

# RECRUITING SPEECH

Delivered at Stonewall, December 10th, 1915, by  
**Lieut.-Col. Geo. H. Bradbury, M.P.**

## INSPIRING APPEAL TO YOUNG MEN TO DO THEIR DUTY

I venture to say that there are many reasons of great importance of the highest patriotic and honorable nature, of real urgency, which should at this moment compel every young Canadian, by birth or by adoption, to think seriously of his country's needs and his duty to it at this moment.

Do we realize the value of our British citizenship in the greatest empire the world has ever seen? Do we realize the value of the civil and religious liberties which we enjoy under our flag? If so, are we ready to sacrifice for the protection and perpetuation of these great blessings handed down to us by our ancestors?

The old Union Jack has been dyed crimson in the blood of heroes, that we might enjoy the civil and religious liberties which all British subjects enjoy today.

Are we going to fold our arms and stand idly by while tyrants trample under foot these great privileges, handed down to us after centuries of struggle and sacrifice?

No, no! We must, we do, realize our duty at this moment. The Empire must be preserved; British civilization, which means so much to the world, must not be supplanted by that thing called German "kultur."

What does the British Empire mean to you? It holds in fee for your use and profit, for your children's development and wealth, the richest resources in gold, silver and precious stones, to be found in all other parts of the world. It is the greatest money power in the world.

Its vast trade—the accretions of centuries of skilled effort on land and sea—with a total of more than nine thousand millions a year. It comprises one-fifth

of the world's area, and one-fourth of the population of the world owes allegiance to the British flag.

These are threatened by foreign tyrants our duty must be manifest to every British subject. I am satisfied that Canadians are thoroughly prepared to do their full

share in protecting the liberties which we enjoy at this moment, to the extent, if necessary, of our last man and our last dollar.

The German war lords have endeavored to create the impression in the minds of the masses of the German people that the British are a decadent and degenerate nation. They proclaim to the world, through their professors and false teachers, that we are a non-heroic nation, skulking behind, whilst we egg on more gallant nations to their destruction.

This is the description given of Britain to the German people—we are a timorous, craven nation, trusting entirely on our fleet.

But I am satisfied these professors, and the German people as a whole, have long ere this found serious reasons to change their opinion of Britons. The battles of Mons, Langemarck, St. Julien and Ypres, and at the Dardanelles, where the Germans and their allies met the British,

have opened their eyes to the fact that the British soldier is more than a match for the German, with all his years of training and preparedness.

The heroic deeds performed by volunteer British soldiers have demonstrated to the world that the old heroic spirit still lives in the hearts of the British people.

One million of British volunteers are now on the firing line, and we, as Canadians, are proud that we have fifty thousand of as good troops as the



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of the world's area, and one-fourth of the population of the world owes allegiance to the British flag.

Back of all this lies the glorious record of individual sacrifice and daring, of naval skill and valor. Every thread of the old flag has been steeped in blood fighting for the rights of small nations, protecting the weak and advancing the cause of civilization in all parts of the world.

As part of this glorious Empire, we have enjoyed all the privileges and liberties that belongs to British subjects, and now that

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world ever produced fighting side by side with the other British troops in the trenches. And at the famous battle of St. Julien the Canadian troops blocked the German advance, but at great sacrifice, and, as Sir John French said, saved the day to the British and allied troops. This gallant conduct of our men makes every Canadian proud of those who have crossed the seas to fight for our flag. While these great battles are being fought thousands of miles away from our shores, we are just as much interested in the result as though we were fighting on our boundary line to keep an enemy out. We must realize, as I am sure most of us do, that we are fighting on the plains of Flanders for our very existence as part of the British Empire, and that until we can say we have furnished our last man and spent our last available dollar, we cannot truthfully say that we have done our full duty in defence of our liberties.

Are we lagging behind? We boast of being the brightest gem in His Majesty's crown. Are we entitled to this honor? If we wish to hold our place we must wake up and make greater efforts to supply fighting men than we have already done.

Australia, with about half of our population, has 126,000 men on the firing line and has furnished a magnificent fleet unit that has done noble work on the seas.

France has no soldier for every ten of her population, including women and children. Great Britain has already one soldier for every fifteen of her population. Canada, a country of young men, has, up to date, only one soldier for every forty of her population.

So, while we are proud of what we have already done, we must realize that our sacrifice is not by any means complete. We have 100,000 more men in training and ready for the field, but we ought to have, within the next year, at least **500,000 men on the firing line**—and we can do it.

