual characters, the Jewish barber and Adenoid Hynkel, both of whom look like Chaplin's familiar characterization. The Jewish barber's speech at the end of the film is as much Chaplin's own[8] as the character's, and, consequently, it becomes the final pronouncement for that character and everything Chaplin himself has attempted to make of him.[9] The end of the speech—the end of the film—can be considered the swan song of the Little Tramp. In accordance with this theory, the release of *The Great Dictator* on March 17, 1941 marks his assumed date of death, for Chaplin never returned to him.

Chaplin in America, 1941–1952

After Chaplin's abandonment of the Little Tramp persona, he spent a tumultuous last ten years in America. President Roosevelt asked him to give *The Great Dictator* speech at a Constitution Hall event the night before his third inauguration, January 19, 1941, then later the same year for the DAR, also in Washington, DC, for a radio spot.[10] He soon found himself in trouble due to the mental instability of an actress he considered for the lead role in an abandoned film project of the play *Shadow and Substance*. Chaplin, however, continued to rankle the ire of the American public and its government by openly promoting his far-left politics.[11] His speech for the Artists' Front to Win the War, given on October 16, 1942 at Carnegie Hall, contained a host of quotable elements, still oft-referenced today, such as "Any people who can fight as the Russian people are fighting now […] it is a pleasure and a privilege to call them comrades,"[12] and "I don't need citizenship papers. I have never had patriotism in that sense for any country, for I am patriotic to humanity as a whole. I am a citizen of the world" (Fig. 1.2).[13] Then on December 16, 1942, Chaplin took part in a radio broadcast of Robert Arden's *America Looks Abroad*, with other panelists, including biographer Emil Ludwig, actors Nigel Bruce and Sir Cedric Hardwicke, and director Frank Lloyd. Chaplin's participation is

passionate, especially in his defense of Russia. At one point, he remarks with fervor:

> While people are anti-Communist, I'm going to be Communistic. I'm going to be pro-Communist, in other words. I'm not a Communist—I'm not anything, but when I see there are people who are deliberately trying to divide this country, they've used the bugaboo—Hitler used the bugaboo of Communism in order to get the Allies to fight on his side against Russia. We didn't fall for that. No.

By 1943, he had been brought up on charges of disregarding the Mann Act (which made it illegal to transport a woman over state lines for the purpose of engaging in sex with her[14]) with the aforementioned unstable actress, Joan Barry. While Chaplin easily won this particular case, Barry's attorneys brought him back into court in answer to a paternity suit, suggesting that Chaplin was the father of Barry's child. Although blood-type evidence proved this to the contrary, it was not admissible in court at the time and Chaplin was ordered to pay for the child's care until adulthood.[15] Betwixt and between these events, Chaplin met and married Oona O'Neill, only daughter of American playwright Eugene O'Neill. She was 18; he was 54. They were married on June 16, 1943, in Carpinteria, California.

In April 1946, Chaplin had mounted his second[16] non-Tramp project in earnest, a film called *Monsieur Verdoux*, which was loosely based on the historical character Henri Landru, a bluebeard who was captured and put on trial in 1921, the same year Chaplin was on a brief homecoming tour of London and Paris.[17] Chaplin used the Bluebeard story to address larger issues, including atomic bomb annihilation. At the end of the film, Henri Verdoux, faced with the guillotine, offers the court that has condemned him these lines:

> "As for being a mass killer—does not the world encourage it? Is it not building weapons of destruction for the sole purpose of mass killing? Has it not blown unsuspecting women and little children to pieces, and done it very scientifically? As a mass killer, I'm an amateur by comparison."[18]

Needless to say, his change from the beloved Little Tramp character to a sinister Bluebeard,[19] coupled with his left-leaning politics and penchant for young women, all added up to considerable trouble for him.[20] *Monsieur Verdoux* received overwhelmingly harsh reviews when it was released on

