

Sans Famille

("Without a Family")

Belgium : 1912 : dir.

Silent : ? min

prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:

[Fernand Mertens](#)

Adult cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	♀	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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The Moving Picture Boy entry on Mertens:

"A Christmas baby of theatrical parents, the future Fernand Gravey (or Gravet) had everything going for him. His father, Charles-Léopold Mertens, was director of a Brussels theatre, where his mother (née Gravey) also acted. Before his screen debut at the age of six, he had often appeared on stage – for instance with the great Mounet-Sully in *"Oedipus"*. In December 1914 he was evacuated to London, and was a contemporary of the future Field-Marshal Montgomery at St Paul's School, Hammersmith. The fluent English he acquired was to serve him well in British and American films of the mid-Thirties, such as **"BITTER SWEET"**, **"THE KING AND THE CHORUS GIRL"** and **"THE GREAT WALTZ"**. He was decorated for gallantry in World War Two. Several of his childhood films were directed by Alfred Machin, father of "Clo-Clo" Machin. "

[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", "Bloomsbury Foreign Film Guide", "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. This is the first known film adaptation of a work by Hector Malot concerning a boy heir kidnapped at 7 and sold to a circus. The story was remade in 1925, 1934, 1944 and 1957. There was also a Japanese animated version: **"CHIBBIKO REMI TO MEIKEN CAPI"** (1970), a 1985 American animated version, **"NOBODY'S BOY"**, and a TV cartoon series. I have, regrettably, seen none of them.

[Mertens](#) was 7 in what appears to have been his debut film role. He went on to make **"UN ÉPISODE DE WATERLOO"** (13), **"SAIDA A ENLEVÉ MANNEKEN PIS"** (13), **"HET MEISJE UIT DE BLOEMENVELDEN"** (14) and others.

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