

Father is a Bachelor

US : 1950 : dir. Norman Foster & Abby Berlin : Columbia : 85 min
 prod: S Sylvan Simon : scr: Aleen Leslie & James Edward Grant : dir.ph.: Burnett Guffey
[Gary Gray](#); [Billy Gray](#); [Tommy Ivo](#); [Mary Jane Saunders](#)
 William Holden; Coleen Gray; Charles Winninger; Stuart Erwin; Sig Rumann

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ♂	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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William Holden makes a rather obvious bid to mesmerise Gary Gray

Source: indeterminate website

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001 review:

"Vagabond Holden with five "adopted" kids meets Gray who wants to marry him: "cute" comedy. **"

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review – identical to above

Halliwell's Film Guide review

"A young tramp cares for a family of orphaned children. Boringly sentimental semi-Western."

"Saccharine, paper thin. At least one spectator at the Palace yesterday couldn't take it – a tot of about four, wearing a cowboy suit, who aimed a toy pistol at the screen and popped off the cast one by one." - New York Times

Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89 review:

“Lightweight comedy about a roustabout bachelor and his involvement with five orphans, a lovable old medicine showman, and a judge’s daughter. ** ”

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "A Pictorial History of the Talkies", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "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"]

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Gary Gray:

“Anagrammatic Gary Gray’s father, a businessman, let him do a little acting as a tot. He got picked as an extra for a Joan Crawford weepie, but everyone liked him so much he was given a few lines. He hardly stopped working in movies for the next dozen years, besides playing in several "little theater" stage

productions. Gary was fair and blue-eyed, with an earnest, doggy expression. (In his early teens he frequently co-starred with dogs - Pal,

Shep, Lassie, etc - when not playing a junior member of Raymond Walburn’s family in the **HENRY** and **FATHER** comedies. But he managed to avoid most of the **RUSTY** series.) Though occasionally stropky and mischievous, as in "**RACHEL AND THE STRANGER**", he was almost invariably the Good Guy - brave, honest and loyal to the end.

"**FATHER IS A BACHELOR**", by the way - which also features the unrelated but equally admirable Billy Gray - was not part of the **FATHER** series, in which the tough little George Nokes played Gary’s kid brother.

Gary made a few more films after 1952: "**EMERGENCY HOSPITAL**" (56), "**TEEN-AGE REBEL**" (56), "**THE PARTY CRASHERS**" (58), "**WILD HERITAGE**" (58) and "**TERROR AT BLACK FALLS**" (62).”

No further information currently available. A virtually identical story was told the same year in Universal’s “**SADDLE TRAMP**”, with Joel McCrea as the itinerant bachelor of the title, and Orley Lindgren as the eldest of three boys left in his care by the accidental death of their widower father.

Gary and Billy Gray were unrelated, but surely one of them must have been the son of Coleen Gray, co-starring here with Holden? To muddle matters further, as Holmstrom points out, blond Gary, 13, was busy at the same time with an unconnected series of “father” comedies starring Raymond Walburn – “**FATHER MAKES GOOD**” (50), “**FATHER’S WILD GAME**” (50) and “**FATHER TAKES THE AIR**” (51). The fifty films he made between 1944 and 1952 were mostly second features, but included “**GASLIGHT**” (44), “**THE GREAT LOVER**” (49, with Bob Hope) and “**THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR**” (50 – about a radio broadcast from god). Dark-haired Billy, 12, is best known for “**THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL**” (51), the Doris Day musicals “**ON MOONLIGHT BAY**” (51) and “**BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVER MOON**” (53), and as the son of the house in the highly successful TV sitcom “**Father Knows Best**”.

See subject index under **COMEDY, ORPHANS / ADOPTION, SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS** and possibly **WESTERNS**.