

Curing the Office Boy

US : 1912 : dir. : Edison Silent : ? min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
 Yale Boss
 Adult cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ♀	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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The Moving Picture Boy entry on Yale Boss:

"Fair and flop-haired, Yale Boss ("Yale" an anglicisation of his Swiss grandmother's maiden name) was perhaps the best-loved of all America's early film children. He was a better-looking Mickey Rooney, usually cast in cheeky parts but perfectly capable of dignified pathos. He could "provoke shouts of laughter or cause unbidden tears to flow", and was prodigal in "little touches which would only be expected of actors of great experience". His sisters Matilda and Frances also acted, though apparently with less power.

In 1907 he had a leading role in a Broadway musical called "Top of the World", and his first screen appearance was directed by D.W. Griffith for Biograph. After a brief move to Thanouser, he settled with Edison in 1911, on a five-year contract at \$25 a week. During this period he played in a constant stream of two-reelers. His total tally is said to have been more than 300 titles... He was best known latterly as the office boy in the series "DOLLY OF THE DAILIES".

At this point Boss took a two-year break from acting, in order to "complete his education". In December 1916 "Moving Picture World" heralded his return to the studios: "As a boy he earned wide popularity among film patrons by his cleverness and his engaging personality".

In 1917 he had leads in "THE HALF-BACK" and in "KNIGHTS OF THE SQUARE TABLE" (with Andy Clark and Paul Kelly also

in the cast), but over the following three years he only averaged earnings of eight dollars a week. His career faded out – his last featured part seems to have been in "SOULS FOR SALE" (23) – and after leaving the movies he was at various times a clerk with the U.S. Shipping Board, a book-keeper with an ice company, a pencil manufacturer, a private detective, a bricklayer, a salesman and a motor mechanic.

In this last capacity Yale Boss worked for the Georgia Power Company throughout the 1930s and until enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War Two. After the war he bought a piece of land and built his own garage and service station. Also, in 1948, he became the proud father of twin boys."

[no listing in "Classics of the Silent Screen", "Hollywood in the Twenties", "A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen", "Silent Movies: A Picture Quiz Book", "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "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"]

No information on the film itself alas, but who could resist the title? He was 13, and Holmstrom lists twenty other films for him in that year alone. His debut seems to have been aged 10 in **"HIS FIRST COMMISSION"**. The **"DOLLY OF THE DAILIES"** serial began in 1914, but before that he'd played other working boy roles – as in **"ARCHIE AND THE BELL-BOY"**, **"BOY WANTED"** and **"THE OFFICE BOY'S BIRTHDAY"**. The archive will carry separate entries on many of his films, even though no more information is available on them than on this one, merely as a record of his phenomenal output.

See subject index under **SILENT CINEMA** and **WORKING BOYS / WORKING GIRLS**.