

Why John Bull Is Greatest Landholder

The Story Behind England's Mighty World Empire

(Continued from page one.)
 of soil outside the British Isles. The whole growth of the empire, therefore, has been a matter of modern history. Although Newfoundland, commonly termed the senior colony of the British empire, was claimed by Sir Humphry Gilbert in the name of the crown in 1583, it was not until 1623 that British rights were established there by the planting of a colony by Sir George Calvert, afterward Lord Baltimore. British settlements in what is now the United States of America, principally those in Massachusetts and Virginia, formed the nucleus of what later became the thirteen original colonies. But these, as pointed out, rebelled and broke away from the empire—to the everlasting discredit of the British statesmen of 1775 and their colonial policy.

The varicolored map of the world that appears on page one is rich in red. These red sections, some tiny, some extensive, all represent lands that are part of the British empire of today or under British control. Approximately one-fourth of all the land in the world is British. Apparently no one knows exactly how many square miles of land are British or what is the exact total population of the empire. It is impossible to take reliable censuses in remote lands inhabited by savages, and the British possess some such lands. No two authorities, therefore, agree exactly as to the area and population of the empire. The figures previously given are approximately correct, corresponding closely with those of a majority of the authorities.

Having noted the vastness of the British empire, as shown in the colored map, let us now consult the map of the world of 225 years ago (1714) which appears on this page. On this map we see that the British then had only begun their imperial expansion. We see as British territory Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, a thin strip of Labrador, the American colonies, Jamaica, Honduras, and a sprinkling of islands in the western world. We see in the eastern hemisphere the British Isles themselves, a few more islands, some settlements on the coast of India, other settlements on the west coast of Africa, and, most important of all from the standpoint of imperial security, the rock of Gibraltar. By this time the British had gained a foothold in that part of Canada that touches on Hudson bay, but only in the name of the Hudson's Bay company and not in the name of the crown.

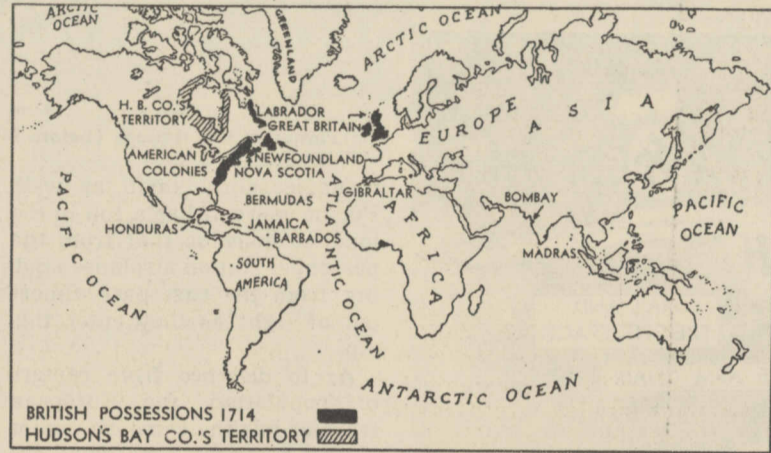
Of all the colonial territories possessed by the British government before 1714 and still owned by it, only two were taken by conquest, the other being acquired by colonization. The island of Jamaica in 1655 was captured from the Spaniards by the British admirals Penn and Venables and finally recognized as British property by the treaty of Madrid of 1670. Gibraltar was taken from the Spaniards by the British in 1704, and later successfully defended by them through several important sieges.

Gibraltar appears on the map merely as a tiny red spot, yet for many years it has been vital as a defense position of the British empire, a means of helping to hold the empire together. It commands the eastern gateway to the Mediterranean, and the Mediterranean provides Great Britain with a route to the orient by way of the Suez canal.

As it slowly was gaining a foothold in the west in the eighteenth century, Great Britain was planting the seeds of empire in the east. Through the East India company British settlements were being established in India at Madras, Bombay, and in Bengal. Before 1714, however, the British held no part of India as crown territory. Before that year they had no part of the great continent of Africa except as covered by insignificant trading posts at isolated spots on the

west coast. Moreover, they had no part of the vast island continent of Australia.

The richest part of Canada became British as the result of a series of bloody wars with the French, in which American colonists played an important part. When Maj. Gen. James Wolfe defeated the Marquis de Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham just outside Quebec on Sept. 13, 1759, the power of the French in Canada was broken. By the end of the year both the province of Quebec and the province of Ontario were in the hands of



British possessions in 1714.

