

Wesley Barry

Titles: 34

Sources: 2

Stills: 10

Born: 10th August 1907, Los Angeles, California.

Died:



No oil painting, our Wes. A studio promotional shot

Source: The Moving Picture Boy



Wesley reveals the tender aesthete within – a tongue-in-cheek studio shot

Source: The Moving Picture Boy

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

"Mickey Rooney's predecessor as Boy of the People was also red-haired, but skinnier and more elfish, the son of a grocer. He was discovered by Marshall Neilan, who was to direct some of his best films. Neilan later described him as "a natural born artist", and supervised his education with extreme thoroughness. He introduced six-year-old Wesley Barry into the "**Ham and Bud**" series, with the comic duo of Lloyd V. Hamilton and Bud Duncan.

Barry was an instant hit, and over the next few years became well known to filmgoers. He appeared in six of Mary Pickford's movies, beginning with "**THE FOUNDLING**" and ending with "**DADDY LONG LEGS**" (where he was memorable as a small orphan with a drink problem). In that same post-war year, 1919, he was seen in "**THE UNPARDONABLE SIN**" as "George Washington Sticker, an American Boy Scout from Kansas, but temporarily in Belgium". "If any boy actor", wrote a critic, "ever succeeded in making more out of a part than Wesley does out of Sticker, neither the screen nor the stage has any record of the event."

His popularity can be gauged by the fact that in 1920 an impostor tried to cash in on it: a boy called Sidney Ward Scott was touted around by his father on a "Wesley Barry personal appearance" tour. To complaints that he was insufficiently freckled, the Scotts replied that these were only painted on for the camera. Other natural accidents couldn't be so easily foreseen ("Pseudo Wesley Barry Runs Into Real Wesley Barry's Grandma and Runs Away" - headline in "Moving Picture World"), and when the Scotts tried the bluff again in Detroit, Marshall Neilan got wind of it and called the police.

During 1920 Wesley got his first incontrovertible lead in the title role of "**PENROD**", a feature-length kid film based on the 1914 Booth Tarkington best-seller. Penrod, for the benefit of non-American readers, was the American forerunner of Richmal Crompton's William, who saw the light eight years later - a creature of wild imagination and grandiose stratagems, from the ruins of which, by a mixture of luck and bluster, he emerges unscathed. Subsequent screen Penrods included Ben Alexander, Leon Janney and Billy Mauch.

Wesley Barry's "PENROD" wasn't in fact released until 1922, by which time he had had another lead in "DINTY" - an earlier role writ larger.

Though he retained his impishness, the teens eventually crept up on Wesley Barry. He married in 1926, but remained a popular screen teenager for several more years. As late as 1934 he was playing a Huck-Finnish role in "THE LIFE OF VERGIE WINTERS", and Ford among others employed him in the 1930s. His last featured role was in "ROCKY" (48).

After World War Two, he produced and/or directed a few B movies, and at one stage had his own company, Genie Productions. He produced 70 of the 113 "Wild Bill Hickok" TV half-hours for Broidy Productions, in which he was a partner."

