

Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

Assignment: Television—PUH is but this is awful. You don't even have time to have a cup

Overnight fame and fortune are still a big part of the Hollywood Dream. They are as permanent in the community as palm trees, smog, or Forest Lawn.

"I've worked with three newcomers for whom I could predict stardom," said Barbara Stanwyck. "They're Bill Holden, Kirk Douglas, and Lee Majors."

With the first two she hit the nail on the head. Holden became such a big star he had to live in Switzerland to escape paying his share of the cost of running the U.S. Government. And, of course, Douglas' iron profile and cold smile raised him to such heights that he became the favorite of those who do imitations in night clubs.

But who is Lee Majors? I found him on the set for "The Big Valley," a new television series wherein he shares the marquee with Miss Stanwyck. He is REALLY a newcomer. This is his first time before the camera. Just a few months ago he was a recreation director of North Hollywood Playground.

A short two years ago he came west from his home in the Cumberland Gap country of Kentucky. He's a tall, quiet chap with a pleasant, easy-going personality — like, say, a recreation director at a public playground.

HE RELAXED for a moment in between rehearsals for an earthquake scene. He leaned against a pillar and flicked some plaster dust from his Western hat.

"My biggest problem is to keep from being scared," he said with a shy smile. "I got this job on my first audition and I didn't know camera left from camera right. But people here are nice. They help you."

"I had thought about acting, I'll admit, and I remembered the name of James Dean's agent — Dick Clayton. I saw him and he said to get some training so I studied with a coach named Estelle Harmon and had six months training with the MGM contract players. All the time I worked at the playground from 2 to 10:30 at night and motorcycled out to acting lessons from 9 to 11 every morning."

"My first audition was for this part and, by golly, I got it. I'm not so sure why."

THE PRODUCERS of "The Big Valley" are sure. "He has a face and a certain quality the others didn't have," they said. "He has a little of James Dean, Steve McQueen, and Paul Newman."

"In the show he's playing Heath, the lost puppy, the kid who needs to be taken care of," said Miss Stanwyck.

More specifically, in the opening episode he played a young stranger who rides up to the ranch house occupied by Widow Barkley and her four children and identifies himself as old man Barkley's illegitimate son. What a way to start a career!

Majors lives alone (with two collies and a roping horse named Red) in a lonely canyon near Calabasas. He seems truly shy which is rare for an actor.

"The romantic scenes are the worst," he said. "I'm bashful enough around girls as it

Burt Smith Will Lead Realtors

Burton E. Smith of Bellflower has been elected president of the 52,000-member California Real Estate Association (CREA) for 1966 at a meeting of the association's Board of Directors.

The election took place during the closing session of CREA's 61st annual convention, held at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.

Smith will succeed David N. Robinson of Berkeley, current president, and will be installed in the office at a meeting in early January.

The election of officer for the association climaxed a five-day convention attended by some 5,000 members representing 176 real estate boards throughout the state.

of coffee with the actress first."

Underneath the shyness I sensed a strong determination to make good as an actor. Right now it is not clear just which parts of Dean, McQueen, and Newman are his. It doesn't make much difference. For the present, Majors has merely transferred from one playground to another.

Building Permits Top \$20 Million for Year

A single building permit valued at \$3.5 million accounted for more than 75 percent of all new construction begun in Torrance during August, a check of Building De-

partment figures for the month reveals. Total value of all new construction begun during the month was pegged at \$4,594,481. The figures raised the value of all permits issued

since Jan. 1 to slightly more than \$21.2 million. Bullocks Department Stores accounted for most of the total with a \$3.5 million permit for the firm's new fashion square, to be located at 21600 Hawthorne Avenue.

The only other major permit issued during the month was valued at \$380,000. Issued to the city, it provides for the construction of a major addition to the Police Department.



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