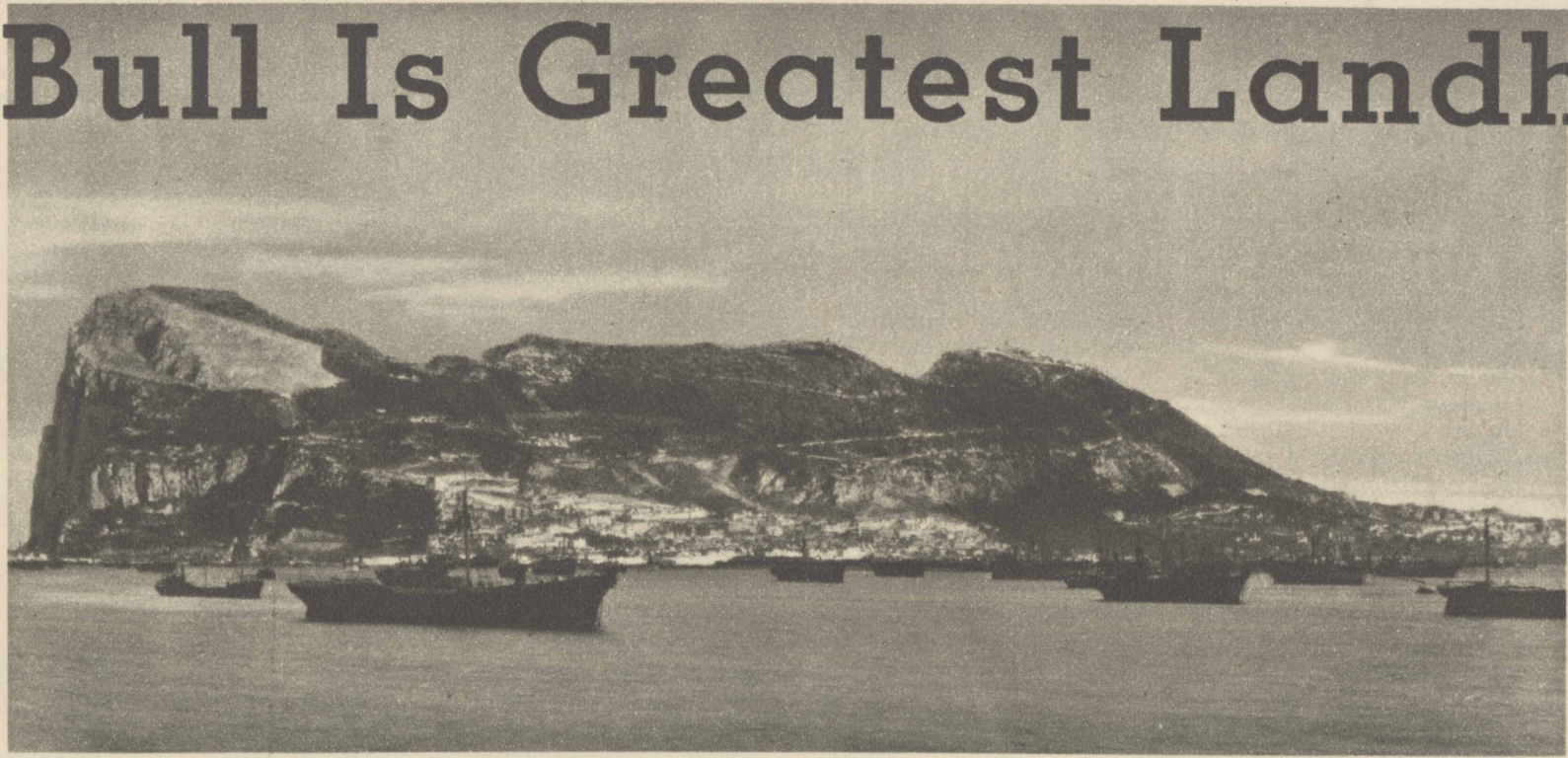
the British. In 1763 Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Ontario were ceded to Great Britain by France.

As we have disclosed, by discussing a map of the world of 1714 (the year Queen Anne died), how meager were Great Britain's territorial holdings 225 years ago, let us now consult the accompanying map of the world of 1837—the year Queen Victoria came to the throne. This map shows nearly all of Canada—all except the far north and a strip on the west coast adjoining Alaska—in British possession, many more islands than in 1714, British Guiana in South America (annexed in 1803), the greater part of Australia and all of Tasmania, and the major part of India, the last named still held, however, through the offices of the East India company. It was not until after the Indian mutiny that India formally was transferred to the crown in 1858, and it was not until 1877 that Queen Victoria, through the plan engineered by her prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, was proclaimed empress of India.

