

Gene Reynolds

Titles: 18 Sources: 2 Stills: 11

Born: Eugene Reynolds Blumenthal; Cleveland, Ohio; April 14th 1923
[elsewhere given as 1925]

Lean, dark and handsome boy of earnest expression, one of M-G-M's ground troops in the late Thirties. At 15 he could pass well enough for 12 or 13, and did so often. Scarcely a versatile player, he was best in cameo parts of the hero-as-boy variety, as "**IN OLD CHICAGO**" and particularly "**OF HUMAN HEARTS**", where the boyhood section of the film is far superior to the (James Stewart) manhood section which follows. When called upon to sustain a more central role, as he was for the insufferably patronising "**THEY SHALL HAVE MUSIC**", he looked rather like a Dead End Kid out of his metier, (Billy Halop, to be precise). He had the rambunctiousness of a Tom Sawyer without the wiliness or appetite for mutiny. One senses he needed encouragement to let his hair down more and shrug off the studious self-restraint, but it was the season for "worthy" social message melodramas, and more playful escapades never came his way. Also, compared to many contemporaries he was a late starter. Note the "Americanisation" (or de-Jewification) of his studio name.



*Eyes locked in mutual admiration while **"THE CROWD ROARS"***

Source: The Moving Picture Boy



*His passage blocked by a hound from hell in **"THEY SHALL HAVE MUSIC"**
Source: indeterminate*



With Virginia Weidler and a passing drunk..

Source: indeterminate website

Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion entry:

"American boy actor who later became a producer of TV series including The Ghost and Mrs Muir, Anna and the King and M*A*S*H."

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

"Eugene Reynolds Blumenthal - for it is he - was a wildly romantic-looking boy, with the features of a matinee idol and expressive, intelligent brown eyes. If a youngster with

artistic or idealistic leanings was called for in a movie of the late Thirties, Reynolds was your choice. He was a dead ringer for Tyrone Power (and actually grew into him in the 1938 film **"IN OLD CHICAGO"**) but without old Ty's air of honest bafflement.

He began at two with some modelling, took the stage (in Detroit) at six, then began to do radio work. The road led inexorably to screen tests in Hollywood, and a debut in **"TOO MANY PARENTS"**. M.G.M had him under contract from 1938. Gene had some good parts in 1940, in **"GALLANT SONS"**, **"THE MORTAL STORM"** and **"SANTA FE TRAIL"**, and in the 1942 serial **"JUNIOR G-MEN OF THE AIR"**. Then, when war embroiled the USA, he served with the Navy.

Once it was over he resumed his acting career, but without any conviction that it was what he wanted to do. He had parts in **"THE BIG CAT"** (49), **"THE COUNTRY GIRL"** (54) and **"DIANE"** (55). After working in television he got the chance to write and direct, and it was this that eventually led to his most priceless contribution to the popular culture of our times. He became producer (and sometimes writer or director) of TV's **"M.A.S.H"** series, with its magnificent complexity of response and richness of repartee."

What the Critics said:

In **"OF HUMAN HEARTS"** –

"...Walter Huston and James Stewart were superb as religion-bound father and rebellious son, with Beulah Bondi matching them as the mother making sacrifices to help her son break away to become a surgeon. A fourth outstanding performance came from Gene Reynolds, playing Stewart as a boy."

- **The MGM Story**



*On woodshed manoeuvres with
Walter Huston for "OF HUMAN
HEARTS"*

*There's no truth to the rumour that
forty-eight takes were needed to
get the scene just right..*

*Source: The Movie and TV
Spanking Page (where else?)*



FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
36	13	LIBELED LADY with Tommy Bond, Mickey Kuhn, Silas "Buster" Phelps	
36		SONS OF MAN with Mickey Rentschler	
36		THANK YOU, JEEVES!	as Bobby Smith
36		TOO MANY PARENTS with Sherwood Bailey, George Ernest, Billy Lee, Silas "Buster" Phelps, Douglas Scott, Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer, Lee Van Atta	
37	14	THE CALIFORNIAN	
37		CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS with Freddie Bartholomew, Mickey Rooney, Tommy Bupp, Billy Burrud, Frankie Thomas, Lee Van Atta, Jay Walter Ward	
37		MADAME X with Dickie Moore	
37		THUNDER TRAIL with Billy Lee	
38	15	BOYS TOWN with Mickey Rooney, Bobs Watson, Jimmy Butler, Leonard Kibrick, Sidney Kibrick, Mickey Rentschler, Martin Spellman, Frankie Thomas	
38		THE CROWD ROARS with Mickey Rentschler	
38		IN OLD CHICAGO with Billy Watson, Bobs Watson, Delmar Watson	
38		LOVE FINDS ANDY HARDY with Mickey Rooney,	
38		MEN WITH WINGS with Billy Cook, Donald O'Connor	
38		OF HUMAN HEARTS €	as Jason (12)
39	16	BAD LITTLE ANGEL with Virginia Weidler, Cora Sue Collins, Mickey Kuhn, Douglas Madore	
39		THE FLYING IRISHMAN with Scotty Beckett	
39		THE SPIRIT OF CULVER with Jackie Cooper, Freddie Bartholomew, Jackie Moran, George Billings	
39		THEY SHALL HAVE MUSIC	as Frankie
		with Terry Kilburn, Tommy Kelly	
40	17	THE BLUE BIRD with Shirley Temple, Johnny Russell, Tommy Baker, Scotty Beckett, Billy Cook, Dickie Moore, Douglas Scott	
40		EDISON THE MAN	
40		GALLANT SONS with Jackie Cooper, Tommy Kelly	
40		THE MORTAL STORM	
40		SANTA FE TRAIL with Junior Durkin	
41	18	ADVENTURE IN WASHINGTON with Dickie Jones, Tommy Bond, Billy Dawson	
41		THE PENALTY with Edouard Trebaol	
42	19	EAGLE SQUADRON with Billy Severn, Bill Sheffield	
42		JUNIOR G-MEN OF THE AIR	serial
42		THE TUTTLES OF TAHITI with Tommy Cook, Teddy Infuhr	

[Among his later credits as TV producer/director was "IN DEFENSE OF KIDS" (83)]