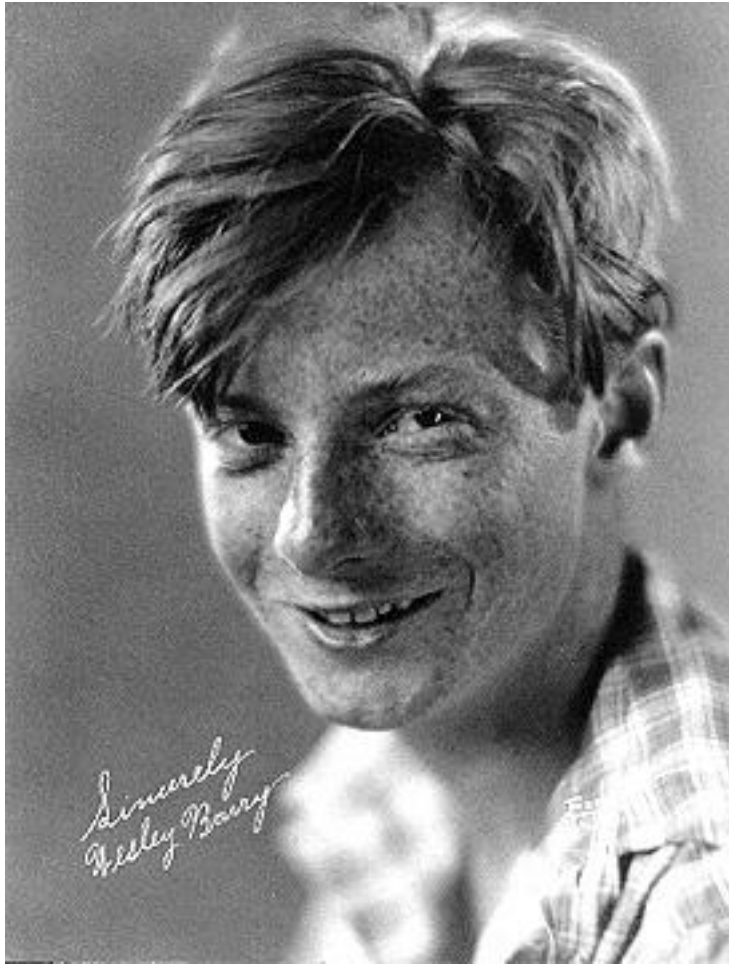
[no listing – inexcusably - in "Great Child Stars", "Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion" or "Those Endearing Young Charms"]



Above: with Walter "Spec O'Donnell (left) and Bruce Guerin (right) in *The Country Kid* (23)
Source: The Warner Bros Story

Below: in *Heroes of the Street* (22)
Source: The Warner Bros Story





Above left: publicity still circa 1923

Above right: in "**PENROD**" (with Gordon Griffith bottom)

Below: stone-cold sobre with Mary Pickford in **Daddy Long Legs** (19)

Source: *The Silents Majority* website

Source: *A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen*

Source: *The Moving Picture Boy*





Left: Studio publicity shot
– Barry (the screen's first
PENROD) pictured with
Ben Alexander (the
second incarnation)
Source:
The Moving Picture Boy

Below: Lining up a shot
on the set of "**HEROES
OF THE STREET**" with
director William Beaudine

Source:
The Warner Bros Story



FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
14-16	7	"Ham and Bud" shorts	
15	8	CHRONICLES OF BLOOM CENTER	(series)
15		THE FOUNDLING	
16	9	THE PRINCE CHAP	
17	10	REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM	(not in title role)
18	11	AMARILLY OF CLOTHES-LINE ALLEY	
18		HOW COULD YOU JEAN?	
18		JOHANNA ENLISTS	
19	12	DADDY LONG LEGS	
19		FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE	
19		HER KINGDOM OF DREAMS	
19		MALE AND FEMALE	
19		THE RIVER'S END	
19		THE UNPARDONABLE SIN	as "George Washington Sticker"
		with <i>Bobby Connelly</i>	
19		A WOMAN OF PLEASURE	
20	13	THE COUNTY FAIR	
20		DINTY	
20		DON'T EVER MARRY	
20		GO AND GET IT	
20†		PENROD	in title role
		with <i>Gordon Griffith, Clara Horton, Sunshine Sammy Morrison, Florence Morrison</i>	
20		THE WHITE CIRCLE	
21	14	BITS OF LIFE	
21		BOB HAMPTON OF PLACER	
21		THE LOTUS EATER	
21		PARDS	
21		SCHOOL DAYS	
21		STRANGER THAN FICTION	
21		TRUST YOUR WIFE	
22	15	RAGS TO RICHES	(first film for Warner Bros)
22		HEROES OF THE STREET	
		with <i>Joe Butterworth</i>	
23	16	THE COUNTRY KID	
		with <i>Walter "Spec" O'Donnell, Bruce Guerin, Bobby Gordon</i>	
23		HIS OWN LAW	
23		THE PRINTER'S DEVIL	
23/24		GEORGE WASHINGTON, Jr	
		† not released until 1922	



Snared by the wiles of Eve in "PENROD"

Source: indeterminate website

ADDENDUM :

NFT Bulletin comment:

"The first child star of feature-length Hollywood films was a skinny, lavishly freckled boy of irrepressible vivacity, who first came to notice as one of the smaller orphans of Mary Pickford's "DADDY LONG LEGS" (1919). Wesley Barry's sharp, cheeky personality made him a national figure..."