The fact is there must be no limit to what Canada will do to save the Empire. We must realize that everything we have under heaven in this great Canada of ours depends entirely on the perpetuation of the power and the prestige of the British flag.

I am not going to say a single word in disparagement of the German people as a people. They are a great people and have great qualities of head and heart. I believe, in spite of recent horrible events, that there is a great store of kindness in the German peasant, but, unfortunately, he has been schooled and drilled into a false idea of civilization. His civilization is efficient; it is capable, it is powerful, but it is cruel and heartless. They cannot comprehend the action of

Great Britain today. They say—France we can understand; she is fighting for vengeance, she wants territory, she wants to win back Alsace and Lorraine. They can understand Russia—she is fighting for mastery; she wants Galicia.

They can understand fighting for vengeance, they can understand fighting for greed of territory, but they cannot understand a great nation like Britain fighting for **honor**, pledging its resources, pledging its might, pledging its very existence, to protect a little nation like Belgium that seeks to defend its honor.

God made man in His own image, high of purpose and noble of character. The German civilization would re-create him in the image of a machine, precise, accurate, powerful, cruel, but with no room for the soul to operate.

Why is Great Britain involved? There is no man cognizant of the facts that is not convinced that Great Britain could not have avoided war without national dishonor.

I know many a crime has been committed and is being committed today in the sacred name of honor. All the same, private and national honor is a reality, and nations that disregard it are doomed.

Then why is Britain's honor involved in this war? Because, in the first place, we are bound by honorable obligations to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small nation that has tried to live at peace with the world.

Belgium could not have compelled us to fulfil our obligation. She was small and weak in comparison with Great Britain. But the man or nation that declines to discharge an obligation because his creditor is too poor or too weak to enforce it is a contemptible coward in the eyes of his fellow men. We entered into a solemn treaty in 1831 to defend Belgium and her integrity. Britain's signatures are attached to that treaty. Her signatories do not stand there alone. Britain was not the only country that pledged herself at that time to defend the integrity of Belgium. Russia, France, Austria and Prussia were all pledged on the same document.

Then why is Austria and Prussia not performing their obligations under this bond? Germany suggests that when we quote this treaty it is purely an excuse on the part of Great Britain, it is low craft and cunning to cloak our jealousy of a superior civilization which we are now endeavoring to destroy.

Our answer to this is Britain's action in 1870. What was that? The great Gladstone was then premier of Great Britain and Lord Granville was foreign secretary, and they realized the honor of Britain was at stake. The treaty made in 1831 bound Great Britain then,

as it does now. She did not shirk her obligations then; she called upon France and Prussia, the belligerent powers, to respect it. At that time the danger for Belgium came from France and not from Prussia. Great Britain intervened to protect Belgium from France at that time, as she did a year ago to protect her against Germany.

Britain proceeded in exactly the same way in both cases. She invited both belligerent powers to agree that they had no intention of violating Belgium territory. In 1870, when Great Britain made this request, Germany, through its great chancellor, Bismarck, stated it was superfluous to ask Germany such a question in view of the treaty she had signed (Germany's code of honor has changed materially since). France gave a similar answer. Great Britain received the thanks of Belgium at that time for her kindly interventions. Here is a document addressed by Belgium to Queen Victoria:

**"The great and noble people, over whose destinies you preside, has just given a further proof of its benevolent sentiments towards our country. The voice of the English nation has been heard above the din of arms, and it has asserted the principles of justice and right. Next to the unalterable attachment of the Belgian people to their independence, the strongest sentiments that fill their hearts is that of imperishable gratitude to England."**

Mark what followed a few days after Great Britain had intervened and secured the pledge that Belgium territory would not be violated. A French army was wedged up against Belgium territory, every means of escape shut off by a ring of flame from Prussian guns. Yes, there was one way of escape. What was that? By violating the neutrality of Belgium. The French army could have escaped by crossing the Belgium boundary. But France preferred ruin and humiliation at the hands of the Prussians rather than break her bond with Belgium, and the French emperor, with a hundred thousand men, surrendered themselves to the Prussians sooner than violate her bond by crossing into Belgium territory. **All honor to France.**

Today conditions are reversed. It is Germany's interest to break the treaty which she has done without the slightest compunction. She proclaims to the world the damnable doctrines that treaties should only be kept when they are in the interest of the state. "The German chancellor of today asks: 'What is a treaty?'" And answers his own question by saying it is only a scrap of paper to be honored only when it is in the interest of the state to do so.

