

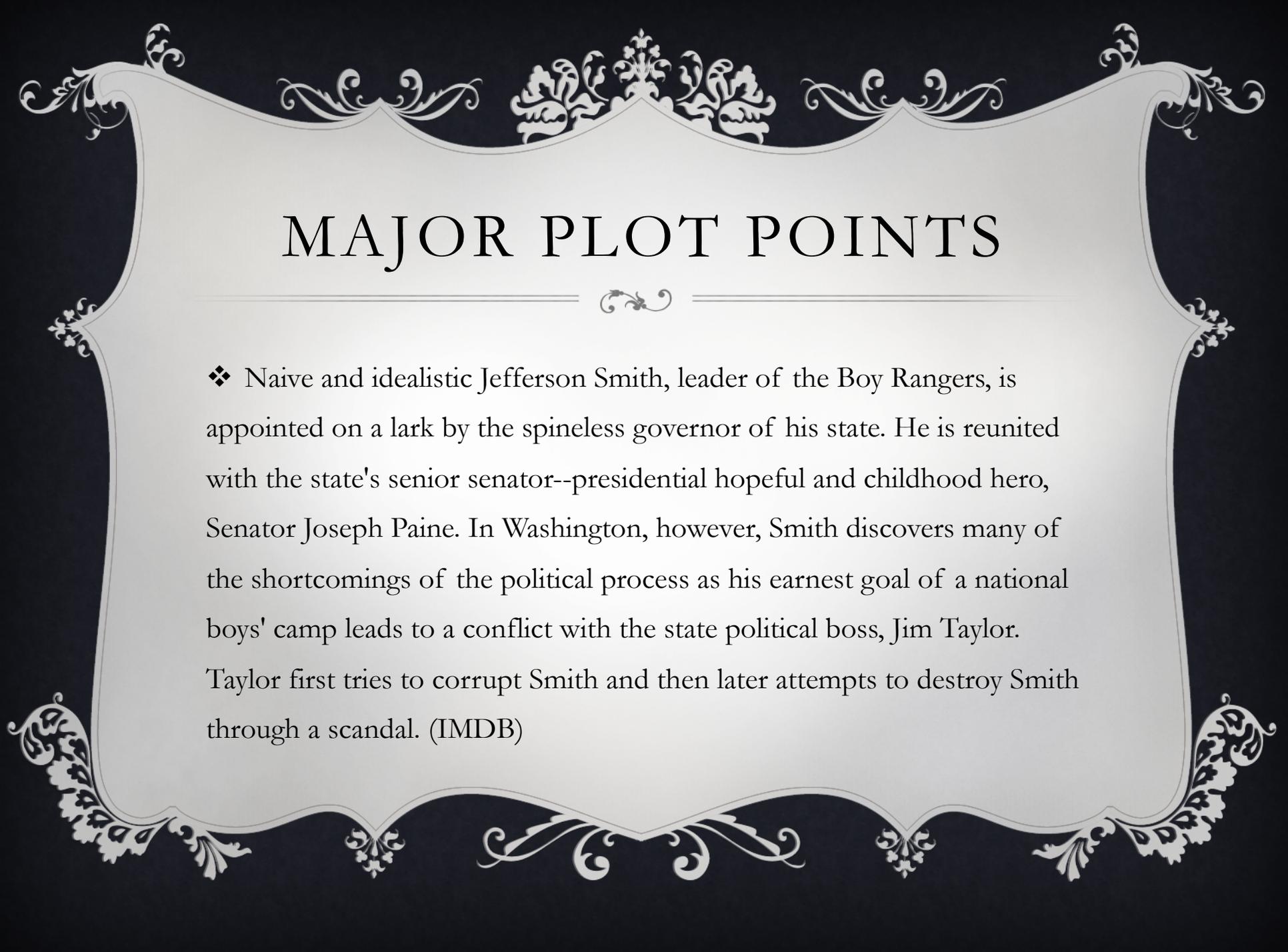


MR. SMITH GOES TO
WASHINGTON



MAIN FACTS

- ❖ Made: 1939
- ❖ PRODUCTION COMPANY: Columbia Pictures
- ❖ Directed by: Frank Capra
- ❖ Written By: Sidney Buchman
- ❖ Starring: James Stewart, Jean Arthurt, Claude Rains
- ❖ Genre: Drama



MAJOR PLOT POINTS

❖ Naive and idealistic Jefferson Smith, leader of the Boy Rangers, is appointed on a lark by the spineless governor of his state. He is reunited with the state's senior senator--presidential hopeful and childhood hero, Senator Joseph Paine. In Washington, however, Smith discovers many of the shortcomings of the political process as his earnest goal of a national boys' camp leads to a conflict with the state political boss, Jim Taylor. Taylor first tries to corrupt Smith and then later attempts to destroy Smith through a scandal. (IMDB)



FINANCIALS

❖ Budget: 1.5 Million

❖ Money Made: 9.6 Million

❖ Special Costs: Some of the film shot on location in DC, everything indoors recreated in studios.

