

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRAIN BUFFS' SPECIAL

Old Number 54, known far and wide as "Terrible Tessie," is 66 years old and one of the last of the red-hot marvels. Part of the marvel, of course, is how an ancient, clanking, steam-snorting hulk like Tessie can make the rattling, lurching 60-mile trip from Kingston Jamaica, to Montego Bay at all. But she can't take the heat like she used to, and has to stop at least once every 15 miles for a 3,000-gallon snort of water.

Actually, her temperment is part of her charm, and director Jack Cardiff used this to advantage in MGM's "Dark of the Sun," filmed in the island paradise and dealing with rebellion in the African Congo. Regular service on the diesel express run became erratic, to say the least, when passengers insisted on their trains' stopping to watch the old locomotive, on a set of tracks paralleling their own, laboring up a grade pulling four flatcars, two boxcars and a caboose, or grinding to a halt as her load of mercenary soldiers dismounts.

(More)

Passengers on the Kingston-Montego Bay express -- now a creeping local -- were enthralled as mercenary leader Rod Taylor, aided by Congolese soldier Jim Brown, rescued sensuous blonde Yvette Mimieux from rebel tribesmen as Metrocolor, Panavision cameras rolled. They cheered wildly at the action sequences, and seemed to be silently awe-struck during some of the film's tender moments.

Adding to producer George Englund's problems were more than 200 extras who were involved in running, fighting action aboard and alongside the moving train. And Cardiff was plagued by technical difficulties such as a mechanical failure in a generator supplying the huge arc lights with power, a broken trailer axle and the like. But shooting in the often-steamy locations was finally completed, Tessie was retired again and the MGM movie company moved on.

The Kingston-Montego Bay express is, once again, an express.

#



TERRIBLE TESSIE DOES HER STUFF

Terrible Tessie, born at a locomotive works in 1902, plays a key role in MGM's "Dark of the Sun," to be released soon. Filmed in Jamaica, the wheezing lady will be seen on the screen pulling a trainload of "mercenaries" to a bloody rendezvous, in a story of rebellion in the Congo. Rod Taylor, Jim Brown and Yvette Mimieux star in the Metrocolor, Panavision production, directed by Jack Cardiff for producer George Englund.

#

33060468