

THE HUCKSTER'S LADY

BY KYLE CRICHTON

All about Deborah Kerr, a Scottish girl with a soft British accent and an ironbound contract which is worth over a million bucks — in American money

WE DON'T want to get Clark Gable angry and we certainly aren't casting a lance at that three-pronged entity, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, but we must say that without Miss Deborah Kerr we should have been unhappy at The Hucksters.

Not that Miss Kerr does any more acting than you could stick in your eye. She appears first as a very reserved and chilly character who is a widow with two children (a nice switch from the book, where she was merely a wife who was cheating a little on her warrior husband), but when she meets Mr. Gable and the steam begins to rise—well, there hasn't been anything like it since John Gilbert and Greta Garbo in *Flesh and The Devil*.

We hasten to add that Miss Kerr has long since established herself as an actress in British films but in this country she will be known through the ages as a lady who could accompany an almost total stranger on a midnight taxi ride to a deserted beach, follow him to a ramshackle resort hotel and finally chase him by plane to California, all with such gentility that the Johnston office beamed and romance took a sharp upward trend in the market. This *could* be acting and, by the Lord Harry, it *may* be acting, but then again it may merely be that Miss Kerr is a Scottish girl who has a soft British accent.

Before Miss Kerr had a chance to reflect upon her experiences, she was making *If Winter Comes* with Walter Pidgeon and preparing to return to London in the fall to make *Young Bess*, a story of the famous beak-nosed queen. It was agreed that Miss Kerr would be required to strain herself in prettifying Bess, but all controversy on the subject was stilled by an act of God: the studio announced that Miss Kerr was about to become a mother.

At first blush this itself seemed a bit regal but all studios now interest themselves in the welfare of their minions and are never so happy as when acting the role of court chamberlain and announcing the plans and hopes of the mighty. As in all royal retinues, however, there were cynics to insist that Miss Kerr (and of course, her consort, Tony Bartley) had been forehanded in the matter.

"Oh, to be in London now that spring is there," they said, "and, oh, to be in California during the winter."

It was true that the tiny one would arrive in December and convalescence would occur during the winter; it was equally true that the family would be in London for the making of *Young Bess* in the spring instead of the fall, as originally planned; but it was really rather unthinkable that nature could be so pat as the critics hinted.

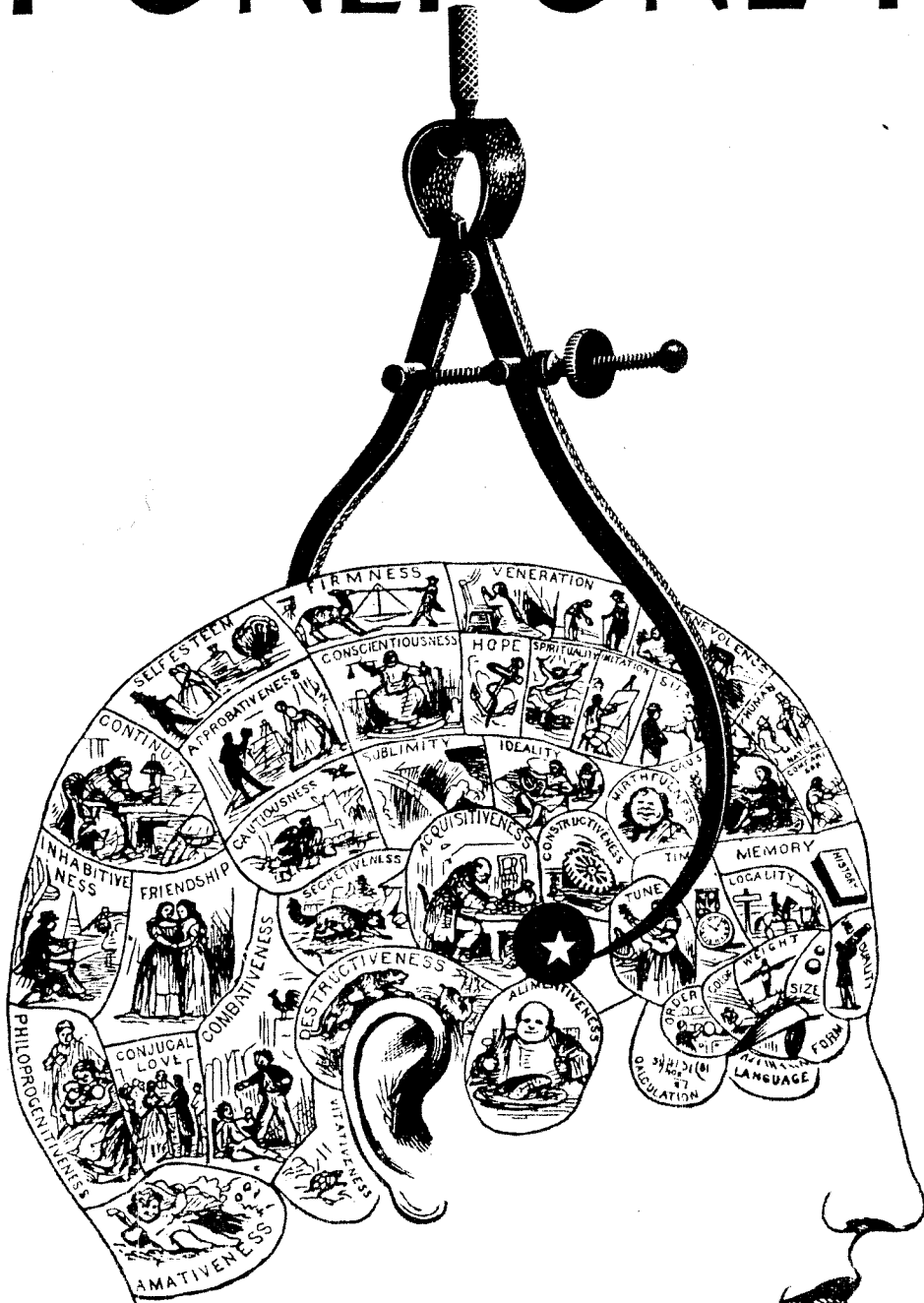
However, there was little doubt that The Hucksters would establish Miss Kerr and there was general rejoicing that M-G-M had done so well on its investment. For it must be understood that Miss Kerr did not come as an almoner seeking charity; she arrived with a seven-year contract, calling for \$3,000 every Friday and no nonsense about options. There was the further provision that she be used in one picture to be made every year in England.

