

Looking at T-V

With GEORGE A. and EDITH ANN BURKE

Dr. Ben Casey is played by Vincent Edwards, who is as intense about being a good actor as Ben Casey is about being a good doctor. Vince arrives at the studio at 7 in the morning and leaves at 7 in the evening.

Vince Edwards, who is thirty and single, has been working at being

an actor for some time. He was a classmate of Grace Kelly, Anne Bancroft and John Cassavetes at the American Academy, New York. Up until he was selected to play Dr. Ben Casey he was an unknown, who just hadn't received any breaks.

He is 6 feet 2, weighs 195, has hazel-green eyes and brown hair. He was born in Brooklyn and was a star swimmer at Ohio State and the University of Hawaii.

His medical manner, which some viewers think is too severe, was copied from Dr. Max Warner at Los Angeles County Hospital. Vince followed him around for two weeks, studying every move he made.

The show is as authentic as James

E. Moser, creator of the show, could possibly make it without using real patients and real doctors. He spent three years in research. He was responsible for the authenticity of "Medic" and "Dragnet."

The different hospital scenes are set-up permanently in the Desilu Studios. The set is a copy of the Los Angeles County Hospital, one third size to scale.

A number of viewers wrote recently when the "Ben Casey hospital" was referred to as having 4,000 beds. They said no hospital was that large. A quick check with the L.A. County Hospital revealed that there actually are 3,898 beds. They wouldn't want to but the hos-

pital agreed they could accommodate 4,000 persons if necessary.

The Los Angeles County Hospital is the largest in the U.S. in one building. Cook County in Chicago, Bellevue in New York and Charity in New Orleans are larger, but not in one building. A total of 1,500 babies a month are born in the L.A. County Hospital and there are 20,000 outpatients a week.

Up until recently there had been a doctor on the set at all times during the filming of the show. Dr. Max Warner left recently to serve the Navy. His post as technical director is filled by dark-haired nurse, Alice Rodriguez, wife of a surgeon. You can see her each

plays the role of the scrub nurse. The neurosurgeons are retained by the producers in an advisory capacity.

The nurses on the show are all selected and given special lessons on how to act like nurses. They are allowed to wear no jewelry except wedding rings. By the time they complete their training it is difficult to tell whether they are nurses working as actresses or actresses working as nurses. Some of the girls said that after acting in the Ben Casey show they think they might have made good nurses.

Betty Ackerson, the Dr. Maggie Graham of the Ben Casey show is the real life wife of Sam Jaffe,

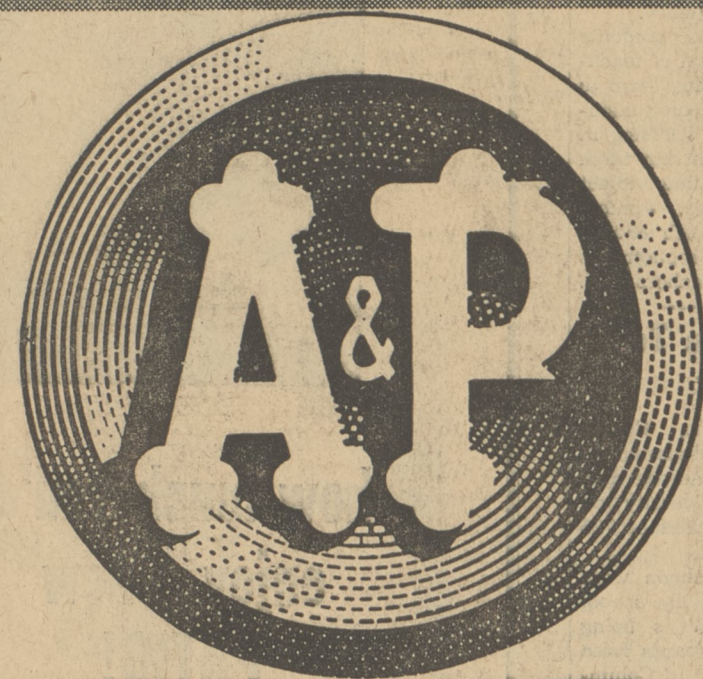
who plays Dr. David Zorba. Ben Casey's superior.

Doctors across the nation seem to enjoy watching Ben Casey work on Monday night. Judging from the letters received, most agree with Ben Casey's decisions. One exception came recently, when a flood of letters arrived after the show titled "A rose for the Ladybird." Ben Casey decided not to try heart massage after a patient's heart failed because of complications. The letters insisted there was nothing to lose and a heart massage should have been tried. Nurse Alice Rodriguez agreed with the writing doctors but the writers insisted for the sake of the story the decision

already made and played was better drama-wise.

Watching the show on Monday night it is hard to believe that Vince Edwards wasn't meant to be a real doctor.

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