

flamboyant gambler for monumental stakes. Here are some examples:

He was the first to try sound dialogue ("The Jazz Singer").

He inaugurated movies with bad-guy heroes ("Little Caesar").

He introduced realistic themes based on headlines ("Public Enemy," "I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang").

He started the cycle of biographical films ("House of Rothschild").

He was the first to touch previously untouchable subjects (the Depression, "Grapes of Wrath"; lynching, "The Ox-Bow Incident"; anti-semitism, "Gentleman's Agreement"; and mental illness, "The Snake Pit").

He pioneered shooting in authentic locales ("Prince of Foxes" was filmed in Italy, "Snows of Kilimanjaro" in Africa).

In 1953, when television was flexing the executioner's ax over Hollywood's neck, Zanuck startled the entertainment world with a new wide-screen process called Cinemascope, driving millions of fans back into theaters.

But in that Paris hotel room Zanuck was wrestling with the odds on his biggest gamble of all. "The Roots of Heaven" is the third film he's made as an independent producer since breaking with 20th Century-Fox in 1956, and it's the costliest he's ever been associated with.

He also took a big chance on the cast. Neither Errol Flynn, Trevor Howard, nor Miss Greco is likely to start a box-office stampede, but Zanuck insists, "They're perfect for the story."

Then, again demanding "authentic locale," Zanuck shipped the entire cast and crew to a torrid part of the Dark Continent where no movie had ever been attempted before—the stifling jungles of French Equatorial Africa.

There his troubles really began. At noon, the temperature hovered at 125 degrees in the shade—with no shade. By midnight, it dropped to as low as 85. Within weeks, everyone in the company, except raw-boned director John Huston, became ill—some so severely that they had to be rushed back to France. There were nearly 1,000 sick calls, and at one point the situation became so desperate that the company doctor warned Zanuck he could no longer be responsible for the health of the cast and crew unless they were moved out.

Zanuck hired trucks and airplanes and hurriedly shipped everyone 1,200 miles north. Nevertheless, malaria, diarrhea, and heat exhaustion were still common.

But the gamble paid off. By some monumental scrambling, the location scenes were finished just 12 hours before Africa's

rainy season began, and Miss Greco recovered in time to shoot the wrap-up scenes in Paris, one day before Zanuck had to relinquish his studio space.

FORTUNATELY, Zanuck has always thrived on such excitement.

It wasn't poverty that prompted his love of adventure. He was born 56 years ago in Wahoo, Neb., into a fairly well-to-do family. His grandfather got rich building railroads, and his father ran a grain elevator and a hotel. But young Darryl was something of a juvenile delinquent.

When his mother made a brief trip to California for her health, she enrolled Darryl in a military academy. He attended classes occasionally, but mostly played hooky to sneak down and watch them make movies. Eventually he got a job as an extra at 50 cents a day—playing an Indian maiden! When his mother discovered this escapade, she shipped him back to Nebraska.

He wasn't any better there. When he was 14, he quit school, lied about his age, enlisted in the Sixth Nebraska Infantry, and was sent to the Mexican border.

It wasn't his size, either, that gave him the courage to test fate. A giant with ideas, Zanuck has always been something of a shrimp physically. When he went to France as a private with the A.E.F., he saw action for nearly a year at the front lines—as a messenger. He was too small for fighting.

Ironically, it was Zanuck's overseas quest for adventure that led back to Hollywood. Some of his letters home were printed in the local newspaper and encouraged him, after the armistice, to try writing. By 1924 he had sold so many scenarios to Warner Brothers that they hired him to write scripts for their greatest star—Rin Tin Tin. Zanuck turned out an average of a story a week for a year.

By 1927 he had learned the business so well that the Warner brothers made him executive producer at a mild salary boost—from \$150 a week to \$5,000—and the "boy wonder" (he was 25) was on his way. In 1928 came "The Jazz Singer" and the revolution in Hollywood.

For relaxation, Zanuck finds golf or fishing too tame. He needs excitement and goes out of his way to get it. He has hunted Kodiak bears in Alaska, lions in Africa, but so far his only injury has been a head injury—suffered while playing polo.

Zanuck is married to Virginia Fox, who gave up a screen career when she became his wife. They have three children, Darrylin, Susan (now Mrs. Andre Hakim), and Richard, who is following his father as a motion-picture producer.



Old photo shows Al Jolson and Zanuck, who helped make first talkie, "The Jazz Singer."



John Huston directed Zanuck's \$4-million gamble, "The Roots of Heaven," in Africa.

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