Since M-G-M is already committed to making a quota of pictures in the motherland this agreement was quite acceptable. Everything was acceptable if only Miss Kerr made good; otherwise an outbreak of suicides in the studio would have been nothing but justified. Her contract called for \$1,092,000 and was as ironclad as the battleship Hood, having been attended to by sundry barristers with perukes and tight, hard minds.

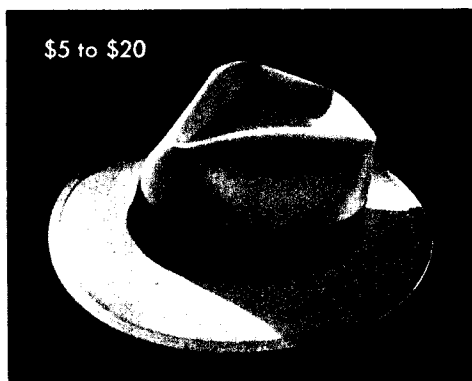
Since these details establish the lady as a personage of some eminence, it is only right to reveal the background that has made it possible. To be brief about the early boring years, it may be said merely that she was born in Helensburgh on the banks of Loch Lomond and very soon thereafter took the low road to Surrey in England, where her father was an architect. In due (Continued on page 54)

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC CARPENTER

9 OUT OF 10 MEN HAVE IT* BUT ONLY ONE HAT HAS!



* Not phrenology—
but straight fact!
According to actual
head shape
measurements
of thousands of men
throughout the country,
90 out of 100 men's
heads slope in
at the temples.



