

Lord Kitchener's Great Bluff.

How England Secretly Raised an Army Four Times as Big as She Has Admitted.

By J. Herbert Puckworth.

(From the American Magazine for July.)

"Mr. Puckworth is an Englishman belonging to a family of well-known London and Liverpool journalists, but for the past ten years, with the exception of two years in London for The New York Herald, he has lived most of the time in New York, where he has been connected with The Evening Sun. At the outbreak of the war he went to England, where he has remained most of the time. During the winter, because of his unusual opportunities for getting in side information pertaining to England's part in the war, he came confidentially into possession of the facts in this article. On account of strict censorship imposed by Lord Kitchener, no English journal has published them, and, in truth, few Englishmen have known the real facts. Indeed, Mr. Puckworth himself has been unwilling, until now, to communicate publicly what he has learned.—The Editors of The American Magazine."

How Kitchener's army was secretly increased from 1,000,000 to 4,000,000 men right under the very noses of the ubiquitous German spies is one of the most amazing stories of the war.

The feat of clothing, arming and training this mighty host, and of then smuggling it out of a supposedly submarine-blockaded island to France, has no parallel in history. As an exhibition of high strategy alone it surpasses the finest performances in the field of either Gen. Joffre or Gen. von Hindenburg.

It completely deceived the German general staff as to England's military strength, and confounded the Teutonic theorists, who had always maintained that it was impossible to make a soldier in less than three years.

The grim joke on the Kaiser was concocted by Lord Kitchener himself. He commandeered the services of the press to assist him to carry out the great bluff and there can be no harm now in telling how it was done.

When the British Secretary of State for War first conceived the idea of putting into the field four million men, he realized that it would be a grave strategic blunder to allow the enemy to know what was really afoot. Rather, the game should be to call for a million men and then press-agent the world with stories lamenting the fact that, at last, the British Empire was about to crumble up because the men of England had not the pluck to defend it. All the German stories that the modern Englishman had become effete and anaemic were, indeed, too true!

The scheme worked out admirably. Recruiting was phenomenally brisk from the first. Yet the Germans eagerly swallowed the skillfully phrased yarns that were published broadcast, that told how only conscription would save the British from utter disaster.

While the cartoonists and funny verse writers of the rest of the world were holding up to ridicule the sport-loving Englishman, who was supposed to be refusing to shoulder a gun in defence of his hearth and home, Great Britain was rapidly and thoroughly building up her own big "Steam Roller."

Last winter in London I was privileged to meet Lieut.-Col. Sir H. C. Schlater, adjutant-general to the forces, at an informal luncheon. War was not discussed. But as the party was about to break up, somebody asked the adjutant, the one man, mind you, who could have answered the question:

"How many men are there in Kitchener's Army?"

Looking squarely into the eyes of his questioner, Sir H. C. Schlater replied:

"I don't know."

The campaign of silence was conducted on strictly scientific lines. The news paper editors were first warned that any indiscretion would mean a court-martial, under the Defence of the Realm Act, on charges of having "spread reports likely to interfere with the success of His Majesty's forces." They were instructed to publish only the recruiting returns sent out by the War Office. Independent census taking was strictly forbidden. All articles on the new army, and even pictures of soldiers had first to be submitted to the censor. A permit was required even to own a camera.

One London editor refused to "stay put." He published a picture of some soldiers without the permission of the censor. Lord Kitchener sent for the offender.

"A second indiscretion," he explained, "means a court-martial and jail."

"On what charges?" stuttered the astonished editor.

"Never mind," answered Lord Kitchener, "we will clap you into prison first and find the charges after the war is over."

The English have the reputation of having "muddled through" most of their wars. They are muddling through this one, but for once there has been method to their muddling. Tricks and subterfuges, cunning and unnumberable, were adopted in order to hoodwink the enemy as to the size and disposition of the new army. Battalions of the same regiment were trained in different parts of the country. Instead of creating new corps, old ones were increased to colossal proportions. The Manchester Regiment, for instance, grew from four to thirty battalions—to thirty-six thousand men. Of course it was obvious to the most casual observer that Great Britain was getting together a tremendous army. But who could say whether it numbered two million or four million men.

Nothing was ever said about the five hundred thousand very efficient Territorials. And yet these men virtually belonged to Kitchener's Army. Men who enlisted in the Territorial forces after the declaration of war undertook the same obligations as the men in the regular army. The old members, recruited for home defence only, were easily brought into line. They were paraded before their colonels, who would bawl out:

"Any man who doesn't want to go into the trenches please step one pace to the front."

When it came to moving the new troops to France extraordinary precautions were taken to mislead the spies. The regiments were not all transported from Southampton to Boulogne or Havre. Instead they were shipped from what were really out-of-the-way and inconvenient ports—Bristol, Avonmouth, Cardiff, Swansea and Barrow, for example—to French ports as far from the firing line as St. Malo, Brest and even Bordeaux on the west coast and Marseilles on the Mediterranean.