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If the German doctrine prevailed, business would be at a standstill all over the world, for three-fourths of the business of the world is done on faith, that is, on credit, by the exchange of paper. Adopt the German doctrine and no man would be expected to keep his promise or to pay his promissory notes or to fulfil his contracts when it was against his interest to do so.

We may thank God that Great Britain and her allies have not fallen to that depth, but are staking their very existence for the purpose of discharging an honorable obligation entered into with a small nation almost a century ago.

The distinguishing difference between the German ideal and the British ideal is that in the German ideal honor counts for nothing. If by dishonorable action you can add power to your state, the German ideal justifies any act, no matter how dishonorable. But with Great Britain this stands today as her motto, as it has stood all the days of her existence. Honor must be, and has been, the distinguishing characteristic of the British nation; good faith must be kept, and when Great Britain pledges her honor with the long traditions of history behind her it would be a sad day, not only for England, but it would be a sad day for the wide world, if the lesson had been taught by Great Britain that honor could be subordinated to selfish ends, security on the one hand or power on the other.

Britain has always stood for the inviolability and respect of smaller nations. Look at history. How often she has spent her blood and treasure battling for the weaker and oppressed in Europe, yes, and in almost every quarter of the globe. **This is one fine golden thread that runs through the whole warp of English history and English tradition.** And so, when England's honor was bound up in the pledge she gave to Belgium that her territory should be inviolate, and when Germany, on the 29th day of July, 1914, made the cold-blooded and dishonorable proposition to Great Britain that if she would stand aside and allow Germany to deal with Belgium and with France, England could have Germany's goodwill and co-operation.

That proposition attacked centuries of English honor and English traditions. Sir Edward Grey hurled the offer back, as it deserved to be. Honor forbade Britain to keep out of the war. What more? Self interest in its widest and greatest sense forbade that course.

Great Britain is not only the government of forty-five million in her own islands; she is a mother and protector and trustee for hundreds of millions of divers humanity all through the wide world, that live under her flag and depend upon her protection.

Sitting, then, on the island of her own North Sea home, she has to look not only after the interests of forty-five millions there, but she has to think of the interest of her colonies—Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and other dependencies—national wards in other parts of the world. She has to ask herself: "What should I do at this juncture of circumstances, as a trustee of British civilization throughout the world?"

There was only one possible answer to that. Accede to Germany's demand, stand aside with folded arms, let the German army hew and hack its way through Belgium? No, never! Honor, friendship and self interest all demanded Britain's co-operation with Belgium. And Belgium knew that Britain would not desert her. She had faith that if she stood in the way and claimed her own, and if over Belgium bodies and ruined homes and desecrated hearths, Germany hewed and hacked its way into France the time would come when Great Britain and her allies that stood with her would see these ruined homes were rebuilt and Belgium restored to her destined place.

So in that respect Great Britain had to do what she did. But, suppose for a moment that she sacrificed her honor and sacrificed Belgium and France and Russia, her friends, by simply refusing to interfere, and allowed Germany to destroy, as she would have done, these nations. What would have happened?

The German fleet would have dominated the seas; it would have ravished every port and entry on the French coast. The German fleet could have easily controlled or dominated the seas. It would have blockaded the French ports, and its armies would have taken Paris in a very short time. Germany would have advanced her frontier right up to the North Sea and created ports and submarine bases almost at England's door, and would have been a standing menace to Great Britain ever after.

And just as soon as Germany had finished with France and Russia, and with a mighty, victorious army resting within a few hours of the English coast, Great Britain would have had to meet this monster single handed.

So, you see, Great Britain, in justice to British civilization, could not have allowed Germany to overrun Belgium and France without going to their aid.

No, for when Britain dies, British civilization goes to the wall. When Britain's great roads, the highway of the sea, are blocked, or liable to be blocked, by any hostile power on earth as far as naval strength is concerned, British supremacy is in danger as her food supplies, her communications, her own existence and the existence of the

Empire depend absolutely upon her command of the seas.

Then, how foolish, how utterly suicidal, would have been the policy which would have said to England: "Stand there until every friend you have in the world is lucked to pieces. Stand there until their possessions have been taken by your great enemy in every portion of the world and fortified. Stand there until the German fleet gets its basis in every water and fortifies itself there. Then face the contest and on unequal ground and on unequal terms." It would have been tempting fate. It would have been playing false with humanity and with God for any decision like that to have been taken by the British Empire under the circumstances.

Have you followed the history of the Prussian junker? Have you followed the Prussian tyrant and his doings?

