



**BIG SCREEN CLASSICS**

# Hope and Glory

*Hope and Glory* is a bold example of a film refusing to tailor itself to the supposed requirements of the substantial international audience that it presumably needs. The meticulously detailed suburban street in which 'Bhin-Tal' stands (and falls) constituted one of the largest studio sets built in Britain since Hitchcock recreated an East End neighbourhood at Lime Grove for *Sabotage*. The domestic audience available to that film in 1936 was considerably larger and more stable than it is now, and Hitchcock also took the precaution of bringing over a leading lady from Hollywood, Sylvia Sydney. The one recent British film that compares with *Hope and Glory* in setting and scale had Richard Gere, and the title of *Yanks*. In contrast, *Hope and Glory* refuses all the obvious temptations to court an American audience in casting or content. Its narrative ends in late 1942, just before Americans came to England in a big way; its Canadian is not (as has been known to happen) an honorary American, his French affiliations being stressed; Pearl Harbour, and the American entry into the war, gets not even the smallest passing reference.

The key motif in the film, moreover, is a cricketing one. David Puttnam tried for years, in vain, to set up a film about Don Bradman and the 1932 'bodyline' series; he was ready, reportedly, to change all the LBW dismissals into catches, so as to make the action more comprehensible to audiences familiar with baseball. Boorman, splendidly, admits no such compromises over the intricacies of the 'googly'—the wrist-spun offbreak bowled, deceptively, with the action of a leg-break. Clive, about to depart for war, teaches the secret of the googly to his son: the son will, in due course, use the googly to bowl out his grandfather, and then the returning father himself.

This googly is, in a typical Boorman rite of passage, the direct agent of Bill Rohan's progress towards maturity through the symbolic overthrow of the father. But it also functions as a metaphor for the deceptive intricacies of human motivation and behaviour (his own included) which Bill has to learn to master. When his father first explains the googly, his response is shock: 'That's like telling fibs'. But 'fibs' are all around him. His mother insists that she can't cope if her husband goes to war, but will actually enjoy and prefer his absence; Bill himself resists evacuation to Australia, but protests just as violently when his mother claws him back; his teenage sister Dawn lives her life as a dizzying series of contradictory signals to boyfriend, family and self. The war itself looks like disaster but is experienced as joy. The pattern is so insistent that it might easily have become tiresomely schematic, were it not for the richness of the main performances (Sammi Davis' Dawn above all), and the rigour and delicacy with which the film is centred upon the consciousness of the boy.

Intelligently cast and directed, and playing a convincing game of cricket, Sebastian Rice-Edwards as Bill looks at times uncannily like Anthony Wager as the young Pip in David Lean's *Great Expectations*. And he dominates the film structurally in the manner of Pip himself: by his look, by intermittent voiceover, and by his virtual omnipresence. Time and again, scenes between adults (e.g., Clive and Mac talking politics, Grace and Molly talking of men)

turn out to have Bill as a half-observed witness. The only exceptions to this are some brief scenes involving Dawn's affair with Bruce, and even these are like extrapolations from what Bill does witness between them. The result is an intricate double perspective, notoriously less easy to handle in the 'objective' medium of cinema than with the written word: we witness these scenes of World War Two, but as filtered through the subjectivity of the youth perceiving, and the narrator remembering – very much as we do in David Lodge's fine novel/memoir of the war and after, *Out of the Shelter* (1970), a book which makes a fascinating cross-reference to *Hope and Glory*.

Here both youth and narrator are, of course, John Boorman. For the closeness of film to life, see Michel Ciment's book on Boorman, or indeed the film's publicity, but the identity is made explicit enough on screen from the start: the camera moves in slowly on a still photo of the family and superimposes the final panauthorial credit on the face of Bill, whereupon the first-person voiceover begins. *Hope and Glory* belongs to the rare film genre of autobiography, a mainstream companion to the Bill Douglas trilogy: looking at it another way, Boorman has written a childhood autobiography on film the way Michael Powell wrote his on paper, and in very much the same spirit. 'All my life I have loved running water': Powell's first sentence in *A Life in Movies* has its almost precise equivalent in the last line and image of *Hope and Glory*. It is tempting to pursue the analogy between autobiographies, and oeuvres, at some length: suffice it to say that *Hope and Glory* confirms Boorman as a worthy inheritor of Powell's role as the great risk-taking romantic of (or at least with one foot in) British cinema.

**Charles Barr, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, September 1987**

When John Boorman gave the first draft of the script of *Hope and Glory* to his eldest daughter Telsche she tossed it back to him after 20 minutes. 'You couldn't possibly have read it so soon,' he cried. 'Well,' she said, 'I skipped all the stories I knew, which didn't leave much, did it?' *Hope and Glory*, the story of a wartime childhood, does it must be said chiefly register as a series of family stories. But it is Boorman's achievement to have told them with fresh enthusiasm, and to have made the film more than the sum of its parts. One is not made to feel like the polite stranger at the chattering family table.

What makes *Hope and Glory* singular, if not quite unique, is its tone. It sometimes shades into sentimentality. Boorman has acknowledged with gratitude the influence of growing up in a family dominated by forceful women and of having three daughters of his own; and he has, not unnaturally, several soft spots. But the sentimentality rarely gets out of hand, even in the potentially perilous but in fact very funny school scenes, and it is occasionally inflected into genuine feeling, as, for example, in the night train journey back to London after the seaside outing, when Grace and Mac come close to speaking their hearts. But sentimentality is only an undercurrent. Boorman knows how to write and direct scenes which play in the cinema. He understands scale, and he has too, unexpectedly, an eye and an ear for understated comedy. Bill and his fellows recite the nine-times table in gasmasks lined up along the side of the school shelter: in the mumbled litany one hears one unmistakable raspberry.

