

= The Actor 's Children =

The Actor 's Children is a 1910 American silent short drama written by Lloyd Lonergan and produced by the Thanhouser Company in New Rochelle , New York . The film features Orilla Smith , Yale Boss , Frank Hall Crane and Nicholas Jordan . The production was not the first film subject by the company , but it was the first to be released . Both Barry O 'Neil and Lloyd B. Carleton have been credited as the director of the production . Edwin Thanhouser stated that 19 copies of the film were produced and distributed to dealers .

The film begins with two unemployed parents obtaining employment in an upcoming theater production . Shortly after returning home , the landlady shows up and demands the rent , but can not collect . She gives them one week , but the theater production does not manifest and the parents again search for work . While they are out , the landlady finds a tenant and puts the children out on the street . They end up dancing for an organ grinder and are saved by a theater manager who puts them on his vaudeville bill . The parents come into a fortune and are reunited by their children at the theater . The film was met with positive reviews and some criticism for its acting and scenario , but the industry had reasons to encourage the success of Edwin Thanhouser 's company . A print of the film exists , but it was the subject of nitrate deterioration .

= = Plot = =

The plot of the film was best conveyed through a published synopsis in trade which introduced the names of the cast and the backstory . Eugenie Freeman and Paul Temple , marry and have two children , a boy and a girl . The parents have been unemployed , but the film starts with the parents finding work in an upcoming production at a theater . As they return home , they are interrupted by the landlady , Mrs. O 'Brien , who demands the rent . The landlady does not care about the family 's misfortune and is upset when she cannot collect . She provides one week for the Temple family to pay up .

The production is postponed and the parents are out looking for work when a prospective tenant appears . Mrs. O 'Brien shows him the room and he is interested , but does not know what to do with the children . Mrs. O 'Brien puts the children out onto the street where they dance to the music played by an organ grinder . The organ grinder earns more money from their dancing and he entices the children to return to his hovel and teaches them to dance . The organ grinder instructs them to dance for money . The children are rescued by a theater manager and finds them a place in the theater program .

In the meantime , the parents have searched for their children and suddenly come into a fortune when a relative bequeaths a large sum of money to them . The parents search for their children in large gatherings and find their children dancing on the vaudeville bill from their theater box . The family is reunited and the film concludes .

= = Cast = =

Frank H. Crane as the actor (adult male lead)
Orilla Smith as the actor 's daughter (little girl)
Yale Boss as the actor 's son (little boy)
Nicholas Jordan as a comedian

= = Production = =

The script for the production was written by Lloyd F. Lonergan , who employed the deus ex machina dramatic technique in the conclusion of the plot . In film , this is the sudden inheritance and parents finding their children in the theater . The two children , Orilla Smith and Yale Boss , were child actors with prior film experience and did not have any further known connection to the Thanhouser Company after the production . The cameraman , Blair Smith , used a camera rented

by the Columbia Phonograph Company and had its inventor , Joseph Bianchi , assist in the camera 's operation and use . The director of has both been credited to Barry O 'Neil and Lloyd B. Carleton in numerous trade sources . Smith was the first cameraman of the Thanhouser Company , but this film was not the Thanhouser Company 's first subject . Instead , it was The Mad Hermit produced in autumn 1909 and shelved until August 9 , 1910 . The exact order of the productions is not known , but a work titled Aunt Nancy Telegraphs was filmed in December 1909 and never released . Certain parts of The Actor 's Children were produced in the last week of February 1910 .

The director of the film is not known , but two possibles exist . Barry O 'Neil was the stage name of Thomas J. McCarthy , who would direct many important Thanhouser pictures , including its first two @-@ reeler , Romeo and Juliet . Lloyd B. Carleton was the stage name of Carleton B. Little , a director who would stay with the Thanhouser Company until moving to the Biograph Company by the summer of 1910 . The confusion between the directing credits stems from the industry practice of not crediting the film directors , even in studio news releases . Q. David Bowers says that the attribution of these early directors often comes from a collection of contemporary publications or interviews .

= = Release = =

The single reel drama , approximately 1000 ft , was released on March 15 , 1910 by the Thanhouser Company . In later years , Edwin Thanhouser recalled that 19 copies of the film were produced and sent out to dealers throughout the United States . Of these 19 copies produced , ten were returned , some with letters of interest in future Thanhouser productions . The film was viewed across the United States with advertisements for showings in Pennsylvania , Wisconsin , Kansas , and Washington

= = Reception and impact = =

The Actor 's Children was released with enthusiasm and positive reviews in trade publications . The Moving Picture World reviews would be favorable and without much criticism , even calling the acting convincing . A more honest review in The New York Dramatic Mirror was written by a reviewer who was pleased with the production , but offered criticism about the production 's weaker aspects . The reviewer found there to be too much emphasis on the unimportant parts and a lack of emotion from the actors , and the child actors performance was faulted by repeatedly looking at the camera . Critical reception of the film may not have been entirely neutral for a number of reasons . Edwin Thanhouser was a well @-@ liked gentleman who had many friends in the Patents Company that likely wanted him to succeed . Furthermore , writers in the magazines hoped that Independents would succeed and challenge the Patents Company 's stranglehold on the industry . Also , film critics and reviewers of the era would balance the negativity of even the worst films with some favorable aspects . Even without any ulterior motives , the film may have been worthy of a favorable review .

The release managed to survive against considerable odds , but the surviving print is not without severe faults . The surviving print has considerable nitrate deterioration and very poor picture quality in certain parts . This film survives in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences film archives .