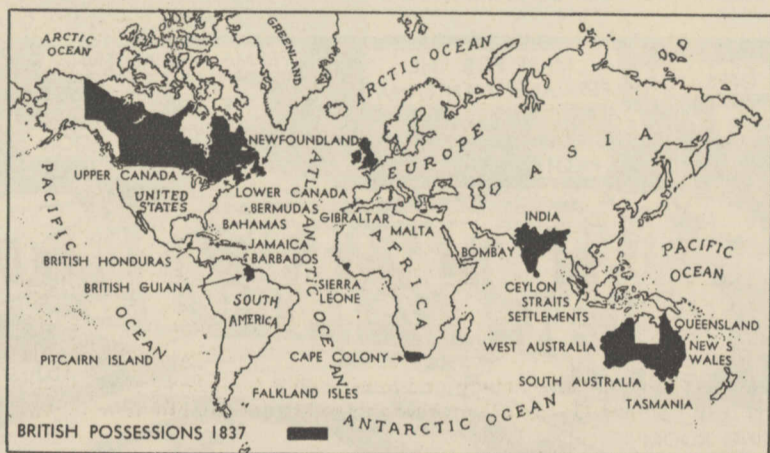
The British had laid the foundation of the present Union of South Africa in the occupation of the Cape of Good Hope in the years from 1795 to 1806, taking it from the Dutch, who had settled there as early as 1652. They had settled in Sierra Leone in 1787. But still as recently as 1837 the British were without sizable holdings in Africa—it still was the dark continent.

There is no particular credit redounding to the British so far as the early history of Australia is concerned. This great island, approximately the same in area as the United States, and one of the major units of the empire, may have been discovered by a French navigator, Binot Paulmyer, in 1503. His claim never has been proved. The Dutch arrived and landed there 103 years later. Capt. James Cook, the British explorer, landed on the shore of Botany bay, an inlet on the coast of New South Wales, in 1770 and took possession in the name of the British crown. Eighteen years later a shipload of criminals was landed on the very spot and a penal settlement was established. The prisoners of the settlement some time later were shifted to the present site of Sydney. Thus Australia got its start as a place of banishment for undesirables. It has long since, however, lived down the stigma, if any.

The last century has been one of marvelous expansion for the British empire. Since 1837 there have been added to it the vast collection of islands in the Arctic ocean to the north of North America, British Columbia,



(Publishers' Photo Service photo.)
The rock of Gibraltar—"most important of all from the standpoint of imperial security."



The British empire as it was in 1837.



"The governments of Australia and New Zealand today are helping Great Britain prepare for the next war." Australia's 17th Light Horse regiment during maneuvers. (Associated Press photo.)

Yukon territory, huge territories in Africa, a wide addition to India on the northwest, Burma, a sizable chunk of land in north central Australia, the Straits Settlements, British New Guinea, New Zealand, and a scattering of minor possessions. From Egypt, which now is a semi-independent kingdom under British military control, to the Cape of Good Hope, Great Britain today possesses an unbroken stretch of the most desirable land in Africa. This is in addition to its numerous possessions on the west coast of the continent. The British are the biggest landholders of Africa. As a result of the World war they took from the Germans the fertile territory of German East Africa (Tanganyika territory), German Southwest Africa, and parts of Togoland and the Cameroons. They also took from the Germans a number of islands in the South Pacific.

From the beginning of the empire in the seventeenth century to the present day Great Britain has annexed approximately a hundred separate and distinct territories, a surprisingly large number of which were won by conquest. In all that time it has lost, by war, formal cession, or exchange, only the American colonies, territories that now are parts of Dutch and French Guiana, Java, Reunion Island, Pondicherry in India, Helgoland, St. Pierre, and Miquelon. Unproved British claims to the northwest corner and parts of the mid-section of what now is the United States of America were

responsible to it for local matters. The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are in an anomalous position, inasmuch as they have independent legislatures and semi-independent executives subject to the supremacy of the British parliament.

2. The self-governing dominions, possessing membership in the league of nations and therefore a quasi-international status. Though still subject to the supremacy of the British parliament, they possess the same independent status as Great Britain, with which they are equal members of the British imperial conference. The dominions are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, and Eire (Ireland).

(The British imperial conference consists of an association of component units of the empire meeting every four years, in which the prime ministers of each are on a footing of equality with the British prime minister.)

3. A dominion with its status temporarily reduced to that of a colony. This is Newfoundland. Directly after the World war

relinquished in the period from 1763 to 1846.

Outside the innumerable small wars with native tribesmen in Africa, Australia, and elsewhere the British have fought several really important campaigns to conquer alien peoples. Among these were some of the earlier wars in India, the Indian mutiny, the Afghan wars on the north-west border of India, and the Boer war in South Africa. The last named came dangerously close to being a successful war of independence for the Boers and another major blunder on the part of the British, but finally, through a preponderance of men and supplies, the British managed to vanquish the valiant Boers.