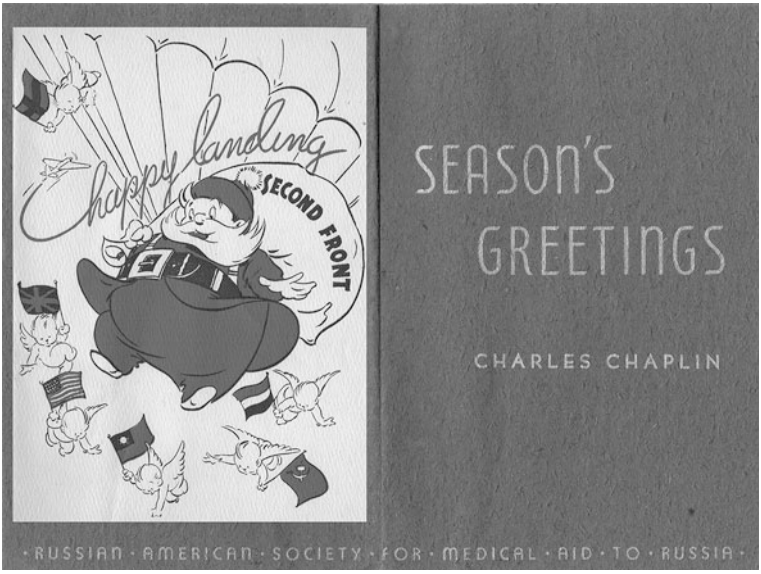

Fig. 1.2 Composite photo of Chaplin Christmas card, Dec. 1942. Author's collection, Zanesville, Ohio

April 11, 1947, and was pulled from theaters early. Some organizations, like the American Legion and the Theater Owners of Ohio promoted a boycott of the film entirely.[21] Myron C. Fagan reported in "Hollywood Reds Continue Treason" that New York TV station WPIX had scheduled a series of Chaplin films, and after only one telecast, the Catholic War veterans swung into action: "the flood of protests was so great the Station cancelled the Series. This little job was spearheaded by Joseph Fehrenback, commander of New Jersey's Hudson County Department of the CWV."[22] It was at this point that longtime Chaplin admirer and film critic James Agee of *Time* and *The Nation* came to the rescue, devoting three long review columns to the film in *The Nation* and beginning a re-invigoration of the Little Tramp persona and of Chaplin himself in America. Beat poets Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac both discussed the film in correspondence written in 1948 and evidence of its effect on them found its way into lines of their poetry[23] (Fig. 1.3).

Also in 1947, Chaplin became one of 43 Hollywood individuals to receive a subpoena from the House on Un-American Activities Committee

Fig. 1.3 Chaplin as Monsieur Verdoux, 1947. *Monsieur Verdoux* © Roy Export S. A. S. Scan courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna

(HUAC).[24] Together, he and his wife supported progressive candidate Henry Wallace in the 1948 election by donating a rare $500 and attending his rallies. Later that year, he became deeply involved in the unceremonious deportation of composer Hanns Eisler, a known communist, even uncharacteristically writing to artists in Europe, such as Pablo Picasso, for help protesting America's decision in the case.[25] Shortly thereafter in December, the New York Department of the Catholic War Veterans strongly insisted that Attorney General Tom Clark and Secretary of State George C. Marshall start a campaign to get Chaplin deported.[26] In May 1949, Senator Harry P. Cain, piggybacked on this effort and suggested publicly that Chaplin's activities on behalf of Eisler "skirts perilously close to treason."[27] Also in 1949, Chaplin became a sponsor of the much-maligned Waldorf Peace conference, the Congress of American-Soviet Friendship and the People's Radio Foundation. He is also known to have contributed, over the years, to both *The New Masses* and *Soviet Russia Today*, noteworthy communist publications.

Fig. 1.4 Chaplin as Calvero. *Limelight* © Roy Export S.A.S. Scan courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna

After 1944, Chaplin and his wife Oona had begun having children: Geraldine in 1944, Michael in 1946, Josephine in 1949 and Victoria in 1951. Then in 1950, he embarked on what would be his final American film, *Limelight* (1952), one that was both a sort of memoir and a fam-

ily project, for all of his children and his half-brother Wheeler Dryden claimed parts in the film. Oona is believed to have been an understudy for the Claire Bloom character, Thereza, thereby making it a true "family affair" (Fig. 1.4). Unfortunately, however warm and fuzzy this new film endeavor, the American public at the time were having none of it, the film industry included: "Coming on top of Chaplin's fellow-traveling, which was now pretty well known, even in Hollywood, the [Joan] Barry case made his name mud to huge sections of the film colony, whose leaders were wearying of the embarrassments Chaplin constantly brought the industry."[28,29] This, and the situation that Chaplin's was the only completely autonomous studio in Hollywood were facts that few could forgive. It was time for Chaplin to go.

