STUDIO WORK IS ON FOR BIBLE DRAMA
By THOMAS M. PRYORSpecial to The New York Times.
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Major Filming of De Mille's 'Ten Commandments' Begun After Stint on Location

By THOMAS M. PRYOR
Special to The New York Times.

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., March 28—Principal photography got underway this morning at the Paramount studio on Cecil B. de Mille's production of "The Ten Commandments."

The biblical drama is expected to make movie history in more ways than one. Facts that set it apart at the moment from other movie undertakings are, according to Paramount, "its staggering budget, embracing figures well beyond $8,000,000," and "an imposing schedule of 104 shooting days, longest planned schedule ever mapped in Hollywood."

Today's activity had been preceded by a three-month location trip to Egypt and the Sinai peninsula.

The script for "The Ten Commandments," written by Jesse L. Lasky Jr. and Frederic M. Frank, is believed to be the longest written in Hollywood, 308 pages, or almost three times the length of the ordinary screen play.

Only Charlton Heston, as Moses, and Yul Brynner, as the Pharoah, Rameses II, took part in the sequences filmed in Egypt. Anne Baxter, as the wife of the Pharoah, and Judith Anderson, as the servant Memnet, worked in the action photographed today.

Other principals, such as Edward G. Robinson, Yvonne DeCarlo, Debra Paget, John Derek, Nina Foch, Cedric Hardwicke, Vincent Price, Martha Scott, John Carradine, Henry Wilcoxon, Douglas Dumbrille, Julia Faye, Olive Deering and Ian Keith will parade before the VistaVision camera later, backed by an army of extras running into the thousands.

Buddy Ebsen has been signed to a three-fold long-term contract by Walt Disney Productions, and will be featured first in "Johnny Tremain."

The story of Revolutionary War Boston, written by Esther Forbes, will be filmed in two segments, each running one hour in length, for the Disneyland television show.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer announced the title today for its Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz comedy about a married couple. It will be called "Guardian Angel."

Of Local Origin

David O. Selznick will re-release this summer his 1937 production of "Tom Sawyer." The picture will be available to theatres through States Rights Distributors. . . . Universal-International will photograph "Away All Boats" in the VistaVision wide-screen process developed by Paramount. The studio also is using Twentieth Century-Fox CinemaScope cameras, as well as standard cameras, on its productions.

Both Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Warner Brothers will bring out pictures photographed in black and white for CinemaScope projection. Metro will use this approach with "Trial," starring Glenn Ford and Dorothy MacGuire, while the Warners will give the monochrome CinemaScope treatment to "Rebel Without a Cause." Both films are slated to get under way this week.

"Naked Sea," a documentary about tuna fishing, has been acquired for release by R. K. O.-Radio Pictures. It was made by Allen Miner, who is said to have traveled 15,000 miles up and down the Pacific Coast in shooting the film.

"Jedda," reportedly the first color feature to be filmed in Australia, has been acquired for distribution in the Western Hemisphere by Sam Baker-David Brill Associates and Berkson and Mills, it was announced by the distributors. An adventure film shot in Gevacolor, "Jedda" was produced and directed by Charles Chauvel and features Narla Kunoth and Robert Tuda Wali.

Stanley Kramer, independent producer-director of the forthcoming "Not As a Stranger," will be honored for his achievements in production by his alma mater, New York University. A special program will be held on April 11 at N. Y. U.'s Vanderbilt Hall, 40 Washington Square South. Excerpts from four films produced by Mr. Kramer will be shown, and he will receive an official citation from the university.

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