

City Boy

US / Canada TV : 1994 : dir. John Kent Harrison : New City / Accent / Bonneville : 95 min
 prod: : scr: Coralee Elliott Testar & John Kent Harrison : dir.ph.: Richard Leiterman
[Christian Campbell](#) [d]
 James Brolin; Christopher Bolton; Wendel Meldrum; Sarah Chalke

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	⌘	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Radio Times review:

"The reassuring presence of James Brolin (now married to Barbra Streisand) adds some solidity to this made-for-TV family adventure. Set at the turn of the last century, it follows the fortunes of a young boy *[sic]* who, while searching for his father, gets caught up in a battle to save a beautiful untouched piece of forest. Based on the children's book "Freckles" by Gene Stratton Porter, it's a familiar enough story, ably directed by John Kent Harrison (who also served as co-writer with Coralee Elliott Testar) and enthusiastically played by a largely unknown cast. The striking locations in the northwest territory of America are an added bonus. ** "

"Drama Starring James Brolin and Christian Campbell. A boy from Chicago who visits the

Northwest Territory of America to search for his father becomes involved in the struggle to protect a section of forest. ** "

"Drama, set at the turn of the last century starring James Brolin, about a child who leaves his Chicago orphanage to search for his natural father in America's northwest territory. ** "

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "The Critics' Film Guide" or "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995"]

"Freckles" is the hated nickname acquired at an orphanage by "Nick", who was rescued from a burning house as a small child, his parents presumed perished. Lacking a surname (the name Nick given to him by the orphanage nuns) he sets out in hope on the news that his father may still be alive in Canada. Train-hopping, he runs into trouble with some hobos and leaps off into the middle of nowhere with a youth, Simon, who springs to his aid. Nick's right hand was crippled in the fire that killed his mother, but he's an honest-faced, game lad, and soon lands a job patrolling the boundaries of the Limberlost for grizzly but kind-hearted lumberman Tom McClean (Brolin). Also, within five minutes of the film's opening, he has careened headlong into a girl his own age, Angelica, and we just know that by the film's close they're going to be sharing that (groan) all-important first kiss (groan again).

Nick is 17, so not in fact a "child" or "young boy" by anybody's definition, and this title lies on the outer perimeter of relevance to the archive's remit, but debuting Christian Campbell is a fresh-faced youth who might as well be 15, and the fact that the source book was written for children is sufficient to tip the balance.

See also "MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN" (1969), another US/Canadian green-tinted story in which young Teddy Eccles leaves home to live off the country for a year, and subject index

under [ORPHANS / ADOPTION](#), BOY MEETS GIRL, ECOLOGY / ENVIRONMENTALISM,
[SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS](#) and [WESTERNS](#).