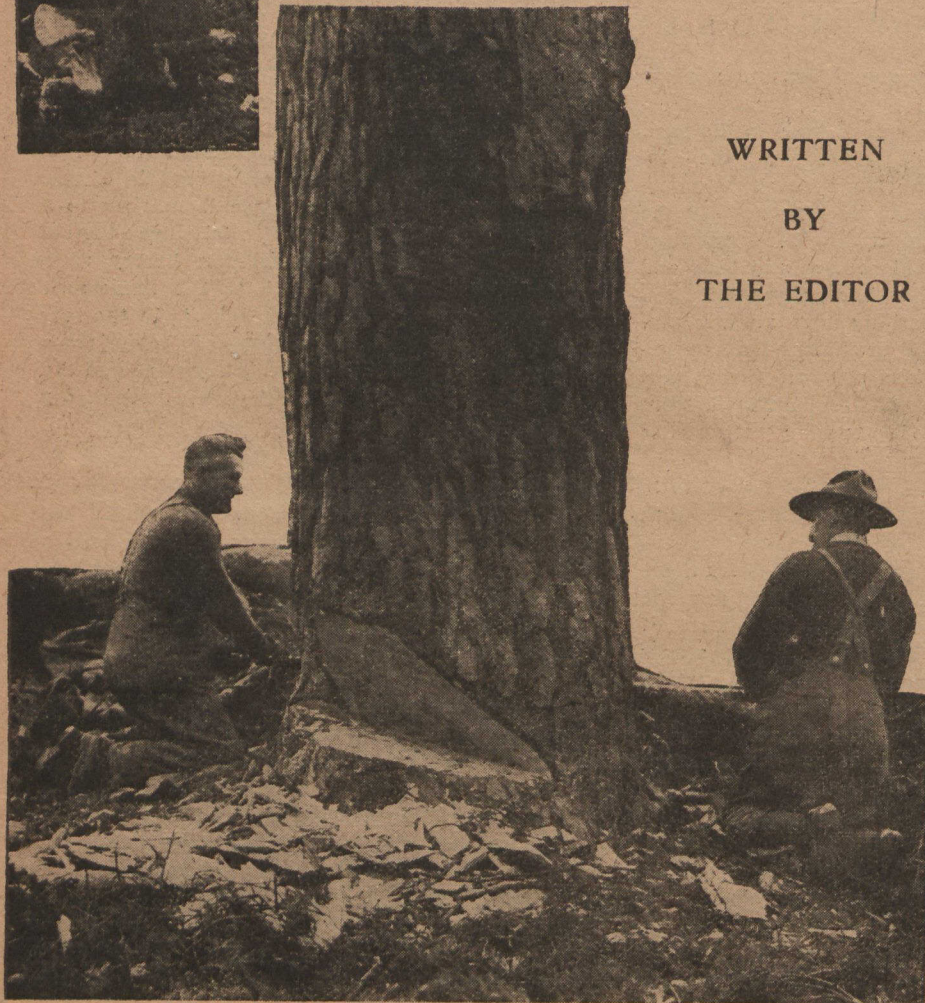


OUR MEN BUSHWHACK ENGLAND



The man with the axe and the cross-cut saw; man with the cant-hook, the skidway and the log-chain, make bush-clearing scenes in the historic forests of King George. The timber goes for war purposes. The land is cleared for war crops. Renewal of old Canadian epic in a new setting makes parts of England as picturesque as a pageant



WRITTEN
BY
THE EDITOR

CANADIAN bushmen for the first time in history have begun to bush-whack England. Pictures on this page indicate what this bushwhacking is—the real thing. The trees that Caesar knew—just to exaggerate a bit—are feeling the brunt of the bushmen that are famous the world over as once the Northwest Mounted Police were famous. The man with the axe in this country has always been a greater figure than the man with the hoe. It was the man with the axe and the log-chain and the handspike and the skid, to say nothing of the cant-hook, that made it possible to have a modern Canada at all. It was a long while ago when the first axe-man turned himself loose on the wilderness here. And he has not quit yet. It is within the memory of many Canadians living that bushmen of the first-class bush-conquering kind made the hardwood bush and the pine bush quiver with the noise they made.

Chopping down a tree of any size is no small contract. What it feels like to a greenhorn you may discover by reading that foolish book of Irvin S. Cobb, entitled *Fibble*, D.D., where Fibble essays to haggle down a few small saplings for a summer camp of his Young Nuts of America. Cobb had a fair idea of what a sapling looked like when Fibble at last got it down. But Cobb was never a bushwhacker.

Notice in the tree picture what a fine notch the axe-man made before the men with the crosscut saw got down to their hunkers to finish the job. Observe, first of all, the axe itself; the long, clean bit with about four inches of steel flanged out on the wrought iron body of the head. That axe was intended to carve out great clean chips such as you see lying in a scattered heap at the foot of the tree. A notch so clean and straight as that was never made by any but a fine axe in the hands of a superfine axe-man—who in this case looks very like a Fernch-Canadian. It's rather a bigger notch than we used to make in the swamp-elms of the hardwood bush. Don't imagine the axe-man intended to cut the tree half down before the saw-men began to work. No, he made the notch in order to get the tree to fall where the bushmen wanted it. That was an old trick of the bushman. Trees have a habit of wanting to fall their own way. The good bushman makes the tree fall—his way. And the crosscutters have a little windier job than even the axe-man. Notice how they have to crunch down to leave as much of the timber in the log as possible. No two-foot stumps such as we used to leave in the hardwood bush when timber was the curse of the earth that kept the corn from going in. Timber is scarce in England. Submarines are keeping timber out. Timber is needed for war as it once was for industry. The other day Lloyd George, in his submarine speech in the House of Commons, said that France had already given up some of her historic forests for the war, and on account of the submarines might have to give up still more. And the bush clearing of to-day becomes the crop acres of to-morrow.

In the lower picture observe the good, old-fashioned business of skidding up logs with a long chain, a pair of skids and a team. These are not the sized logs we used to roll up in the hardwood days of Ontario, either. But they illustrate the knack required to skid them up. None but real bushwhacker teamsters could do that sort of thing. To get a given log up a given pair of skids so that one end doesn't get ahead of the other and slew the log crosswise over the pile is a neat, scientific trick in adjusting the chains. And if you have not in your memory of Canada, along with the tap of the bushman's axe, the clank of the chain and the bung of the log to its appointed place on the skidway, you have lost more than the writer of this will ever have space to tell you.

