

The Boy From Stalingrad

US : 1943 : dir. : ? min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
Bobby Samarzich; Scotty Beckett; Conrad Binyon
 Adult cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω 8 ∞ M ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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*Gongs for the camp-followers – Bobby Samarzich (left) and Scotty Beckett gleam with pride
 Source: The Moving Picture Boy*

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Samarzich:

“This was a boy whose professional name was changed with almost shirt-like regularity. He began as "Bobby Smarzich", but in 1938 appeared as "Bobby Samrich". In 1943, for **"THE HUMAN COMEDY"** and for his one leading role in **"THE BOY FROM STALINGRAD"** – a flower of the brief "glorious Russian allies" era – he changed to "Samarzich", which does seem to be his own name. (At least, it's the one he lives under as an adult). He made a highly

likeable little Russian hero, given stardom over the head of Scotty Beckett on this occasion. Nevertheless, the following year, he was back as "Samrich". He was even billed sometimes as plain "Bobby Rich", and had a brother who acted as "Vido Rich".”

Excerpt from **The Moving Picture Boy** entry on Conrad Binyon:

“Conrad was a delightfully unglamorous boy who radiated humour and common



Comrade Scotty Beckett – ready to strike terror into the hearts of the Hun

Source: indeterminate website

sense. Hugh (Dewey) Binyon – a few outings with **OUR GANG** – was probably his elder brother, and the director and writer Claude Binyon his father. One of his best parts came as a Russian boy fighter in "**THE BOY FROM STALINGRAD**"..."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "A Pictorial History of the Talkies", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]



Conrad Binyon, sporting not the most functional of combat headgear
Source: The Moving Picture Boy

No further information currently available, and once again deleted from all the principal film reference guides. Anyone who has seen documentary footage of the actual siege of Stalingrad, or knows anything of the horrors of that pivotal event in WW2, will find something vaguely offensive in these Hollywood images of fresh-faced boys beaming with patriotic glee. The almost unimaginable privations and sufferings of the population of that city were quite a different tale. There certainly was great heroism shown by the Russian civilians and fighters, but not a great deal of grinning done in those days. Of course I have not seen the film, and perhaps the stills are an unfair indication.

[Samarzich](#) was 14, and under his forest of de-Russianised screen names (some perhaps mere spelling errors by slapdash film titlers) his appearances included "**BLACK FURY**" (34), "**TOMORROW'S YOUTH**" (35), "**THE GREAT COMMANDMENT**" (39) and "**TALL IN THE SADDLE**" (44). [Conrad Binyon](#) was 12, and among his eighteen films as a boy were "**YOUNG AMERICA**" (42), "**THE HUMAN COMEDY**" (43, also with Samarzich), "**THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM**" (44) and "**COURAGE OF LASSIE**" (46).

The pretty but insipid Scotty Beckett was another of Hollywood's child stars for whom adult life proved an unmitigated disaster: repeated brushes with the law, two divorces, suspected suicide bids, and finally his death in 1968, following a savage beating, of a presumed overdose. In 1964 he received a six-month suspended sentence for crowning his stepdaughter with a crutch. For some fêted child stars, puberty brings nothing but bad news. (And for some step-kids, family life brings nothing but bad news.)

See subject index under [EASTERN EUROPE / SOVIET BLOC](#) and [WAR](#), for a sub-section on boy soldiers. "**IVANOVO DETSTVO**" ("My Name is Ivan", 62) is one of the best films ever made on the courage and heroism children can display in war environments. The child not as victim, but transcender of his age.