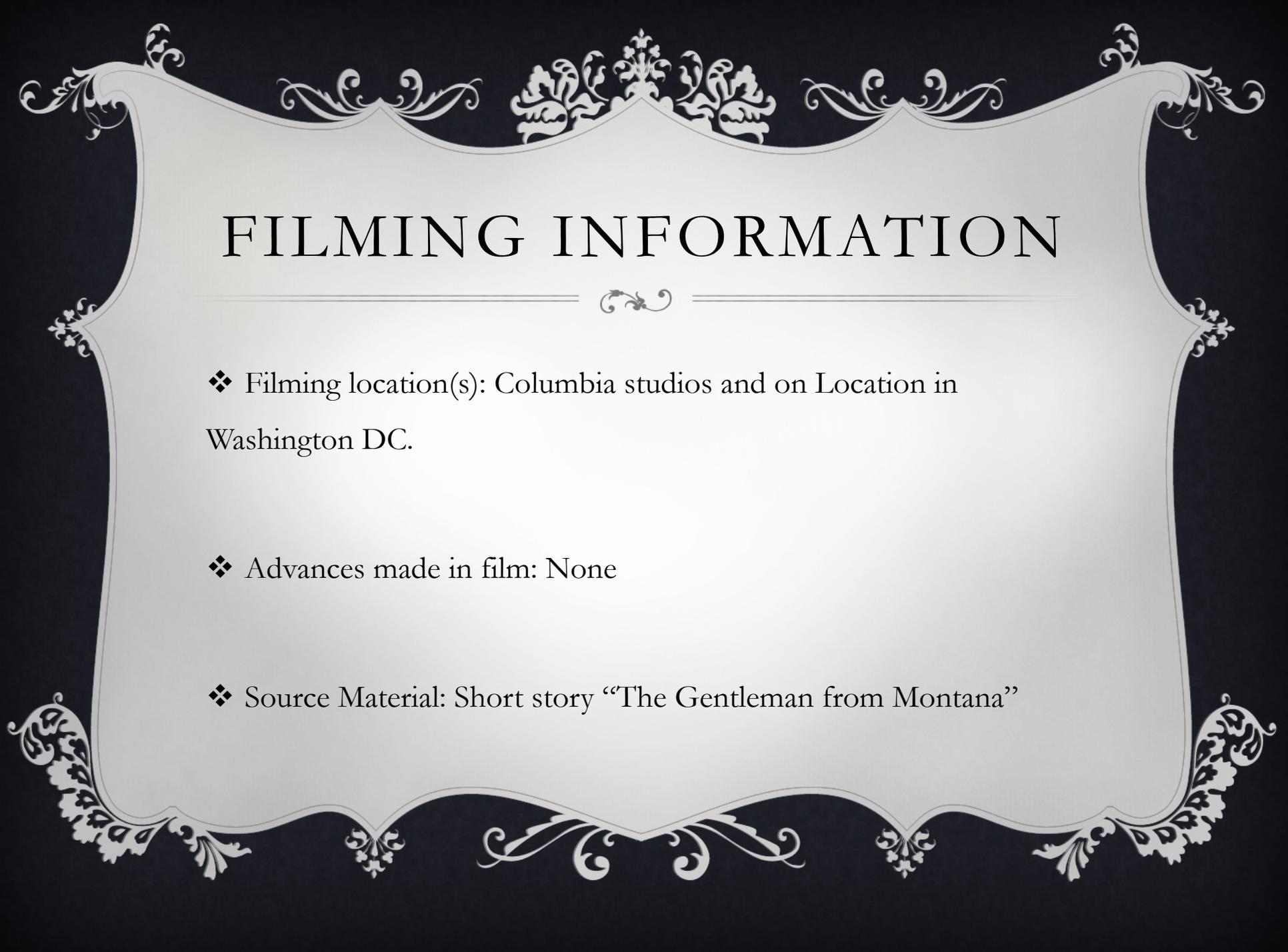
QUOTES

- ❖ **Jefferson Smith:** I always get a great kick out of that part of the Declaration of Independence. You're not gonna have a country where these kind of rules work, if you haven't got men that have learned to tell human rights from a punch in the nose.
- ❖ **Jefferson Smith:** I-I-I don't think I've ever been so thrilled in my whole life. And that Lincoln Memorial! Gee whiz. That Mr. Lincoln, there he is. He's just lookin' right straight at you as you come right up those steps. Just - just sitting there, like he was waiting for somebody to come along.
- ❖ **James Taylor:** Aah, he'll never get started. I'll make public opinion out there within five hours! I've done it all my life. I'll blacken this punk so that he'll - You leave public opinion to me. Now, Joe, I think you'd better go back into the Senate and keep those Senators lined up.



HISTORICAL/CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ❖ Made during and set during the Great Depression
- ❖ Set during a time of political questioning of senate corruption.
- ❖ Panned by media and politicians alike



FILMING INFORMATION

- ❖ Filming location(s): Columbia studios and on Location in Washington DC.
- ❖ Advances made in film: None
- ❖ Source Material: Short story “The Gentleman from Montana”



COMPOSITION/MUSIC NOTES

- ❖ Soundtrack includes many well known patriotic songs such as
 - Battle Hymn of the Republic
 - Yankee Doodle
 - My Country 'Tis a Thee
 - The Star Spangled Banner
 - Auld Lang Syne
 - When Johnny Comes Marching Home

INANE TRIVIA

- ❖ Bitterly denounced by Washington insiders angry at its allegations of corruption, yet banned by fascist states in Europe who were afraid it showed that democracy works.
- ❖ The scenes where [James Stewart](#) wanders around in amazement at the Washington monuments were "stolen", since the US Parks Service had denied the studio permission to film near them.
- ❖ According to the New York Times, "the Boy Scouts of America objected to having any part in Mr. Capra's reform movement," and [Frank Capra](#) therefore had to use the fictitious name of the Boy Rangers.
- ❖ Neither the Republican nor Democrat parties are ever mentioned in the film.
- ❖ The set for the Senate chamber was constructed on two newly built adjoining stages at Columbia, stage 8 and 9. The set was built almost to scale, and was at that time, the largest set built on a Columbia sound stage.



ACCOLADES

- ❖ Nominated for 11 Academy Awards. Outstanding Production, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Screenplay, Best Supporting Actor x2, Best Art Director, Best Film Editing, Best Music Scoring, Best Sound Recording
- ❖ Won Best Original Story