

Bette Davis Goes West... WITH A WALLOP



Pow! Bette Davis lets Amanda Blake have it in a scene for a Gunsmoke episode.

The story thus far: On a ruse, Matt Dillon (James Arness) has been enticed to the Stone farm to rescue Kitty (Amanda Blake), who has been kidnaped. Etta Stone (Bette Davis) plans a horrible revenge. She and her four sons would hang Matt, with Kitty looking on, to avenge the hanging of the Stone father for murder six years before. Matt had brought him in for trial. As our scene opens,

Kitty has tried to escape, and in the ensuing action Etta Stone in fury has killed her own son Jack. Now Bette Davis stands before Amanda Blake for one of the meanest slapping scenes in all TV history.

Pow! *right in the kisser* (as Jackie Gleason would say), resounds the first slap. Again and again, Bette slaps Amanda, whose head and long red tresses toss with the continued



As Miss Davis swings, again and again, Amanda's head and red tresses toss under 'impact' of the blows. Complimented Bette: 'Amanda Blake is one of the best.'

Bette approaches Amanda for the big scene. Said Miss Blake: 'At first I was scared to death because I'm in awe of this woman. But it turned out dandy.'





Still friends. It was the first TV Western for Bette since some Wagon Trains and a Virginian several years ago. She also once did a Perry Mason.

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impact of the blows.

"You and that marshal," Bette yells. "You're killin' my family."

Uncontrollably, she lashes out, now decides that both Matt and Kitty shall die "If it costs all our lives every one. You'll both die on the rope Him first, then you!"

Cut. The two women embrace (below), then laugh and talk (above) about the scene, which is from an upcoming episode of *Gunsmoke*, "The Jailer," due this September.

Actually, in the accepted Hollywood fight-scene technique, Bette never laid a hand on Amanda, although the sound ef-

fects and the violent action made it appear plenty realistic. Said Amanda afterward, "I could feel the wind going by."

Bette Davis commented that she enjoyed doing the scene and the show which, according to TV custom, was completed in six days. She believes it's one of the best organized programs on TV and that much of the credit should go to the production people. The experience reminded Miss Davis of her early days at Warner Brothers, where feature films were often completed in eight days.

"There is something to be said for doing a show quickly," Miss Davis observed, "but I think six days is cutting it just a little bit close."

