

David Copperfield

US : 1911 : dir. : Thanhouser Silent : ? min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
[Leland Belham](#) [?]
 Adult cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5576	2	1	3	473	- - - - -	No	unseen



The screen's first incarnation of Dickens' "favourite child" (Leland Belham ?) with Peggoty and his mother Source: A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen

Excerpt from A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen general note on 1911:

"...Companies continued filming the classics. Thanhouser did "**DAVID COPPERFIELD**" and "**ROMEO AND JULIET**". Edison made "**THE THREE MUSKETEERS**" and a film

version of the opera "**AIDA**", while Pathé released "**FAUST**" and "**IL TROVATORE**"... Vitagraph's contribution to the screening of well-known novels included "**A TALE OF TWO CITIES**", "**VANITY FAIR**" and "**THE DEERSLAYER**". Monopol distributed "**DANTE'S INFERNO**". Both

Selig and Thanhouser made a film of

"CINDERELLA"..."



Left: David and Emily meet as children (though for this scene the actor has already doubled in height)

Right: The adult David and Agnes

Source: *A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen*

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Leland Belham:

"Leland was very much "the Thanhouser boy" from his seventh to eleventh years. His father, Harry Benham (1886-1969) was a Thanhouser star, together with his mother, Ethyle Cook (1880-1949) and kid sister Dorothy. He was generally teamed, though, with one or both of two other little girls: Marie Eline ("the Thanhouser kid") and Helen Badgley ("the Thanhouser kidlet"). From 1916 Leland and family left to work for other companies.

He was an intelligent, grown-up looking child, and presumably a useful mimic, since in June 1915 he won third prize in a Charlie Chaplin impersonation contest at a Chaplin night at Murray's restaurant, New York."

[no listing in "Classics of the Silent Screen", "Silent Movies: A Picture Quiz Book", "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "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. The first known film adaptation, followed two years later by a British version with Eric Desmond (father-to-be of one Johnny Sheffield). Hollmstrom missed this version (nobody's perfect), but it seems more than likely the boy playing David in the early still is Leland Belham, in which case he would have been just 6. See also **"THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN"** (12), **"THE CHILDREN'S CONSPIRACY"** (13) etc.

See subject index under **BOY MEETS GIRL, CRUELTY / NEGLECT / MALTREATMENT, CHARLES DICKENS ADAPTATIONS, HISTORY, ORPHANS / ADOPTION, SEASIDE TRIPS & HOLIDAYS, SILENT CINEMA** and **STEPMOTHERS/ STEPFATHERS**.