The twentieth-century colonial policy of the British is far different from that of 1775. Today the Boer citizens of the Union of South Africa enjoy most of the privileges and liberties for which they fought the British in 1899 to 1902.

The British empire—or, to give it its latest name, the British Commonwealth of Nations—today is divided into the following political classes:

1. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, consisting of England, Wales, Scotland, and northern Ireland. It possesses full sovereignty, external and internal, but is limited in action as regards the dominions by certain recognized conventions. Northern Ireland has a parliament and a government



The famous bridge that is a landmark in Sydney harbor, Australia.

Newfoundland was made a self-governing dominion with membership in the British imperial conference but without membership in the league of nations. By 1933 it had drifted into such a desperate financial state that it became necessary to revert its position to that of a colony until such time as it again should become self-supporting. By the Newfoundland act, passed Dec. 21, 1933, by the British parlia-

ment, the island's representative government was replaced by a commission government. The commission consists of six members, three appointed by the British government and three by Newfoundland.

4. Two self-governing colonies, with wide but not unrestricted autonomy, and not entitled to representation in the imperial conference. These are Malta (taken from the French in 1800) and Southern Rhodesia in Africa.

5. Crown colonies, or colonies not possessing responsible governments—that is, colonies in which the executive governments are controlled by the British government through the secretary of state for the colonies. The legislatures in these cases may be entirely independent of the executive, as in the Bahamas, Bermuda, and Barbados, with their nominee upper houses and their elective assemblies, but normally are, either in case of emergency or regularly, subject to control, either because there is an official majority or because the governor alone constitutes the legislature. To the Australian commonwealth are attached, as dependencies administered on crown colony lines, Papua and Norfolk Island; to New Zealand, the Cook Islands and the Ross Dependency.

6. Protectorates administered on colonial lines. These differ from colonies mainly in that they are not annexed to the crown, and their inhabitants are not British subjects. Protectorates normally are annexed when they arrive at the proper state of political development.

7. Protected states. Some of

and representation in the imperial conference.

The mandated territories, held under league of nations mandate by Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa, are not, strictly speaking, part of the empire, yet they are governed by the British. Among these mandated lands are Tanganyika territory, Palestine, Southwest Africa, and Western Samoa.

All the dominions, all the colonies of the empire, whose subjects of the king prize liberty above all else, are held together in the main by a single tie, the crown. Take away the revered figure of the sovereign, abolish the age-old tradition of loyalty to the king, and it is more than likely the empire quickly would fall apart. Its insurance against enemies from within is the crown. Its insurance against enemies from without is its superb navy, the might of which is portrayed numerically in a drawing on page one.

While the crown holds the empire together, it is the riches and the resources of the great dominions that make the empire so impressive, so dangerous an enemy with which to tangle in war.

These dominions stanchly supported Great Britain during the World war with men, guns, money, and flaming patriotism. "Would they do it again?" is a question that has been asked repeatedly within recent months.

So far as New Zealand and Australia are concerned, for example, the answer to that question comes emphatically from the heads of the governments of the two dominions. Prime Minister M. J. Savage of New Zealand, who has been outspokenly critical of the British course in the past, said recently:

"Let no one imagine that if Britain were involved in conflict we would stand idly by."

And Prime Minister Robert G. Menzies of Australia in a similar declaration said his country would support Great Britain in any conflict.

The governments of these two dominions today are helping Great Britain prepare for the next war, according to an article from The Tribune's correspondent at Wellington, N. Z., Quentin Pope. Only last year, for example, the dominion pilots formed one-third of the 1,500 postings to the British air force. The people of the two dominions know how important to them is strength at the center of the empire, and that so long as Great Britain is unconquered they may expect military and naval aid against possible foes.

Both Australia and New Zealand today frankly admit that Japan is the power they fear. For many years these southern dominions were cautioned by London to avoid irritating Japan, but now the situation is different. No one today pretends that Australia's quarter billion dollar armament program is aimed at any nation but Japan.

During the World war home defenses in these two countries did not present an extremely difficult problem, as the enemy was largely bottled up in central Europe. But now the military plans of the two antipodean democracies, according to Mr. Pope, are being laid primarily not to supply expeditionary forces but to give protection at home.

In principle the dominions in the event of war are free to choose their individual courses. But in actual fact this freedom, which came from the statute of Westminster, is largely a front. In practice the British government, while keeping the dominions informed as to the progress of events, always can make its own decisions and justify them. Britain can commit herself to a course and pledge at least two of the dominions to it. Canada may insist on putting the question to her parliament, South Africa may consider the idea of neutrality, but for Australia and New Zealand, as in 1914, there is only one course. That is with the home government. The remoteness of the two dominions and the constant threat from Japan make it imperative for them to be with Great Britain for self-preservation if war comes.



M. J. SAVAGE