

No Greater Glory

US : 1934 : dir. Frank Borzage : Columbia : 78 min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
George Breakston; Jackie Searl; Frankie Darro; Tad Alexander; Jimmy Butler; Bruce Line;
Donald Haines
 Ralph Morgan; Christian Rub; Lois Wilson

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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George Breakston right, Jackie Searl Centre

Source: Those Endearing Young Charms

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"Boys learn through their play that there is no greater glory than to die for one's country. Glum parable which probably worked better in the original German. From "The Paul Street Boys" by Ferenc Molnar."

The Good Film and Video Guide review:

"Molnar's novel **"THE BOYS OF PAUL STREET"** had already been filmed in his native Hungary in 1928 and it cannot be said that Borzage does much with it here, though his heart was in the right place: for its subject is the dangers that can result when rival gangs indulge in imitations of adult wars. Some

countries banned it, which you may feel was not a deprivation. With Frankie Darro, Ralph Morgan and Lois Wilson."

NFT bulletin – July 1979 – review:

"This was Borzage's talkie version of Ferenc Molnar's popular novel **"THE BOYS OF PAUL STREET"**, which had already been filmed in Hungary in 1924 and was to be filmed again in 1968. An exciting and funny account of street warfare between rival gangs of kids, with a dash of tragedy, it brought together many of the American boy actors of the early 1930s, including George Breakston (a future film director) as the eager hero, Jimmy Butler and the inescapable Jackie Searl."



A brave little soldier – not long for this world

Source: NFT Bulletin

Those Endearing Young Charms caption:

“ **"NO GREATER GLORY"** is the story of a group of German lads and their "war" with a rival gang who invade the lumber yard that they use as a playground. Jackie has the role of a "juvenile Judas". Adapted from the Ferenc Molnar story entitled "The Paul Street Boys".”

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film 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", "That Was Hollywood - the 1930's", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

The Moving Picture Boy entry on George Breakston:

“Although George’s father was American, his mother was French, and France was where he came into the world and left it. The Breakstons moved to America when he was seven, and he began getting radio and stage work in New York and Los Angeles, long before his debut in films. This frail, fair-haired boy, with cloudy blue eyes and a cowlick, inspired affection and protectiveness in the manner, later, of Claude Jarman, John Howard Davies and Mark Lester.

He was doubly touching when being heroic, notably in **"NO GREATER GLORY"**, the first American version of Ferenc Molnar’s popular 1907 novel "A Pál Utcai Fiúk" ("The Boys of Paul Street"), which had already been filmed in Hungary in 1924, and would be again in 1968. Dying gloriously of pneumonia contracted in a desperate exploit against the opposing gang (leader, Frankie Darro), and with Jimmy Butler and Donald Haines among the grateful comrades gathered round his bedside, little George is a figure of admirable pathos.

He tapped the vein again in **"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"** (as young Pip), **"MRS WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH"** and **"THE RETURN OF PETER GRIMM"**. As a teenager, George played Mickey Rooney’s friend Breezy in some of the Andy Hardy films, and had small parts in **"SWANEE RIVER"** (39) and **"THE GRAPES OF WRATH"** (40). During World War Two he was a military cameraman in the Pacific battle zone, and didn’t return to acting when it was over. Instead, he took to writing and directing for television and the cinema, usually choosing exotic or open-air subjects, as in **"THE SCARLET SPEAR"** (54) and the TV series **"African Patrol"** and **"Jungle Boy"**. He also directed the fine British boy actor Frazer McIntosh in two films of the mid-Sixties.”

No further information currently available. The implicit irony of the title, no doubt, lost on the Americans as it was on Halliwell. Later remade as a US/Hungarian co-production – **"THE BOYS OF PAUL STREET"** (69). [George Breakston](#) was 14 (or 12, depending on which source you believe) in the same year that he made **"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"** (not the David Lean version). Among his other features were **"IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT"** (34), **"THE DARK ANGEL"** (35) and **"THE RETURN OF PETER GRIMM"** (35).

Jackie Searl (14) and Frankie Darro (16) were already seasoned veterans, and need no introduction here. Tad Alexander (12), although he'd been working in films since 1931, never

really made his mark, and will mostly be recognised as the Tsarevitch mesmerised by wicked Lionel Barrymore in "**RASPUTIN AND THE EMPRESS**" (32). Jimmy Butler (13) was likewise an also-ran in the screen boy stakes. He worked again with Breakston in "**MRS WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH**" (34) and "**THE DARK ANGEL**" (35). Donald Haines (16) had been an **Our Gang**'er, had had his own series of comic silent shorts playing the character **SMITTY**, and was a supporting player in several Jackie Cooper vehicles. Bruce Line, finally, is the least known. He was also seen in "**NEWLY RICH**" (31) and "**THE GREAT JASPER**" (33).

Warring boy gangs immediately bring to mind "**LA GUERRE DES BOUTONS**" (61), originally filmed as "**LA GUERRE DES GOSSES**" (36), and remade (surprisingly well) as "**WAR OF THE BUTTONS**" (94), but other very similar films would include "**NOUS LES GOSSES**" ("Us Kids", 41), "**THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR**" (Canada 86) and "**REACH FOR GLORY**" (63).

See subject index under **BANNED FILMS / CENSORSHIP, THE CHILD AS POLITICAL OR PROPAGANDA SYMBOL, DEATH / DYING CHILDREN, FOLLOW THE LEADER (Children's Gangs)** and possibly [WAR](#).