

Let 'er Go, Gallagher!

US : 1927/28 : dir. Elmer Clifton
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:

Silent : 57 min

Junior Coghlan
 Harrison Ford; Elinor Fair

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	¢	M	Ⓜ	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5664a	2.5	3	2	1,050	-	-	-	-	-	No	unseen



"Madam, may I present my business associate?" Left to right: Elinor Fair, Coghlan (all spruced up) and the original Harrison Ford, long before Indiana Jones was ever dreamt of.
 Source: The Silents Majority website

NFT Bulletin – July 79 – review:

"A likeable potato-faced boy of Irish extraction, Coghlan was Hollywood's best urchin between Wesley Barry and Mickey Rooney. Over 20 years later he became famous again as Billy (Shazam!) Batson in the "CAPTAIN MARVEL" serial. Here, as the highly independent newsboy Gallagher – with his own self-contrived furnished flatlet – he witnesses a murder and helps a reporter friend to bring the criminal to book."

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Coghlan:

"This cheerful, brown-eyed Irish-American was just about the most likeable boy actor of the late silent screen. His father, Frank Coghlan Sr, was a doctor, and his mother, Katherine, an actress. In early childhood he earned good money as a model¹, then followed his mother's profession to considerable effect.

¹ Earned his parents good money, that is

He hit the screen at the age of three, at \$3 a day.

Though Frank Junior could look sad and waifish if business required, he was irrepressibly optimistic by nature, and when the leading roles began to come they were of an active, self-reliant nature. In "**LET 'ER GO, GALLAGHER**" he was an orphaned newsboy with his own furnished flat (an abandoned taxicab), who became the sidekick of an investigative journalist.

Other rewarding parts came in "**RUBBER TIRES**", "**THE YANKEE CLIPPER**" (as a stowaway) and "**MARKED MONEY**".



Hi-diddly-dee, the orphan's life for me! – hums master Gallagher in the comfort of his (ex) mobile home.
Source: NFT Bulletin

Sometimes, foreshadowing Mickey Rooney's persona of the mid-Thirties, he would be the rough street kid cast opposite the posh one, as he was with Philippe DeLacy in the military-school setting of "**SQUARE SHOULDERS**". The chemistry was perfect.

The 1931 Penrod was Leon Janney, and Frank Coghlan (as Junior was now beginning to be called) was his Sam. The homely potato-faced boy was growing into a personable youth, and his child career was over. He was in the 1932 serial "**LAST OF THE MOHICANS**", and played the four-year old Shirley Temple's elder brother in a series called "**FROLICS OF YOUTH**". He often cropped up in supporting parts in films of the Thirties, sometimes as a jockey (for he was a skilled rider), sometimes as gang leader in opposition to **The Dead End Kids**.

Then, just as his career was fading, came a lucky break: the still eager and innocent-looking Frank was cast in the leading role of radio reporter Billy Batson (for whom the invocation of "Shazam" worked wonders) in "**THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL**". Launched in 1941, it was one of the most popular of all big-screen serials. Coghlan was Mickey Rooney's buddy in "**MEN OF BOYS' TOWN**" ('40) and many of the Andy Hardy films.

Having clocked up more than 300 screen appearances, he joined the U.S. Navy during World War Two, and stayed for 23 years, initially as a Naval Aviator and latterly as a Public Affairs Officer, proving an invaluable link between the Navy and Hollywood producers. Around the time of his retirement (in 1965, at the rank of Lieutenant Commander) he had a little role in "**THE SAND PEBBLES**", and since then has combined public relations work in Los Angeles with dozens of appearances on film and TV - in recent years as "spokesman" for Curtis Mathes TV in their commercials."

CVMC video retail/rental website review:

"I don't think I've ever had as much fun watching a silent film than I did the afternoon I sat down and viewed "**LET 'ER GO GALLAGHER!**". The plot is simple, involves an orphaned eleven year old boy named Gallegher (Frank "Junior" Coghlan) who idolises Sherlock Holmes and manages to witness a murder one night while sleuthing around with his faithful dog Watson. When he tells an older friend (Harrison Ford, but probably not the one you are thinking of), a reporter at the city's newspaper, what he saw, his face and name quickly become common knowledge, especially to the murderer, Four Finger Dan.

But the trouble doesn't really start till Gallegher spots Dan at a train station one afternoon and opts to track him down. Granted, it might not sound like anything special, but Coghlan is so much fun to watch, you shouldn't miss this one even if you are not a fan of silents. The lad can pull off in a mere expression or gesture what many of today's young actors and actresses rely on stunts, special effects and sound to do for them. A real winner; highly recommended!

Rated NR: violence

Categories: Boy Films, Little to Preteen, Comedy

Silent with organ score. Though there are some speckles and other minor problems to be found with this print, it is in rather good shape."

[no listing in "Classics of the Silent Screen", "Hollywood in the Twenties", "A Pictorial History 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", "Radio Times Guide to Films", "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. [Junior](#) was 11, in the same year that he rolled off "A HARP IN HOCK", "RUBBER TIRES", "THE YANKEE CLIPPER", "THE COUNTRY DOCTOR" and "SLIDE KELLY SLIDE". His earliest film known to the archive was "THE POVERTY OF RICHES" in 1921. The transition to talkies coincided for him with puberty – a double whammy to any silent boy actor – but his career seems to have weathered the storm.

See subject index under **BOY SIDEKICKS**, [DOGS](#), **EYEWITNESSES TO MURDER / BOY WHO CRIED WOLF**, **JOURNALISTS (& other liars)**, **KID DETECTIVES**, [ORPHANS / ADOPTION](#), [SILENT CINEMA](#) and [WORKING BOYS & GIRLS](#).