

# The Dollar Bottom

UK : 1981 : dir. Roger Christian : Paramount : 33 min  
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:  
[Rikki Fulton](#) .....  
 Robert Urquhart; Jonathan McNeil

| Ref:  | Pages | Sources | Stills | Words | Ω | 8 | € | M | ⚡ | Copy on VHS | Last Viewed |
|-------|-------|---------|--------|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|-------------|
| 2411b | 1.5   | 4       | 0      | 578   | - | - | 3 | - | - | No          | Unseen      |

## Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"A sharp-witted public schoolboy sells his friends insurance against being beaten. Ingenious but thinly-acted short, with the added hazard of impenetrable accents."

## International Film Guide 1982 note:

"..Universal, United Artists and MGM have all expressed a renewed interest in UK production, and American backing was largely responsible for a number of superior dramatic theatrical shorts seen during the past year, including Andrew Birkin's "SREDNI VASHTAR" and Roger Christian's "THE DOLLAR BOTTOM", respective winners of the British and American Academy Awards for Best Short Film."

## Historical Boys' Clothing wesbite review:

"A classic Scottish film. The cast is made up of actual Scottish school boys. It was shot at the Daniel Stewart academy. The leader is a youth of about 14 years old. He concocts an insurance scheme, the boy's pay a small premium and if they are latter caned they collect a certain amount for their pains. Attractions here are the young hero's looks, his intelligence in dealing with the masters, and a scene where a boy bends over for the cane. The boys, except the very oldest wear grey shorts and blazers, except when they dress up in kilts."

## World Corporal Punishment Research (!) website comment:

"...A fictional, but probably reasonably authentic, example of [*caning in Scottish schools*] can be seen in the short film "**THE DOLLAR BOTTOM**", made by Roger Christian in 1980. Set in an Edinburgh boarding school in 1953, and based on a story by James Kennaway, it is a light-hearted tale about an enterprising boy who sets up an insurance scheme against getting the cane, and quickly makes a fortune.

A real-life private school, Dollar Academy, announced in 1983 that it was giving up using CP altogether, but there is anecdotal evidence that in the mid-1960's it was still using the cane across backsides in quite a big way and - on occasions - with much force and ceremony. This was apparently administered by senior boys in the boarding houses; teachers themselves used the tawse on the hand, said to be a daily occurrence."

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Films of the Eighties", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Radio Times Guide to Films", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "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 further information currently available. Won the 1980 Academy Award for Best Live Action Short. It is not listed, surprisingly, in "*The Moving Picture Boy*", so we have no details about the cast. A websearch in May 2003 yielded only the above two reviews, and notations on various sites listing Academy Award winners, or the credits of the screenwriter. It has not, to my knowledge, ever been shown on British television. Nothing else is known of Rikki Fulton.

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