We are not fighting the German and Austrian people. These people are under the heel of the military class, and it will be a day of rejoicing for the German and Austrian peasant, artisan and trader when this military autocracy is broken.

You know its pretensions. They give themselves the airs of demigods; they walk on the pavements. Civilians and their wives and children are swept into the gutter; they have no right in the way of these autocrats. Men, women and children, like nations, all have to go.

He thinks all he has to say is that he is in a hurry. That is the answer he gave to Belgium when he violated his pledge to protect her neutrality.

Rapidity of action is German's greatest asset, which means "I am in a hurry, get out of my way." You know the type of motorist, the terror of the roads, with a sixty-horse-power car, who thinks the roads were made for him and knocks down and mangles anybody who impedes him in his mad rush.

The Prussian tyrant is the road-hog of Europe. Small nations in his way are trampled on and hurled by the roadside bleeding and broken; women, children and men are crushed under the wheels of his cruel car.

Britain was ordered out of the way by this tyrant so that he might drive his death-dealing monster over Belgium, but the old British spirit still lives, which compels her to keep sacred her pledges and to defend the weak. The Prussian has yet to settle with Great Britain and her allies, and when he has paid his debt the German Empire will be humbled in the dust and the military autocracy will end forever and the German and Austrian people will be free and live to thank God for the downfall of the war lords who have held them under the iron heel for the last fifty years.

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What has Britain and her allies accomplished to this end?

What of our great navy? We may feel at times that this arm of defence has lost itself to view, and we ask where is it? What is it doing? Is it effective? Is it doing what we thought or expected it would do?

Yes, no thanks to Canada, which, through its senate, refused to aid the strengthening of the imperial navy by providing dreadnoughts when urged to do so by the admiralty. If the British navy has been able to drive the Germans off the seas, Canada can claim no share in the glory that comes to it. **Canadians hang their heads in shame when they realize the awful position Canada was made to assume on this question.**

Lord Churchill, realizing after the action of the senate, Britain could not rely on Canada to aid in strengthening the navy, took vigorous action and did the work Canada ought to have done, and when war was declared, owing to his vigorous policy Britain's navy was strong enough to sweep the seas and chase the Germany navy into hiding.

Invisible, lying somewhere in the North Sea, enveloped in fogs and mists, riding the boisterous waves, or maybe snugly settled in quiet waters, somewhere that mighty fleet is there unseen by us and its movements unknown. But its influ-

ence is like the influence of the mighty sun, whose motions we do not see, but whose light and heat penetrate and vivify everywhere—and there is not a quarter of the world that does not owe much of its present peace and happiness to the fact that the British fleet keeps the gateways to the Atlantic, and that the much-vaunted German fleet lies on the other side of these gateways, hiding behind Heligoland in the Kiel Canal afraid to show its nose outside, fearing the British bulldogs that are lying in wait.

The glorious record of the navy up to date, the wonderful work accomplished in sweeping the seas not only of the German navy, but of the German commerce, is a record that speaks louder than any words of mine and demonstrates beyond a doubt that **Britannia still rules the waves.**

Look for a moment at the work that has been accomplished by the allies during the last fifteen months—and this largely through Britain's navy. Britain and her allies have annexed the whole great German colonial empire, with the exception of East Africa and a district in Kameruns.

She has swept the German flag, both imperial and mercantile, off the face of the seas. She completely paralyzed the German navy. She has dealt successfully with her submarine attacks, and played her

game so successfully that time shows Britain growing stronger instead of weaker.

In addition to these things, Britain has raised a volunteer army of over 3,000,000 men, the greatest volunteer army the world has ever seen. And she has demonstrated to the world that she can increase this army two-fold if necessary.

Those who speak of failures are pessimists and must be blind. **Britain and her allies cannot fail to be victorious.** Victory is as sure as that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

True, there are great sacrifices to be made yet, but these will be made willingly, and the great Empire will come out of this war stronger and more glorious than it has ever been.

Oh, for the eloquence of a Burke or a Kipling that I might utter some words tonight that would burn into your very souls and compel you young men to realize your country's needs and your duties at this moment.

Your king and your country call you. How many will respond to the call tonight?

—  
"What nobler death can Britons die, than fighting fearful odds For the glory of their country and the temples of their God?"

**RECRUITING OFFICER**

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**It is my desire to enlist for Overseas Service, and I would be glad to receive further information as to the proper steps to take.**

Name.....

Street Address (if any).....

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