

= Jenks ' Day Off =

Jenks ' Day Off is a 1910 American silent short comedy produced by the Thanhouser Company . The film follows Mr. Jenks ' who drafts a telegram to himself as an excuse to get a reprieve from boredom and his wife 's requests . He walks along the beach and finds a secluded spot to go swimming . A convict in women 's clothing swaps his clothes with Jenks and Jenks has no choice to but to wear the discarded clothes . On his way back , Jenks answers a call for help and is mistaken for the robber . He is captured and has to explain circumstances which lead to awkward situation . Production and casting credits for the film are unknown , but likely Thanhouser staff offer possible identities of the writer and actors . The film was released on August 2 , 1910 and was met with approval by the trade publication . The film is presumed lost .

= = Plot = =

Though the film is presumed lost , a synopsis survives in The Moving Picture World from August 6 , 1910 . It states : " Mr. Jenks and his family are spending the summer in a fashionable summer hotel , and Mr. Jenks is kept bored and busy performing the many services demanded by his wife . He hits upon the bright idea of sending himself a business telegram which would necessitate his immediate presence in the city , then starts out on a little vacation on his own account . Walking on the beach he discovers a secluded spot , and leaving his clothes on the beach he takes a swim . In the meantime , a convict , who has escaped from a nearby penitentiary , has entered a house nearby in search of a change of clothes , his stripes being too conspicuous . The convict locks a woman of the house up and ransacks the house , but the only garments he can find are women 's clothes , and , deciding that they are better than stripes , he dons them . As the convict in his new disguise is walking along the beach he sees Jenks ' clothes lying there and promptly makes another change . There is nothing for Jenks to do when he comes out except to array himself as a woman . On his way back to the hotel he passes the house that has been robbed and is unlucky enough to hear the woman 's cry for help . When she gets out of the closet , through his aid , she naturally believes that he is the convict , and screams for help . Jenks , frightened , runs away , but is captured after a chase in which the entire village takes part . His wife and daughter witness humiliation , and it 's almost impossible for them to ' square things . ' "

= = Production = =

The writer of the scenario is unknown , but it was most likely Lloyd Lonergan . He was an experienced newspaperman employed by The New York Evening World while writing scripts for the Thanhouser productions . The comedy of the situation derives from Jenks ' own attempts to manufacture some free time to enjoy himself , only to regret the action because of the resultant circumstances . Advertising for the film confirms this by stating , " Jenk 's day off was a day of woe instead of the day of joy he meant it to be . It taught him to never , never leave his wife 's side - not even for a day ! " Jenks ' swimming in a secluded spot , inferring swimming in the nude through the lack of a swimming suit , sets the stage for the comedy when his clothes are swapped for those of the cross @-@ dressed convict . With no other option , Jenks dons the clothes and responds to the call for help . The lady identifies Jenks as the convict , wearing her clothes , and the film concludes with a chase that leads to the arrest and humiliation of Jenks . This comedy predates the well @-@ known cross @-@ dressing antics of Fatty Arbuckle and Charlie Chaplin by a few years . The film director is unknown , but it may have been Barry O 'Neil . Film historian Q. David Bowers does not attribute a cameraman for this production , but at least two possible candidates exist . Blair Smith was the first cameraman of the Thanhouser company , but he was soon joined by Carl Louis Gregory who had years of experience as a still and motion picture photographer . The role of the cameraman was uncredited in 1910 productions . The cast is uncredited because their identities are unknown . Bowers states that most of the credits are fragmentary for 1910 Thanhouser productions . Known and more prominent members of the cast to appear in productions include the leading

ladies , Anna Rosemond and Violet Heming , and the leading man was Frank H. Crane .

= = Release and reception = =

The one reel comedy , approximately 960 feet long , was released on August 2 , 1910 . An alternative title for the production Jenk 's Day Off was included in several known Thanhouser advertisements . This would appear to be in error because the character 's name is Jenks and not Jenk . Theaters advertising the film included those in Missouri , Indiana , Nebraska , and Arizona . The Morning Telegraph gave a positive review to the film , stating that it was a " pretty good story " . The Moving Picture World mirrored this assessment with a bit more detail and referred to the story as being within the realm of reality which makes it funnier . The New York Dramatic Mirror provided the most detailed review of the film and praised the ingenuity of the plot and the acting with the exception of the Jenks ' wife . The reviewer also pointing out that Jenks wrote out the telegram too quickly .