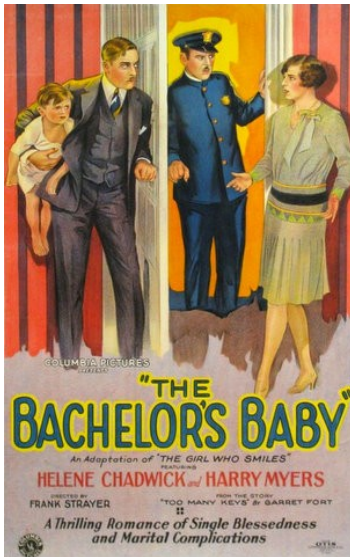


A BACHELOR'S BABY & ORDEAL BY GOLF

BB:ARTHUR ROOKE, GREAT BRITAIN, 1922
OBG:ANDREW P WILSON, GREAT BRITAIN, 1924

Screening: Thursday 19 April, 10:30am



Original poster from remake "The Bachelor's baby". Directed by Harry Hughes 1932

A Bachelor's Baby was greeted with positive reviews upon its release in February 1923. A comic tale revolving around the attempts of a young naval officer to return an abandoned baby he discovers, *A Bachelor's Baby* bears similarities with the W. W. Jacobs adaptations that prove so popular with British Silent Film Festival audiences. This isn't mere coincidence; the film's scenario writer, Lydia Hayward, had just finished adapting two W. W. Jacobs novels for the silver screen – last year's Silent Film Festival hit, *The Skipper's Wooing*, and *The Head of the Family*, which is being screened as part of this year's programme – before she embarked upon *A Bachelor's Baby*, which itself is an adaptation of a Rolf Bennett novel.

Hayward is most remembered for her collaborations with H. Manning Haynes, the director responsible for her W. W. Jacobs adaptations among others, including a successful adaptation of *The Ware Case* in 1928. However, she is shorn of her regular collaborator here, with Arthur Rooke instead

helping the project. Rooke cut his teeth in the "mysterious 'teens" of British silent cinema production, and never made the transition from silent to sound cinema. Between 1917 and 1924, he directed a staggering thirty films, including *The Lure of Crooning Water*, screened as part of Friday's British Silent Film Festival programme. He then directed only one more film, in 1928, before retiring.

A Bachelor's Baby is an excellent showcase of talented women in British silent cinema, with contemporary press coverage singling out Haidee Wright, who plays the matronly Miss Fisher, for praise. The film, for those regular attendees of the British Silent Film Festival, is of specific interest, though, for Lydia Hayward's individual authorial style. Hayward, without her regular collaborators (a W. W. Jacobs novel to adapt and H. Manning Haynes behind the camera), strikes out on her own in *A Bachelor's Baby*, turning an overly farcical, unsubtle novel into a deftly romantic, warm comedy of errors.

Our supporting feature tonight is an adaptation of P. G. Wodehouse's first foray into golfing humour, *Ordeal By Golf*. The Stoll Picture Company released six of Wodehouse's golfing comedies as a serial, *The Clicking of Cuthbert*, in October 1924. *Ordeal By Golf* involves an elderly golfer who, when presented with two candidates for a vacancy at the firm he owns, decides that the only way of finding out a man's true character was to play golf with him. Cue a series of incidents involving self-help books, Marcus Aurelius, temper tantrums, and airborne golf caddies, as the two candidates vie to impress their prospective new boss. We hope *Ordeal By Golf* whets your appetite for more P. G. Wodehouse golfing mayhem tomorrow when, at 1:30pm, we are screening two more films from *The Clicking of Cuthbert* serial.

CAST

Bachelor's Baby

Constance Worth -
Peggy Woodward

Malcolm Tod -
Lieutenant Jimmy
Barton

Tom Reynolds -
Captain Rogers

Haidee Wright -
Miss Fisher

Maud Yates -
Mrs. Prowse

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The 15th British Silent Film Festival



KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY

June 22nd, 1922, page 58

“A Bachelor’s Baby” is an excellent example of human and humorous comedy with simple yet charming settings. The whole tale holds the interest, and has both its pathetic and funny side; it is sentimental at times without being mawkish.

The greatest praise is due to Miss Haywood, who wrote the scenario, for the capable and sympathetic way in which she has handled the book by Rolf Bennett; out of pure farce she has evolved true comedy.

Points of Appeal

The greatest appeal lies in the genuine humour of the situations, which are not too farcical to be unconvincing. The sympathies are enlisted by the captain’s romance, and some of the scenes dealing with this contain genuine sentiment. There is plenty of interest in the characters, who are quite alive and distinct in type.

Production

There is a real need for these clean, bright comedies, and this film deserves all the success it gets.

The well-conceived scenario has been admirably produced, and the story has been clearly and well told. The greatest possible amount of humour has been extracted from the situations and it never degenerates into foolish farce.

All the characters are excellently cast and the sub-titles are neither too numerous nor too pretentious; the aim has been clean humour, and it has been attained.

Acting

Haidee Wright is a really great screen artiste and graces most parts she is given. She has not a very large part in this, but one would miss her charm if she were not there.

Leghy Woodward has charm and ability, while Malcolm Tod gives an ideal juvenile lead in a breezy, happy-go-lucky sort of way which is just what is required of him in this part. He is essentially boyish and attractive.

Suitability

A good comedy feature for all halls.

Marketing

BOOM AS AN ALL-BRITISH COMEDY

Stress the fact that here is a real comedy, admirably acted and full of humour, sentiment and character.

The original reviews may be abridged

Programme notes by Alex Rock, Programme Design and Layout by Molly Cotterill and Emma Jezard

CAST

Ordeal By Golf

Harry Beasley ...

The Caddie

Edwin Underhill ...

Rupert Dixon

Jean Jay ...

Millicent Boyd

Moore Marriott ...

Reverend Heeza Jones

Jack Rowell ...

Mitchell Holmes

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