J. Edgar Hoover had opened a file on Charlie Chaplin all the way back in 1922. In August 1948, he finally received word that a Security Index Card had been filed on Chaplin, listing him as an Alien Communist, thereby allowing the FBI to detain him in the event of a national emergency.[30] Still, the case against Chaplin had turned cold by 1950, until July of that year, when former Communist turned FBI informant Louis F. Budenz named 400 "concealed Communists"[31] including Chaplin, information that worked to immediately reinvigorate the FBI's interest in his case. Then in July 1952, the INS re-issued Chaplin his re-entry permit for an upcoming trip to promote *Limelight* abroad, a trip that would include his wife Oona and young children. On September 9, Hoover and Attorney General James McGranery met and decided to revoke the re-entry permit after all, which they did after Chaplin and his family left the Port of New York on September 19.[32] This decision caused some consternation in the INS. Commissioner A. R. Mackey voiced the opinion that if Chaplin forced the issue, the administration would have no grounds to exclude him.[33] Much to their relief, however, Chaplin announced in April 1953 that he would not return, noting that "I have been the object of lies and vicious propaganda by powerful reactionary groups who by their influence and by the aid of America's yellow press have created an unhealthy atmosphere in which liberal minded individuals can be singled out and persecuted."[34,35] This persecution caused Chaplin to be deemed a worthy cause célèbre in poems by Beat poets Bob Kaufman and again Ginsberg. Bohemian poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti adopted the persecuted Little Tramp as a figure for the poet gadfly ("enemy of the state") that would remain central to his art throughout the period. He and business partner Peter D. Martin even named their San Francisco bookstore, City

Lights Books, and City Lights Press after Chaplin's 1931 film. And, even Bob Dylan began to think of his connection to Chaplin before every performance and on into his daily civilian life: "If I'm onstage, my idol—even my biggest idol when I'm onstage, the one that's running through my head all the time, is Charlie Chaplin."[36]

Switzerland, 1953–1977

It took the Chaplins about a year to decide to settle in a small town on the Swiss Riviera, Corsier-sur-Vevey, in a house called the Manoir de Ban. Here, Oona and Charlie would have four more children, for a total of eight for their marriage: Eugene, Annie, Jane and Christopher—the last being born in 1962, when Chaplin was 73 years old (Fig. 1.5). The first year or so of his residence in Europe was filled with appearances and visits with personalities who would've added volumes to his FBI file and enhanced his appeal among the Beats and other countercultural groups. In 1954 he shared a prize with composer Dmitri Shostakovich, known as the World Peace Council prize, sponsored by the Soviets (Chaplin donated the cash award). Later that year, he dined with communist China's Chou En-lai in Geneva. Then in 1956 he met with the USSR's new leaders, Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin, while they were in Britain.[37,38] Being in Britain, the country of his citizenship, but one in which he could only reside six months of the year to avoid stiff taxes, Chaplin made arrangements for his next film, his first filmed outside the United States without his loyal company of Chaplin Studios employees and the security of being in command of all aspects of film production, as was his habit. He chose to film it at Shepperton Studios in London, completing the film in a mere twelve weeks (Fig. 1.6).

A King in New York would be Chaplin's retaliatory film against the United States. In it, Chaplin plays King Shahdov of Estrovia, a peace-loving monarch who is overthrown at the start of the film by atomic-bomb-loving extremists. Shahdov and his constant Ambassador Jaume seek refuge in New York City, hoping to sell their plan of nuclear disarmament to the American government. Within the film, no American person or agency is protected from Chaplin's satire, which, even so, was not biting enough for most reviewers. Chaplin does his best to lambast HUAC, the American justice system, and American culture as well, using his twelve-year-old son Michael as the film's embodiment of the suffering the HUAC hearings caused innocent people.[39] As Maland and others

Fig. 1.5 Chaplin Family Christmas card; 25th wedding anniversary. Left to right, back row: Josephine, Jane, Michael, Christopher, Geraldine, Eugene, Victoria, Annie. Seated: Chaplin and Oona. ©Yves Debraine

note, Chaplin never negotiated for the film to be released in the United States in 1957, when it hit the European market, because he was sure it would make no money, and would be banned or boycotted in most places. It wasn't until 1973, just following Chaplin's return to America one last time, that the film reached audiences there in wide release.[40] By that time, as Roger Ebert's review at the time suggests, American feeling against Chaplin had softened considerably:

> "A King in New York" doesn't rank with Chaplin's greatest work, but it is good stuff and there are three or four scenes of marvelous comic invention. And it's a hopeful film, more bittersweet than bitter. Only the hysterical frenzies of the Joe McCarthy era could have made it seem otherwise. […] There's some satire of a congressional investigation into communism, but Chaplin doesn't hit too hard and finally plays it for laughs (he gets his finger stuck in a firehose nozzle and inadvertently drenches the committee.) The film ends with the king comforting the boy: "This madness won't go on forever. There's no reason for despair."[41]