Troop trains were invariably moved at night with drawn blinds. Oftentimes they were run half way around the country before being sneaked alongside a transport. Not even the officers were aware of their ultimate destination—whether it was to be France, Egypt, India or the Dardanelles.

The engine drivers were changed every twenty miles or so, and the captains of the troop ships received their final instructions by wireless after they had put to sea.

Last spring, when the movement of Kitchener's army was in full swing, I visited Ryde in the Isle of Wight. One day a fleet of at least thirty transports collected in the Solent. Nobody knew where they had come from. At dusk a score of forty-knot torpedo boat destroyers, the escort, put in appearance. When night fell, nothing could be seen but the searchlights sweeping the entrance to Portsmouth harbor, on the mainland, for enemy periscopes. In the morning transports and destroyer had gone.

What was the secret of Lord Kitchener's success in so easily persuading four million men voluntarily to enlist? It was advertising. A very few days after England had decided to enter the conflict millions of posters calling for volunteers to enlist for "the period of the war only" were plastered up. The whole country from John o'Gaats to Land's End looked like one huge bill board. It was the biggest and most thorough advertising campaign ever conceived and successfully carried out.

This was the caption on the one recruiting poster that betrayed a trace of real inspiration. This particular appeal was made in picture form. In the top left-hand corner was a photograph of twenty-two husky footballers entertaining a grandstand packed with "slackers." Below was a scene in the muddy trenches. Dead and wounded "Tommies" lay around, neglected, and perhaps forgotten. Half a dozen or so of the survivors of Sir John French's expeditionary force, unkempt and unshaven, gaunt but determined still, had been suddenly aroused from the dreadful nightmare by a mighty shout from the rear. The noise came from the relief columns of Kitchener's army, that could be seen swarming over the horizon.

"Here we are!" bellowed the reinforcements, to which welcome shouts:



tion the war-stained veterans replied:

"We knew that you would come."

But General French's gallant little army that fought so stubbornly during the retreat from Mons and saved Paris, never dreamed that Lord Kitchener was preparing to send over eight armies—four million men—to the rescue. The public back home in England didn't know it. This formidable host was built up from the nucleus of one hundred and sixty thousand regulars under a veil of the deepest secrecy.

The government owned up to one million one hundred thousand men in the middle of November when it asked for a vote for a new army of one million. Early in February, Premier Asquith announced that the army then numbered three million, exclusive of colonial troops. Yet it was known in Fleet street that there were already two million Britishers, miles behind the front, "in hiding," awaiting the day when they would be moved forward to take part in the "great push." And the supply at home then seemed as great as ever it did.

The quicker the men enlisted the faster were the clammy tales sent out. From time to time fresh posters were issued, partly to keep up the fiction that difficulty was being experienced in getting men. Some of these appeals read:

We are going to win, but YOU must help.

Lord Roberts did his duty! Are you doing yours?

Remember Yarmouth.

When your children grow up and ask, "What did you do father in the great war? what will your answer be?"

An appeal to cricket and football enthusiasts was headed, "The Greater Game," while a very clever "ad" was that of the head of Lord Kitchener with a finger pointing directly at the observer. Underneath, in big letters, were the commanding words:

"I MEAN YOU."

Naturally, mistakes were made. Scotsmen refused to enlist until the appeals were addressed to "Britishers" instead of to "Englishmen." Welshmen stayed at home until a Welsh brigade was formed.

It had been said that England was unprepared for war. This is only partly true. Certainly she did not have a big army ready to put into the field:

but she had a scheme to form one already thoroughly worked out to put into operation in an emergency. Why, the very day after war was declared thousands of workmen got busy all over the country turning churches, colleges and schools into hospitals. Vast camps began to spring up everywhere. Public parks were turned into drill grounds. Orders were given for millions of tent poles against the time Kitchener's army would be engaged in a summer campaign on the continent.

Recruiting offices were opened in town halls, vacant stores, in tents in the squares, in the offices of the German shipping companies—in fact in all sorts of corners where a recruiting officer could set up a desk and chair.

On one day alone, August 20, ninety-seven thousand recruits took the "King's Shilling." And at the very height of this boom the newspapers, at the instigation of the war office, commenced to publish the stories about the supposed failure to get men. Young Britons, it was said, preferred cricket, golf, tennis, and afternoon tea to fighting for their country. It was whispering at Westminster that conscription was being considered. Poor old England's downfall was at hand! This "disgraceful state of affairs" was not passed unnoticed by the correspondents of neutral countries, and their despatches telling of "England's shame" were republished in Germany and gloried over.

As a matter of fact the early enlistments were so heavy that before the end of September Fleet street was tipped off by Whitehall to stop "impugning" for more men. They were coming in too fast for the authorities to deal with them. Down at Aldershot and the other garrison towns the men were sleeping ten, instead of four, in a tent, and there was not sufficient food

on hand to feed them.

In less than two months the United Kingdom was one vast camp. Out-of-the-way villages in the mountains of North Wales, or among the lakes of the Scottish Highlands; the big industrial cities of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the Black Country, the coast resorts—each had 100 or 100,000 men billeted upon its inhabitants.

