The Surprising Truth About Britain's Prettiest Girl

And the Very Unexpected Reason Why the Newly Crowned Queen of Beauty Refuses Every Tempting Offer to Dance and to Be a Moving Picture Star

After Studying this Photograph of Miss Winifred B. Mackintosh the Judges Voted Her the Most Beautiful Girl in England They Awarded Her the First Prize as "a tribute to intellectual and spiritual beauty to an extraordinary degree."

Below, Miss Peggy Bayfield, of Charlton, London, Winner of the Second Prize Section 1.

At Right, Little Joan Allerstree, of Kensington, London, Won the First Beauty Prize in Section III., Limited to Contestants Between 4 and 10 Years of Age.

Miss Mabel Coleman, of Ilford, Essex, Winner of the First Prize in Section II. for Girls in the 11- to 15-Year-Old Class.

LONDON.

THE most beautiful girl in Great Britain is—a hopeless cripple!

All England is amazed at the news—amazed and filled with a great pity, for neither judge nor public knew of Miss Winifred B. Mackintosh's affliction when she was crowned queen of beauty.

Now that chance has revealed the surprising secret, the heart of England goes out to her with even greater intensity than did its verdict.

Until a few days ago Miss Mackintosh was merely one of thousands of English girls who had entered their names and their photographs in the London Daily Mirror's beauty competition.

The Mirror's contest was no ordinary affair. For the past year there have been so many controversies, opinions and discussions about beauties of the stage, society and the studios in London and other large cities that the subject vied in popular interest with international issues.

When the Daily Mirror announced it intended to settle the question of "England's prettiest girl" definitely and decisively, there was a hum and a rush from one end of London to the other.

Any girl in England was eligible to compete! The prize would be five hundred pounds—a small fortune in itself! And the judges were no less personages than Sir William Orpen, R. A.; Mr. Richard Jack, R. A., and Sir William Llewellyn, R. A., all famous artists!

The Mirror was swamped with photographs. Celebrated actresses and models did not hesitate to submit their pictures along with those of little shop-girls and cockney queens. Friends of several of the prettiest society women in England put them in the race. The Mirror announced it had received thousands of photographs, representing almost every city and hamlet in Great Britain.

The contest was discussed everywhere. In a fever of interest the candidates and the public awaited the result.

In the little village of Hoddesdon, in a secluded part of the county of Hertfordshire, in a little cottage off the main-traveled road, lived Miss Mackintosh and her father. She read of the Mirror's contest, as every one did, but she admitted, long after the denouement, that she had no idea of entering it.

"The first suggestion," she said, "came from a trained nurse living near us. She asked me if I had a photograph. I told her that I had, but as it was an expensive one I had no intention of wasting it by sending it in for the Daily Mirror competition.

"The next night I found that daddy had all my photographs out in the dining-room. Shortly afterward we went to Bournemouth for our holidays, and when I got there I learned that my photograph had been published in the Daily Mirror. As it had not appeared in the edition we get at home, I never even saw the published portrait."

Miss Mackintosh went back from Bournemouth to Hertfordshire, never dreaming that the arrival of her photograph in the Mirror's office had created something of a sensation. Certainly she had no notion that, even then, Sir William Orpen and the other celebrated judges were picking it as their choice from among all the rest.

The news that Miss Mackintosh had won the great beauty prize stirred public curiosity.

"Who is she? What does she do? Where does she live? We never heard of her!" declared artists, movie managers, theatrical promoters and other beauty specialists.

"We can't help that," replied Sir William Orpen in a public statement. "We have chosen not only a beautiful face, but a beautiful soul. I am convinced of that. We were all agreed that Miss Mackintosh was the most genuinely beautiful girl, even among such an assembly of pictures, where the standard of beauty was extraordinarily high.

"Our judgment," he added, "was based solely on the features of the competitors. All other considerations, such as figure and hair, we ruled out. We simply sought a lovely face, and once we had seen Miss Mackintosh's photograph we never changed our first opinion of her, though we repeatedly compared her with others."

"She surpassed all others," agreed Mr. Richard Jack. "She is a purely British type—a real English rose."

"The eyes were the most beautiful feature of the competitors," said Sir William Llewellyn, "but even there Miss Mackintosh was superior to the rest. She has a spiritual type of beauty that is really very fine."

Such tributes from such distinguished authorities whetted interest in Miss Mackintosh keener than ever. And still England's curiosity about her remained unsatisfied. All that was known of her was her name, her face and the fact that she lived at Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire.

Motion picture and theatrical agents began to get busy. Letters and telegrams followed each other rapidly to the little Hertfordshire cottage. Miss Mackintosh was offered one hundred pounds a night to dance at a leading Piccadilly cabaret. The biggest picture producing company in England offered to star her in a serial thriller. A famous magazine cover artist wanted to paint her as the modern Aphrodite.

But no answer came out of Hertfordshire—none, at least, save brief little notes, thanking managers and all for their interest, but stating that Miss Mackintosh had to decline any offer to appear in public.

It was one of the more enterprising motion picture "scouts" who finally, quite unintentionally, unearthed the cause of Miss Winifred Mackintosh's strange retirement.

He went down to Hertfordshire in person, determined to find this illusive girl, talk to her, persuade her, get her to sign any contract she wanted then and there.

He found himself at an obscure little station off the main line. The luggage porter directed him on his road. There was no conveyance. He set off walking in the pale October sunshine.

"A little green house with an old-fashioned lich gate," the baggage man had said.

Twilight was drawing on when he found himself at his destination. There was no mistaking the little green house.

The movie man climbed the front steps and knocked.

"Come in," said a gentle voice.

He entered. There, seated in a chair in darkness lit only by a blaze from the wide fireplace, was a beautiful girl. She was entirely in shadow except for her face. And that, half turned to him so that the profile was warmed by the dancing flames, caused him to pause with a gasp.

The photograph had not lied. She was, indeed, an "English rose"—the loveliest the expert had ever seen in a long experience with every type and variety of loveliness.

The realization of his hope completely drove his manners from him for the moment. He stepped forward, exclamations of enthusiasm tumbling from his lips. He wanted, nearer the fire, to see the full face.

He saw it—lovely as the profile. And then he saw, too, resting on the floor at the foot of the chair, hidden from the door by the shadow, but plainly visible now in the firelight—a pair of crutches!

Winifred Mackintosh, most beautiful girl in England, was a victim of infantile paralysis! Since the age of seven she has never walked without a stick. She will never walk without one, said her father.

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