

= The Childhood of Jack Harkaway =

The Childhood Of Jack Harkaway is a 1910 American silent short drama produced by the Thanhouser Company . Adapted from S. Bracebridge Hemyng 's Jack Harkaway story series by Lloyd Lonergan , the film depicts the life of the title character . Given to the care of strangers after his birth , Jack grows up and is sent to a school at age 12 . After being severely and unjustly punished by the schoolmaster , Jack runs away and comes across two thieves plotting a robbery . Jack hurries to the house and warns the mistress of the planned robbery . The robbery is foiled and the lady of the house is very grateful , but Jack 's schoolmaster and his guardian arrive to take him back . She recognizes the guardian as the man who forced her to turn over Jack and turns them out of the house . The film 's cast and production credits are unknown . The film was released on December 23 , 1910 , it was met with favorable reviews and saw a wide national release . In 1988 , a severely deteriorated nitrate print of the film was known to exist and it was likely transferred to the Library of Congress archives in 1997 .

= = Plot = =

The film is not lost , but a modern synopsis has not been published . The official synopsis of the film was published in The Moving Picture World on December 24 , 1910 . It states : " Jack Harkaway is of aristocratic birth , being the son of a wealthy Englishman 's daughter and a poor young man , with whom she has eloped . Her parents bring about a separation and compel her to place the child in the hands of strangers , who are bribed to keep his whereabouts a secret from his mother . At the age of 12 Jack is placed in a school , the master of which is prejudiced against him , owing to the boy 's mischievous disposition . After having received severe and unjust punishment from the schoolmaster , Jack decides to run away from school , and escapes from the room in which he is locked , through the window . Wandering along a country road , he accidentally overhears two sneak thieves planning to rob a house . Jack makes his way to the house in time to warn its mistress of the proposed robbery . Two [man] servants are placed in hiding , when the would @-@ be thieves put in an appearance there and are immediately captured . Jack is given a fine supper by the lady of the house , who is very grateful to him . And when the schoolmaster , accompanied by Jack 's guardian , arrives , she is touched by the boy 's appeal not to be turned over to his rough @-@ looking ' friends . ' Upon getting a closer view of the man who calls himself the lad 's guardian , she realizes that he is the man to whom she was forced to give over her child . The man admits that Jack is her own boy , and the picture ends with the men being turned out of the house and Jack restored to his mother 's arms . "

= = Production = =

Lloyd Lonergan wrote the scenario based on S. Bracebridge Hemyng 's Jack Harkaway story series . Film historian Q. David Bowers states that it was based on a stage play based upon a series of boys ' stories , but does not cite a specific credit for which adaptation or work it was based on . Lonergan was an experienced newspaperman employed by The New York Evening World while writing scripts for the Thanhouser productions . The film director is unknown , but it may have been Barry O 'Neil or Lucius J. Henderson . Cameramen employed by the company during this era included Blair Smith , Carl Louis Gregory , and Alfred H. Moses , Jr. though none are specifically credited . The role of the cameraman was uncredited in 1910 productions . The cast credits are unknown , but many 1910 Thanhouser productions are fragmentary . In late 1910 , the Thanhouser company released a list of the important personalities in their films . The list includes G.W. Abbe , Justus D. Barnes , Frank H. Crane , Irene Crane , Marie Eline , Violet Heming , Martin J. Faust , Thomas Fortune , George Middleton , Grace Moore , John W. Noble , Anna Rosemond , Mrs. George Walters .

= = Release and reception = =

The single reel drama , approximately 1 @, @ 000 feet long , was released on December 23 , 1910 . The film had a wide national release , theaters which showed the film are noted in Indiana , Oklahoma , South Dakota , Missouri , Pennsylvania , and Arizona . Reviews of the film were mixed , with the The Moving Picture World describing the film as a " heart story which will interest because it presents more or less unpleasant possibilities of this character . The acting is well done , and the film will prove popular with most audiences . " The New York Dramatic Mirror reviewer found the film to be interesting , but stated that it " would have seemed more natural had [Jack Harkaway 's mother] not recognized [Jack] as her son until the appearance of [his foster father] , into whose care she had given her child . If two of the scenes had been broken it might have been more consistent . The men came up to plot their robbery too soon after Jack 's hiding . They also appeared in the house immediately after the plan laid to capture them . They surely would have seen the light and would not have ventured so soon . "

A surviving , but very deteriorated 35 mm nitrate print of the film was known to exist in 1988 . It was described as being in various states of decomposition throughout the entire reel , including severe shrinkage and brittle or torn perforations . This print is 925 feet long and was held by John E. Allen , Inc. though it is not specifically known if it transferred to the Library of Congress in 1997 .