

= The Stolen Invention =

The Stolen Invention is a 1910 American silent short drama produced by the Thanhouser Company . The film focuses on John Deering , an inventor , whose invention interests Mr. Cobleigh . Deering rejects the small sum Cobleigh offers for the invention , so Cobleigh decides to drugs Deering . The effect of the drug makes him temporarily insane and Deering is sent to the asylum , Cobleigh then forges Deering 's signature and secure the invention . Deering 's daughter breaks her father out of the asylum and nurses him back to health . The girl 's sweetheart , Tom , is a lawyer who takes Cobleigh to court and reveals the forgery through a stereopticon and Cobleigh is arrested . The film was released on September 16 , 1910 , and received neutral to negative reviews . The film is presumed lost .

= = Plot = =

Though the film is presumed lost , a synopsis survives in The Moving Picture World from September 17 , 1910 . It states : " John Deering is a poor inventor living modestly with his wife and only daughter . He has approached Mr. Cobleigh , a capitalist , with a proposition to share the profits of a new invention with him , providing that he (Cobleigh) furnish the capital to swing it . Cobleigh comes to see the model of Deering 's invention and is greatly impressed with it . Cobleigh offers Deering a small amount of money for the invention , but Deering refuses to accept it . Then Cobleigh , having failed to get his invention by fair means , determines to secure it by foul . He drugs Deering , and the result of the poison is to make the inventor temporarily insane . While in this condition , Cobleigh has Deering transferred to an insane asylum . Then he forges the inventor 's name to the bill of sale and thinks that his crime will never be discovered . Deering 's daughter , Grace , failing to induce her sweetheart , Tom Reynolds , to aid in rescuing Deering , breaks into the asylum and takes her father out singlehandedly . She conveys him to a camp in the woods where her tender care restores him to health . Then she takes him home again and he demands his rights from Cobleigh . The latter denies that he owes Deering a cent , and the inventor goes to law . Tom , who acts as his counsel , shows by enlarged stereopticon views of the two signatures that Cobleigh had traced the one from the other . Cobleigh , overcome by the revelation of his crime , is arrested , and the Deering family and the faithful Tom are happy . "

= = 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 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 . Cast credits are unknown , but many 1910 Thanhouser productions are fragmentary . The Celluloid Couch does not include any credits and only a brief summary of the film in its filmography listing . It is also listed in Psychotherapists on Film without further detailing onto the cast or credits . A surviving film still gives the possibility of identifying the actors of Deering and his daughter .

A reviewer for the The New York Dramatic Mirror stated , " It is rather difficult to understand by what magic the two signatures are made to appear in the court room without human agency . They come and go in anything but legal fashion . Evidently their appearance is to be taken symbolically - not realistically . " The final part of the review is difficult to infer because the film is lost , but the synopsis states that a stereopticon was used . A stereopticon , not to be confused with a stereoscope , is a type of slide projector that projects an image . According to the synopsis , the production employs one , or possibly two , stereopticon 's to display the two different signatures to compare and reveal the forgery . The reviewer seems to state that the appearance as unnatural , perhaps referencing a

dissolve effect . The ability to project with a dissolve was a known ability of more advanced stereopticons . According to another reviewer the film included shots of Long Island Sound .

= = Release and reception = =

The single reel drama , approximately 1 @,@ 000 feet long , was released on September 16 , 1910 . The film had a wide national release , with known theater advertisements in Pennsylvania , Kansas , Minnesota , Washington , North Carolina , Arizona , and Indiana . The film was also shown in Vancouver , Canada by the Province Theatre .

Reception for this film was mixed , but not praised highly in the three main trade publications . Walton of The Moving Picture News merely commented on how the water scenery and the reviewer for the Moving Picture World stated it was , " [an interesting domestic story , representing the machinations of a capitalist to secure a poor man 's invention . " The most detailed review was the negative one published in The New York Dramatic Mirror which states , " This film is not so good as the Thanhouser trademark would lead one to expect . The story is long and rambling and the acting is not notable at any point . A drugged potion , a forged receipt , an escape from an insane asylum , and the confounding of the villain are the points around which the threads are woven . The result looks a good deal like crazy work . The sheer impossibility of the plot is not relieved by the details of the mounting or of the action . The wild escape from the lunatic asylum , the row across the river , and hiding in the woods , are all cut upon an absurd pattern . Probably for those who like highly seasoned drama the film will prove entertaining ; for others it is too mellow . "