

John Charlesworth

Titles: 4 Sources: 2 Stills: 11

Born: John William Charlesworth; Leicester; November 21st 1934
Died: Birmingham; April 2nd 1960, by suicide (age 25)



East is a frightfully pukka role in the frightfully pukka tale of "TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS". As Tom's wetnurse during his first term at Rugby School, East finds him an embarrassing encumbrance at first, but they soon become ripping good chums. Such stolid school adventures, dry as old chalk, were still very much the vogue in boys' novels and comics circa 1950, though they look a deal more than half a century old to modern eyes.



Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion entry:

"British teenage actor of the fifties."

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

"John William Charlesworth... came late to acting, but the slight, boyish appearance persisted throughout his teens. He had reddish hair, a light creamy voice and a level blue gaze of disturbing intensity. Besides work in radio, he gave several brilliant performances on the London stage, ranging from the anguished child of divorcing parents in "Background", and a stalwart Jim Hawkins opposite Donald Wolfitt's Long John Silver, to the licentious school prefect in "Quaint Honour".

His best screen role was as the hero's friend East in "**TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL-DAYS**", where he ran the gamut from cocky exuberance through staunch loyalty to manly grief. (He would in fact have been a superb Tom, but the role was predestined for the younger and more tremulous John Howard Davies, who had already starred in "**OLIVER TWIST**" and "**THE ROCKING HORSE WINNER**".)

Charlesworth showed his power in emotional scenes in "**SCROOGE**" and "**THE MAGIC BOX**", and he had an adventurous lead in the Children's Film Foundation's "**JOHN OF THE FAIR**". He appears only in the opening minutes of "**THE ORACLE**", as a worried office-boy.

He continued to be seen in the cinema, in "**YIELD TO THE NIGHT**" (56), "**A QUESTION OF ADULTERY**" (56), "**YANGTSE INCIDENT**" (57), "**BATTLE HELL**" (57), "**THE ADVENTURES OF HAL 5**" (58) and seven or eight more films. Tragically, having recently married, and while playing leading roles at Birmingham Repertory Theatre, John Charlesworth gassed himself in April 1960."



Top to bottom: Tom makes the acquaintance of school Bully Flashman; Tom and East consult an older boy for advice on how to thwart the beast; after sneaking out to join in the older boys' "hare & hounds" race, Tom must report to Headmaster Dr Arnold – "Did you get a flogging?" asks East excitedly; Flashman is finally unmasked in Dr Arnold's study, and expelled from the school for general beastliness. Hurrah!





Charlesworth second right in the Children's Film Foundation production "JOHN OF THE FAIR"

Source: Children's Film Foundation Catalogue & Index of Films 1972

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
50	15	LAST HOLIDAY	
51	16	TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS	as East
		with John Howard Davies, Glyn Dearman, Neil North	
51		THE MAGIC BOX	
		with John Howard Davies	
51		SCROOGE	as Peter
		with Glyn Dearman, David Hannaford	
52	17	JOHN OF THE FAIR	CFF – in title role
52		THE ORACLE	
56	21	YIELD TO THE NIGHT	
56		A QUESTION OF ADULTERY	