**John Pym, *Sight & Sound*, Autumn 1987**

HOPE AND GLORY

Director: John Boorman  
Production Companies: Columbia Pictures Corporation, Nelson Entertainment, Goldcrest Films and Television  
Executive Producers: Jake Eberts, Edgar F. Gross  
Producer: John Boorman  
Co-producer: Michael Dryhurst  
Production Co-ordinator: Sheila Collins  
Location Manager: Peter Cotton  
2nd Unit Director: Michael Dryhurst  
Assistant Directors: Andy Armstrong, Melvin Lind, Julian Wall  
Casting: Mary Selway  
Screenplay: John Boorman  
Director of Photography: Philippe Rousselot  
Additional Photography: John Harris  
2nd Unit Photographer: John Harris  
Camera Operator: Mike Fox  
Focus Puller: Ronnie Anscombe  
2nd Unit Focus Puller: Jamie Harcourt  
Clapper/Loader: Jason Wrenn  
Grip: Bill Geddes  
Special Effects Designer: Phil Stokes  
Senior Special Effects Supervisor: Rodney Fuller  
Special Effects Supervisor: Michael Collins  
Senior Special Effects Technician: Joe Fitt  
Special Effects Technicians: Sean Collins, Brian Wood  
Editor: Ian Crafford  
Production Designer: Anthony Pratt  
Art Director: Don Dossett  
Set Decorator: Joanne Woollard  
Draughtsperson: Gary Tomkins  
Scenic Artist: Ted Michel  
Costume Designer: Shirley Russell  
Wardrobe Master: Steve Hubbard  
Chief Make-up: Anna Dryhurst  
Titles and Opticals: General Screen Enterprises  
Music Composed, Conducted and Arranged by: Peter Martin  
Music Editor: Michael Clifford  
Music Research: Helen Sava  
Choreography: Anthony Van Laast

Sound Recording: Peter Handford  
Sound Re-recording: John Hayward  
Sound Editor: Ron Davis  
Dialogue Editor: Paul Smith  
ADR Recording: Twickenham Film Studios  
Aerial Co-ordinator: John Taylor  
Narrator: John Boorman

Cast

Sebastian Rice-Edwards (Bill Rohan)  
Geraldine Muir (Sue Rohan)  
Sarah Miles (Grace Rohan)  
David Hayman (Clive Rohan)  
Sammi Davis (Dawn Rohan)  
Derrick O’Connor (Mac)  
Susan Wooldridge (Molly)  
Jean-Marc Barr (Bruce)  
Ian Bannen (Grandfather George)  
Annie Leon (grandma)  
Jill Baker (Faith)  
Amelda Brown (Hope)  
Katrine Boorman (Charity)  
Colin Higgins (Clive’s friend)  
Shelagh Fraser (WVS woman)  
Gerald James (headmaster)  
Barbara Pierson (teacher)  
Nicky Taylor (Roger)  
Jodie Andrews, Nicholas Askew, Jamie Bowman, Colin Dale, David Parkin, Carlton Taylor (Roger’s Gang)  
Sara Langton (Pauline)  
Imogen Cawrse (Jennifer)  
Susan Brown (Mrs Evans)  
Charley Boorman (Luftwaffe pilot)  
Peter Hughes (policeman)  
Ann Thornton, Andrew Bicknell (honeymoon couple)  
Christine Crowshaw (pianist)  
William Armstrong (Canadian sergeant)  
Arthur Cox (fireman)

UK 1987  
112 mins

BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

**Battleship Potemkin (Bronenosets Potemkin)**  
Thu 1 Jul 14:30; Thu 15 Jul 18:00; Sat 24 Jul 11:50  
**Hope and Glory**  
Thu 1 Jul 17:30; Mon 5 Jul 14:30; Fri 23 Jul 18:00  
**Casablanca**  
Fri 2 Jul 14:30; Sat 17 Jul 13:00; Sat 24 Jul 14:40; Thu 29 Jul 18:00  
**All about My Mother (Todo sobre mi madre)**  
Fri 2 Jul 20:40; Tue 6 Jul 20:45; Sat 10 Jul 21:00; Thu 22 Jul 14:30  
**How Green Was My Valley**  
Sat 3 Jul 11:30; Thu 8 Jul 14:15; Fri 16 Jul 17:50  
**Wild Strawberries (Smultronstället)**  
Sat 3 Jul 18:10; Mon 5 Jul 20:45; Sun 11 Jul 12:50; Wed 21 Jul 18:00  
(+ pre-recorded intro by Geoff Andrew, Programmer-at-Large); Tue 27 Jul 14:30

**All the President’s Men**  
Sun 4 Jul 11:50; Tue 20 Jul 14:15; Sat 31 Jul 20:20  
**Rear Window**  
Sun 4 Jul 15:40; Fri 9 Jul 14:30; Tue 20 Jul 17:50; Mon 26 Jul 18:00; Sat 31 Jul 11:10  
**The Magnificent Ambersons**  
Mon 5 Jul 20:50; Wed 14 Jul 18:00 (+ pre-recorded intro by Geoff Andrew, Programmer-at-Large); Sun 25 Jul 15:00  
**Distant Voices, Still Lives**  
Wed 7 Jul 18:00 (+ pre-recorded intro by film critic Thirza Wakefield); Sun 18 Jul 12:45; Mon 19 Jul 20:50; Fri 30 Jul 14:30  
**35 Shots of Rum (35 Rhums)**  
Mon 12 Jul 20:45; Wed 28 Jul 17:40 (+ pre-recorded intro by Be Manzini, poet and director of Caramel Film Club)  
**Man About Town (Le Silence est d’or)**  
Tue 13 Jul 14:15; Sun 18 Jul 12:30; Mon 26 Jul 14:20

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