

Father's Son

US : 1941 : dir. D. Ross Lederman : Warner Bros : ? min
 prod: William Jacobs : scr: Fred Niblo Jr. : dir.ph.:
Billy Dawson; Scotty Beckett; Philip Hurlic; Sammy McKim; Sonny Bupp; Bobby Winkler.....
 John Litel; Frieda Inescort; Christian Rub; Bernice Pilot

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Irritant son Billy Dawson — Source: Warner Bros Story

The Warner Bros Story comment:

“ **"FATHER'S SON"**, based on a Booth Tarkington story, was first seen as a film in 1931. The remake had little of the first version's appeal and none of its charm. As the selfish father with a scant understanding of young boys in general and his own son in particular, John Litel was no match for Lewis Stone, but then neither Frieda Inescort (as gentle, understanding mum) nor Billy Dawson (as the irritant son) were as good as Irene Rich and Leon Janney in the original. Fred Niblo jr's screenplay had little going for it, and D. Ross Lederman's direction was all but invisible. Christian Rub, Bernice Pilot, Phillip Hurlic, Sammy McKimm and Sonny Bupp were also in it for associate producer William Jacobs.

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "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 Dawson:

“The solid, dimply Dawson had leads in two Warner films with more than a similarity of title. **"FATHER IS A PRINCE"** was provisionally called "Father's Son", but **"FATHER'S SON"** (with scenario by Booth Tarkington) had quite a different story. To confuse matters further, John Litel, as well as Billy, played a leading part in both. Stardom wasn't to go much further for the busy Dawson. He was one of many senate page boys in **"ADVENTURE IN WASHINGTON"**, and never again rose above the second or third rank.”

No further information currently available, but features a rich crop of boy actors from the period, of whom Dawson, in the title role, was far from the best known. Holmstrom guesses his age at 12. Look for him also in **"KNUTE ROCKNE – ALL AMERICAN"** ('40), **"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH"** ('41) and **"THE MAJOR AND THE MINOR"** ('42).

Ex-Our Ganger Philip Hurlic (12) was among Warners' small retinue of black child actors in the Thirties and Forties, but rarely seen in more than secondary roles. He was with the Mauch twins in all their **PENROD** titles, for example. Sammy McKim (16) had featured in numerous Western serials and programmers since 1935, and went on to become a Disney

animator. The prolific Sonny Bupp (13), put in an appearance in everything from “**ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES**” (when Cagney, fresh out of stir, is looking for a room in his old neighbourhood) to “**CITIZEN KANE**” (as Orson Welles’ son).

Bobby Winkler (14) – another Our Ganger – made nine films this year alone, but in titles of a lesser pedigree: “**THE WAGONS ROLL AT NIGHT**”, “**LAST OF THE DUANES**”, “**WEST POINT WIDOW**”. Finally, Scotty Beckett, who outshone them all “in innumerable front-line productions”, was 11. Scotty was one of those erstwhile child stars, like Bobby Driscoll, who seriously hit the skids in adulthood. After a series of brushes with the law, he died in a convalescent home, aged 38, following a savage mauling.

See the 1931 original of the same title, and subject index under **BOOTH TARKINGTON ADAPTATIONS** and possibly **RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS**.