Fig. 1.6 Chaplin as King Shahdov. *A King in New York* © Roy Export S. A. S. Scan courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna

Chaplin's final film, *A Countess from Hong Kong* (1967), was labeled trite, unfunny and old-fashioned. It failed at the box office, despite the cachet of stars Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando. An accident soon after, which left Chaplin with a broken foot, announced his decline, but he was yet to

receive several important honors. The most important of these, perhaps, was the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' campaign to get Chaplin back to America to accept a lifetime achievement award. This finally came to pass in the spring of 1972 and engendered a spike in the Little Tramp's resurgence that included musicians and artists, but also biographers, film distributors and merchandisers.

Return to America, April 1972

America came calling again in the early 1970s, when both the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles and The Lincoln Center Film Society in New York City proffered a joint invitation to Chaplin to be lauded for his lifetime of achievements in film on both American coasts. He was reticent to accept and reportedly only finally did so because he was promised a glimpse at a special movie camera with which he wanted to film his newest project, *The Freak*.[42] The media played its part in preparing the American public for Chaplin's return, including the *New York Times*'s running of a Chaplin's final speech from *The Great Dictator*, which it titled "Let Us Fight for a World of Reason," in its April 1, 1972 issue, a transcript that would have inspired both old and new Chaplin audiences: "Now let us fight to free the world—to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason—a world where science and progress will lead to the happiness of us all."[43]

The Chaplins arrived at Kennedy airport in New York City on April 2, 1972 to a battalion of reporters. Feted hither and yon the next couple of days, Chaplin arrived at Lincoln Center on the night of April 4th to a crowd of 2700 people. Longtime Chaplin enthusiast Michael Vogelle, an eyewitness to the event and fourteen at the time, received one of the few $10 tickets available and traveled into the city the day before to watch *City Lights* at the Lincoln Art Theater, which was running several Chaplin films (thanks to the re-releases that Chaplin provided at the time of his return). When he and his brother Frank arrived at Philharmonic Hall the next evening,

> Stretched out in front was a huge banner of the Little Tramp with the words "Hello Charlie." […] We took our seats (second terrace—I still have the ticket stub) and waited. On the stage there were what seemed to be a hundred photographers and film cameramen. I noticed something to our left on the first terrace. It was Charlie and Oona! I shouted "there he is!" to my brother. The reaction of the audience was thunderous. It must have lasted five minutes or more. Everyone cheered, yelled, clapped and waved. Charlie

> blew kisses, put his hand over his heart, and waved to us. This was New York welcoming Charlie. All sorts of feelings were going through that audience, not the least of which was a feeling of joy and wanting to make Charlie feel loved after the bitterness of his long exile.[44]

The Idle Class was shown first and then Chaplin's masterpiece, *The Kid*. "When the film ended, the lights came up," remembers Vogelle, "and the ovation was louder than ever, everyone facing Charlie and shouting 'bravo' over and over." When things quieted down a bit, Chaplin responded with "Tonight is my renaissance. I'm being born again. It's easy for you, but difficult for me to speak tonight as I feel very emotional. However, I'm glad to be among so many friends. Thank you."[45]

Candice Bergen had acquired the job of photographer for a feature on the return, so after attending the Lincoln Film Society gala, she traveled by plane with the Chaplins to California and the next event—the Oscars. The result, the photo essay entitled "Love Feast for Charlie" (photos by Bergen and text by Richard Meryman), which appeared in *Life* magazine in the April 21, 1972 edition, suggested that the trip was important for Chaplin because "he could close the American chapter of his life—and Americans could partially atone for something that happened 20 years ago."[46] In "I Thought They Might Hiss," in the same issue, Bergen relates that Chaplin "boarded the plane to Los Angeles with great ambivalence. […] The thought of returning terrified him."[47] In any event, the night was a great success for Chaplin. In Oscars' history, it is still the only time the Lifetime Achievement award came last in the broadcast. Chaplin noted afterward: "It was so emotional and the audience—I felt their emotion. I thought some of them might hiss, but they were so sweet—all those famous people, all those artists. You know, they haven't done this to me before. It surpasses everything."[48]

Chaplin died just five years later on Christmas day, 1977. Ferlinghetti marked the occasion with his poem "Adieu à Charlot: Second Populist Manifesto." Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky marked it by including their parody letter to Chaplin, written back in 1961, in Orlovsky's book of poems published the next year. While the world said goodbye to Charlie Chaplin in these and other ways, his persona, the Little Tramp, remained and still influences filmmakers, playwrights, poets and novelists, musicians and Internet bloggers on into the second decade of the twenty-first century. The persona was lauded with his own conference/celebration in Bologna, Italy in June 2014, the 100th anniversary of his creation, so perhaps there's no end in sight (Fig. 1.7).

