

THE DAVID CASSIDY STORY

PART 30

If it had not been for The Partridge Family, it is quite certain that David's rise to fame would have been very different. But it is equally certain that it would have happened just the same!

The role of Keith Partridge allowed David to combine his singing and acting talents, so that he could be seen and swooned over right across the national network. But David was already well on the way up the ladder to superstardom before he had even tested for the pilot of the Partridge Family...

It all really began with Marcus Welby, M.D. The programme had only been launched in 1969, but it had been an instant success, so David was delighted when Ruth Aarons told him that he had been called to audition for a guest star role. It was something just to be tested for a part in a show like that — let alone be given it!

BOOSTED MORALE

So David set out once again for Universal City... And he was thrilled to find that things were already changing for him. He drove up to the main gate, and the guy on duty there recognised him!

"It seems kinda soft to reckon so much on a little thing like that," David laughed sheepishly, as he recalled the occasion. "But, right then, that gave me the boost to my morale that I needed. I felt like I was a real actor all of a sudden — someone had actually recognised me!"

In fact, quite a few folks were pleased to see David back and gave him a friendly smile or wave of recognition. Not all of them remembered his name. But even the fact that they recalled his face bucked him up no end!

Of course, it didn't stop him feeling nervous when it finally came to reading for the part:

"Though I guess it did help some," David told me, "because I felt as if they were all on my side, and that a lot of the folks there would've been kinda sad if I'd funkyed it. That

gave me some extra confidence and a special determination to do well."

After he'd seen the script, he was even more determined! Ruth had told him already that this part was one that would really be worth having. She hadn't told him to put everything he'd got into the audition, but that was only because she was certain that he'd do that anyway; and she didn't want him to get too keyed up about the reading.

She was absolutely right when she figured that David would know a good part when he saw one:

"The minute I started to read that script, I knew I just *had* to land the part of Michael Ambrose," he told me. "I could feel the role in my bones and I knew that I could bring that guy to life, with all his hang-ups and the tremendous underlying emotion... I wanted that part more than I wanted anything in the world right then."

And, of course, David was given the part. For many of you, this show gave you your first glimpse of David as an actor. For such an inexperienced TV star, it was a performance of unbelievable depth and power... the sort of performance that refuses to fade from your memory.

It goes without saying that David's gorgeous good looks gave him a tremendous advantage. Any girl who caught sight of him was instantly glued to the set — magnetised by the magic of his eyes, which could say so much even without words. But, although they might stop to look at him for his handsome face, they were held spellbound and riveted by his acting.

There could be no doubt at all that David Cassidy had managed to become Michael Ambrose. He had completely identified with the character he was playing, with the result that he gave a stunning performance.

I asked him how he had approached the part, and whether he had been conscious of any special quality in his performance at the time:

"Well," he began with a touch of hesitation,