THEY LOOK BETTER BECAUSE THEY FIT BETTER

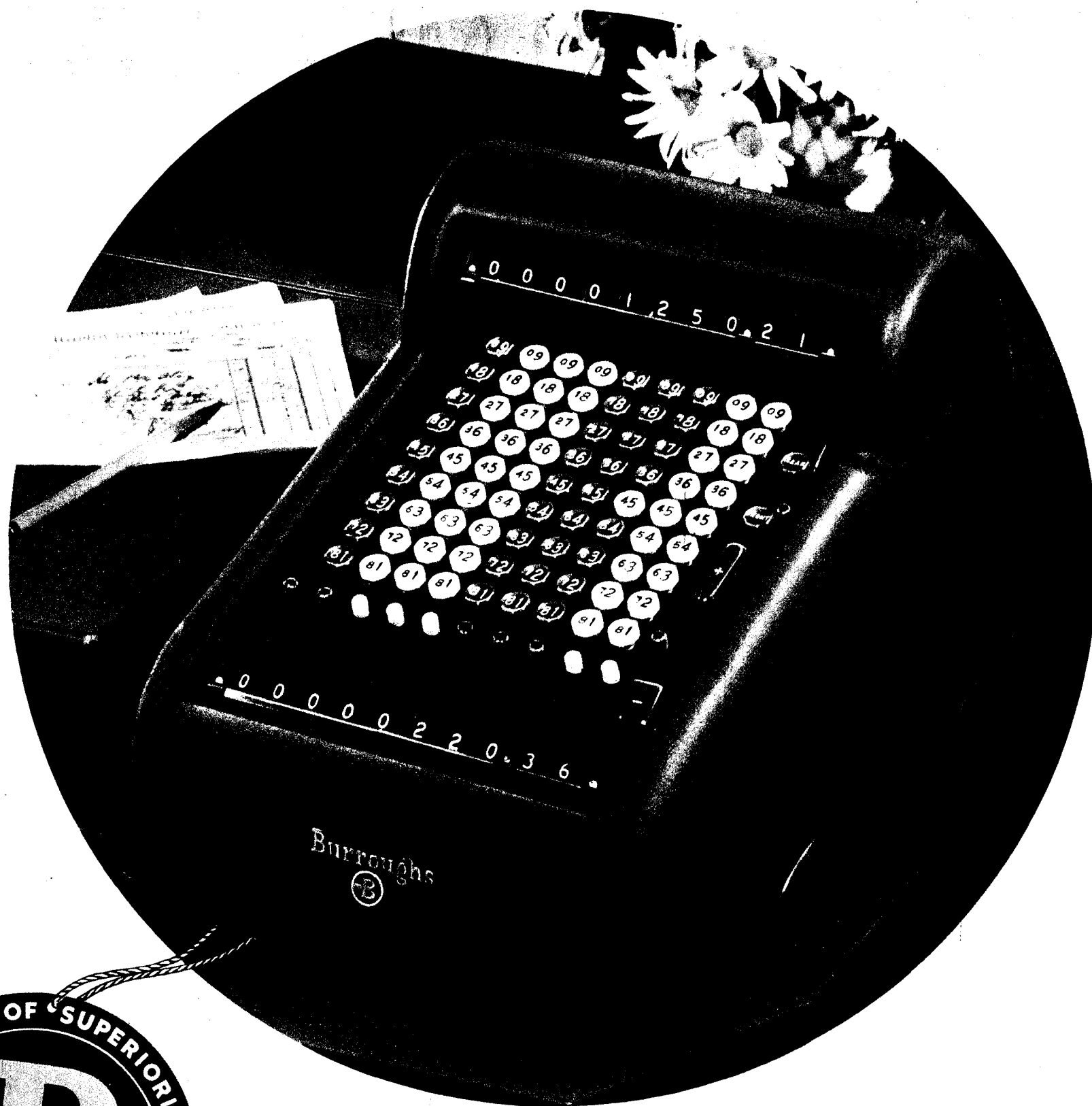
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RURAL CHAMPION



Just before starting the race, Claude uncorked the jug and swung it high. For an interminable time his throat worked as he gulped and the people watched in awe

BY GEORGES SURDEZ

Local boys make good—each in his own way

JULES FAUBRAS came home to visit his family toward the end of August. His father owned a sizable farm about three kilometers from our village of Harquemont, three thousand feet up in the Jura Mountains, on the French side of the Doubs River. That name, Jules Faubras, does not mean much today, but at that time it was known to every boy in France and to every attentive follower of sports all over the globe.

"Our Julot," the newspapers called him. He happened to have run five thousand meters in several seconds under fifteen minutes, which was remarkable forty years ago and remains very fair time even now. His figure for ten thousand meters was almost as startling and as he had just started against real opposition, it was generally believed that he would clip more seconds during the next season. Just at that time, the whole nation was in a fever about athletics, for the recent Olympic Games had

seen no Frenchman in a glorious place and the national ego was smarting.

To be truthful, the people in our village seldom took much interest in outside matters and but for Jules, "Our Julot," few of us would have known or cared. But we were all proud that a local boy had his name printed in the Paris newspapers and his father produced clippings about his famous son, clippings in foreign languages, some from as far away as America, with his name underlined.

The headmaster of our little school told us many anecdotes about his famous ex-pupil—his intelligence, his application and determination. We looked forward to his arrival. Boys of my age could not remember him, as he had been away for several years.

Then, as always since when beholding a celebrity in the flesh, I experienced disappointment when he arrived. I had imagined someone of heroic stature,

of striking appearance, and Jules turned out to be no taller than my father, five feet seven inches, just a stocky little guy with a thin, colorless mustache.

He came to the school and told us a good deal of rather dry stuff about physical condition in general, distance running in particular and the need for athletes to represent France before the world. It was boring, but we admired him nevertheless. Had he not beaten the best runners in France and a number of presumptuous foreigners?

He was to leave again before long, to engage in other races. He would travel to England, Germany, Sweden. People said that he would participate in the next Olympics and after winning his events, probably turn professional and make a tour of the United States. Even as an amateur, he was presumed to be deriving some income from sports. There were ways and means, people whispered. He did appear well supplied (Continued on page 56)

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY BECKHOFF