Kipling's "modified oafs" formed a Football Battalion of their own; ricketers, glers, and other athletes went into the Sportsmen's Battalion. Eighty per cent of the undergraduates of Oxford and Cambridge, and all the members of the different athletic teams, enlisted either in the ranks or applied for commissions. The "Knuts," the Piccadilly dude, the "young bloods," who made the night-dancing clubs possible in London, are now all doing their "little bit." Night life in London ceased when England went to war.

Gentlemen, chauffeurs, taxicab and motor-bus drivers joined the Army Service Corps, wireless operators, telegraphists, engineers and architects flocked to the Royal Engineers; a thousand civilian aviators enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps; the lawyer, the shop clerk, the broker, the hod-carrier, the banker and the van boy joined any old regiment.

There was some excuse at first for the middle class married man hesitating about throwing up a \$25-a-week job for a shilling a day. His folks could not subsist on the government scale of allowances that looked so generous to the working man. The well-to-do didn't have to worry about allowances and pensions.

After spending some months at the front the old soldiers were allowed to come home on week-end furloughs, and there returned warriors proved to be the very best kind of recruiting agent. From time to time new inducements were devised to drum up more "rookies." Friends enlisting in batches of forty were informed that they would be drafted into the same regiments, would be messes in the same huts, and would fight side by side later on at the front.

Finally, men who stood but five feet high demanded to be let in, Lord Derby, who knew the men who "won" the coal from the Lancashire mines, pointed out that this strange race of dwarfs with their massive shoulders would make invaluable trench diggers. Give them a pick, put them on their backs on solid concrete, and they would dig themselves in in half an hour. Lord Kitchener asked to see a sample. Twenty were produced, and recruiting was commenced at once for the famous Bantam Battalions.

I was in England, on and off, during the first seven months of the war, and I have seen the men of Kitchener's army at all stages of training. I don't know what sort of soldiers they will prove to be, but I do know that every man will be sent into battle physically perfect. Every soldier has been trained as though he were a prize-fighter preparing for the world's championship. Their preparation has not only consisted of drill and musketry, but they have been given every conceivable kind of gymnastics.

It used to hurt those who all the time were in the secret to read that France was complaining that she had been left in the lurch by her great ally. But France, and the rest of the world, now understands that John Bull was only bluffing when he pretended that he could not get enough men to accept the war lord's challenge.

Italy's King Had A Close Call

Rome, via Paris, July 9.—King Victor Emmanuel, who is on the firing line with his troops, is risking his life every day like an ordinary officer, according to reports received from the front. The Tribune prints a story, vouched for by an "eye-witness," describing one of the narrow risks the monarch has had, while directing artillery fire against Austrian positions, the king asked an artillery officer in charge of a battery:

"Do you suppose you can get at that hut over there from which comes the fire against the contingent directly below us? It seems to me impossible."

A moment later the hut was a heap of ruins.

"Now, I can go," exclaimed Victor Emmanuel as he grasped the officer's hand.

Soon afterwards the King met one of his generals and described enthusiastically the work of the Italian battery, giving the name of the officer directing its fire.

"That officer was killed by a shell a half hour ago just where you left him. Your Majesty," gasped the general.

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—Have this
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An unusual piece of house-moving was recently accomplished at Cleveland, O., when a half-story building, occupied by a yacht club, was blocked up on barges and towed eight miles over Lake Erie to a new site on an island in Rocky River. The structure is 52 by 78 feet in size, and placed an aggregate weight on the three scows which were employed of approximately 310 tons. The largest of the barges, 40 feet wide and 120 feet in length, was lashed in the middle and supported 80 per cent of the load.

BRITISH SUPERIORITY.

[London Daily Mail.]

Each day that the war lasts the scope and possibilities of the air service are enlarged. The Germans began the struggle with a marked advantage in equipment and machines. The British air service, inferior in numbers, has neutralized that advantage by sheer skill and valor and established an extraordinary personal superiority over the enemy. So marked is this ascendancy that when a British airman goes up the German airman hurriedly return to ground.

THE BLONDE ESKIMOS

Northern Trapper Claims to Have Seen Them Before Stefansson

A far northern trapper, G. L. Deschambeault, returning from Fort Simpson to Edmonton, challenged the claim of Explorer Stefansson that he was the first discoverer of the blonde Eskimos.

Some two and a half years ago Deschambeault on a hunting expedition, accompanied by Joseph and William Anderson camped on the Copper Mine River, seven hundred miles north of Fort Simpson. While in camp the Eskimo interpreter informed Deschambeault that strange stories were being told among his companions about another tribe of "Huskies" who, although they resembled the ordinary Eskimos in their habits, had the pale faces of the white man.

Fired by curiosity, Deschambeault decided to follow the Copper Mine River to its juncture with the Great Bear Lake. On arriving at the shores of the Great Lake, the little party came upon the encampment of the strange tribe. The Eskimos were dressed after the customary fashion of natives of the north, but instead of being squat of stature and dark were tall haired and of light complexion.