Fig. 1.7 From the archives of Roy Export Company Establishment. Scan courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2: Bohemian Writers and the Resurrection of the Little Tramp

Like the Beats, the Bohemians are so labeled due to their lifestyle choices as much as or more than any uniform aesthetic. Critics suggest that the Bohemians arose in 1850 and were replaced by the Modernists in 1910, but many countercultural artists up to and contemporary with the Beat generation, which began in about 1950, preferred the "Bohemian" moniker. In this chapter, I investigate the importance of three such Bohemian artists, namely James Agee, Peter D. Martin and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, with the last suffering under the burden of being lumped in with the generation of artists he so much helped to support, but with whom he had serious differences of opinion, in terms of lifestyle and creative method—the Beats. James Agee, through his tireless efforts supporting Chaplin's endeavors, especially after witnessing his harrowing press conference ostensibly to promote *Monsieur Verdoux* (1947), but really about Chaplin's increasingly problematic stance on certain political issues, is labeled the individual responsible for turning the tide, or at least, providing Chaplin's restoration phenomenon a much-needed boost, mostly through his essay in the September 3, 1949 issue of *Life* magazine entitled "Comedy's Greatest Era." In this essay, Agee re-introduces America to the silent film comedians, waxing most nostalgic and lyrical about Chaplin, an individual he did not originally intend to include in the piece.

Early popular culture maven Peter D. Martin and poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti are somewhat interrelated, in that they were partners in the City Lights Pocket Bookshop in San Francisco for a time, a venture named for Chaplin's 1931 film of the same name. Martin had coupled the opening of the store with the launching of his pop culture magazine, also named *City Lights*, within which he published his own impassioned plea for Chaplin's re-ascendancy. Ferlinghetti, however, went one step further and adopted Chaplin's Little Tramp character as his doppelgänger, a figure for the poet. Ferlinghetti saw in Chaplin and his Little Tramp the gadfly of Socrates—an irritating little insect that liked to buzz in the ears of authority figures in hopes of affecting significant change.

Chapter 3: The Beat Chaplinists

This chapter will discuss a small group of intellectual and artistic folks who fostered the Little Tramp persona's resurgence, one which, initially, had little impact on the larger American society, because decrying publicity and name-recognition was initially important to the Beats' philosophical beliefs. This factor would change with the publication of Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* and its accompanying obscenity trial in 1957, when many of the Beat artists then became legendary iconoclasts and purveyors of their particular version of American culture. Many of these countercultural artists identified with Chaplin the man's political problems and subsequently attached themselves to the Little Tramp as a sort of symbol of the Beat philosophy and lifestyle. Some, Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Bob Kaufman in particular, identified with many of the general attributes of the character, having experienced abandonment, poverty, isolation and/or mental illness in their early lives. In this chapter, then, I will not suggest any particular uniformity of intention or design behind the counterculture's appropriation of the figure. In fact, it seems to me that such an argument cannot be made, because the utilization of the figure in Beat poetry is as different as the artistry of each individual poet. What I hope to achieve, however, is to move organically through the period, noting works in which Chaplin or his persona appears, while privileging neither the work nor the author, in order to present a clearer picture of the role the counterculture played in Chaplin's postexile resurgence in America.

Chapter 4: Seeing Charlie: Legal and Illegal Chaplin Screenings, 1947–1977

The significance of film screenings cannot be overstated in this discussion of Chaplin's resurgence following his 1952 departure from America. This chapter surveys representative groups from many categories, such as film societies, retrospective houses, hippy hangouts, public schools and libraries. Some of the discussion in this chapter will overlap that of Chap. 6 on film collectors and vendors. Take the case of John Hampton, the first American to launch a movie house devoted only to silent films. He was also a private film collector, vendor and, eventually, a donor of his collection to what were then fledgling film archives. Although he may not have considered himself a film restorer, in fact, his efforts led to the saving of many films—many Chaplin films. By screening a Chaplin short