

A French Mistress

UK : 1960 : dir. Roy Boulting : British Lion / Charter : 98 min
 prod: John Boulting : scr: Roy Boulting & Jeffrey Dell : dir.ph.: Max Greene
[Jeremy Bulloch](#); [Nigel Bulloch](#) †
 James Robertson Justice; Cecil Parker; Raymond Huntley; Ian Bannen; Agnes Laurent;
 Thorley Walters; Edith Sharpe; Athene Seyler; Kenneth Griffith; Irene Handl; Robert Bruce;
 Henry Longhurst; Brian Oulton; Cardew Robinson; Margaret Lacey; Paul Sheridan

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	□	≠	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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† see full list of pupils below



*The schoolboys are revolting – **again** – this time over the expulsion of a Bardot lookalike from their all-male environment. Source: Movie & TV Spanking Page*

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"An attractive new mistress causes havoc at a boys' school. Sloppy, predictable comedy with practised performers getting a few easy laughs. The producers tried to excuse its imperfections by promoting it as a "romp"."

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "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"]

Radio Times review:

"Roy Boulting was past his comic prime by the time he made this underwhelming boys' school comedy, produced, as ever, by twin brother John, and co-scripted by longtime partner Jeffrey Dell. The sight of so many familiar faces doing what they did best should at least have given the action a cosy appeal, but veterans such as Cecil Parker, James Robertson Justice and Raymond Huntley are left high and dry. Contains some swearing. **"

"Comedy. When the new French tutor at a boys' school turns out to be a woman the atmosphere changes dramatically. **"

Pupils:

Edmonds.....Scot Finch
Milsom.....**Richard Palmer**
Wigram.....Peter Greenspan
Slater.....David Griffin
Baines.....**Jeremy Bulloch**
Vine.....David Diarmid Cammell
Poole.....Christopher Sandford
Warwick.....Gregory Warwick
Proffit.....Nigel Bulloch
Benson.....Gordon Pleasant
Kent.....Michael Crawford
Church.....Pearson Dodd
Stephenson.....Christopher Beene

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Richard Palmer:

"The distinguished-looking Richard was, briefly, Britain's best boy actor at the end of the 1950s - playing leads like Jim Hawkins and Ronnie Winslow on TV - but apart from the lead in "TREASURE AT THE MILL" (for the Children's Film Foundation) he didn't get enough opportunity in the cinema. He abandoned his acting career, and many years later was working for IBM."



No further information currently available. Adapted from a play by Robert Monro / Sonnie Hale. Evidently one of those antiquated British films destined for swift and merciful oblivion, this was made the same year as the cane-swishing farce "**BOTTOMS UP!**" with Jimmy Edwards (which at least is still to be found in some of the film guides above). I only caught the tail end of it recently (Channel 5: 4/12/2000), at which point the pupils were in open insurrection against the school board's decision to dismiss new sex-kitten French mistress Madeleine Lafarge (Agnes Laurent as a bargain basement Bardot) whom one of the staff, Colin Crane (Ian Bannen) has determined to marry. The French Disease is sex, runs the plotline, and we British want none of it. The boys, of course, beg to differ.

James Robertson Justice was more memorable, and funnier, as thunderous headmaster Grimshaw in "**VICE VERSA**" (47) with a 17-year old Anthony Newley, before he became too pretentious to bear. As for the pupils, most – as we have come to expect of school films - are distinctly past their sell-by dates (Christopher Beeney is 20, for example, and Michael Crawford 18) but Richard Palmer and Jeremy Bulloch are mere tots of 15. Bulloch (Nigel Bulloch is presumably his brother) revisited this sort of nonsense as Bob Cherry in the BBC's "**Billy Bunter**" and in "**SPARE THE ROD**" (61). Previously he'd appeared chiefly in CFF productions – "**THE CAT GANG**" (59), "**THE YOUNG JACOBITES**" (59) - but as an adult has turned up in the James Bond and "**STAR WARS**" films, which I daresay would have been much more his cup of tea as a boy too. Richard Palmer was in "**SAINT JOAN**" (57), "**WHIRLPOOL**" (59) and "**LINDA**" (60), but clearly he made more of a mark on TV.

See subject index under **BOARDING SCHOOL** and **COMEDY**.