

Brian Roper

Titles: 4 Sources: 2 Stills: 0

Born: Doncaster, UK; August 9th 1933

More engaging as "Ginger" than William Graham was in the lead of the two **William** films, Roper was whisked off to Hollywood in the hopes of emulating the success of Freddie Bartholomew, Roddy McDowall and Terry Kilburn, but fluffed his big break as Dickon in "**THE SECRET GARDEN**", and came home to pursue a more modest career in British films. To be fair, he was too old for that gambit – Bartholomew and McDowall started in the US much younger – and his looks and accent would have confined him to supporting roles anyway. But it was a fresh, open face, distinctive in its own fashion, and he was simply unfortunate that no choice Dickensian roles came his way while he was still of an age to play them. Those are the breaks for all actors.

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

"This amiable, freckled redhead - "Ginger" in the **WILLIAM** films - had the sort of cosmopolitan career denied to most Doncaster boys. After acting in local dramatic shows, he toured Britain with a company organised by the National Association of Boys' Clubs, and at 14, in London, played the title role (created, oddly enough by Elisabeth Bergner) in Barrie's biblical play "The Boy David".

In "**THE NAKED HEART**" he acted with Michèle Morgan, in "**THE SECRET GARDEN**" - somewhat woodenly, inhibited by a compromise Yorkshire accent - with Hollywood's leading child stars, Margaret O'Brien and Dean Stockwell, and in "**THE MINIVER STORY**" with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon.

The puppyish Roper - 15 or 16 when this last film was being shot - was still reasonably convincing in short trousers. He subsequently appeared in "**TIME GENTLEMEN PLEASE!**" (52), "**THE GIRL ON THE PIER**" (53), "**THE RAINBOW JACKET**" (54) and "**THE BLUE PETER**" (55). He then went to work in the USA, and was seen in "**HONG KONG CONFIDENTIAL**" (US 58) before moving into the agency business."

What the Critics said:

On "WILLIAM COMES TO TOWN":

"...The supporting cast has Brian Roper as an excellent Ginger.."

- TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
47	14	JUST WILLIAM'S LUCK with <i>William Graham, Brian Weske, James Crabbe</i>	as Ginger
48	15	WILLIAM COMES TO TOWN / WILLIAM AT THE CIRCUS  with <i>William Graham, Brian Weske, James Crabbe, David Paige, David Hannaford</i>	as Ginger
49	16	THE NAKED HEART	
49		THE SECRET GARDEN with <i>Margaret O'Brien, Dean Stockwell</i>	US, as Dickon
50	17	THE MINIVER STORY with <i>William Fox</i>	US
52	19	TIME GENTLEMEN PLEASE!	
53	20	THE GIRL ON THE PIER	
54	21	THE RAINBOW JACKET with <i>Fella Edmonds</i>	