

UNCLE SAM MAY BE GREATEST SHIPBUILDER IN ALL THE WORLD

More Than Two Million Tons of Shipping, Suitable For Carrying Supplies to Our Allies, Are Being Built or Contracted For

If War Continues Another Year or Two United States Will Lead All Other Nations—Ship Carpenters Are Needed Very Badly

VESSELS suitable for carrying food, ammunition and other supplies to our allies in Europe, approximating more than 2,000,000 tons, are being built or have been contracted for to be built in the shipyards of the United States. Today the United States is doing the greatest shipbuilding business in its history, and if the war continues for two or more years it may become the greatest shipbuilding nation in the world.

Including vessels built for American owners, foreign owners, undisclosed owners and builders' accounts, adapted for deep sea service, it is estimated that there are 644 in course of construction or contracted for, with an estimated tonnage of 2,394,131. These figures are exclusive of ships under construction for the navy department, oil and molasses tankers, vessels constructed for use on the great lakes and those under 500 tons.

Of this amount of tonnage more than 300,000 tons already have been launched, about 70,000 tons are scheduled to be launched this spring, about 177,000 tons to be launched during the summer, about 210,000 tons launched next fall, more than 600,000 tons launched next winter and more than 900,000 tons launched and completed in 1918.

Deep Sea Commerce.

Of the vessels built for service on the great lakes, approximating 70,000 tons, a number of these could in an emergency be used for deep sea commerce.

On Feb. 9 the department of commerce issued a report showing the number of vessels of all types of 300 tons and over. This was the last official report on shipbuilding issued, and it is unlikely that any further official reports will be made while the country is at war.

The report showed that there were about 200 vessels suitable for deep sea commerce, approximating close to 1,000,000 tons, exclusive of craft for the great lakes, navy department, oil and molasses tankers and vessels under 500 tons, being built here or contracted for.

Since this time hundreds of new contracts have been placed, shipyards have been enlarged, new shipyards are being built, and many plants are working twenty-four hours a day to keep up with their contracts. The construction of new yards and the enlargement of old ones will involve the expenditure of millions of dollars.

\$2,000,000 Plant.

One of the largest of the new plants will be built for the Baltimore Drydock and Shipbuilding company. The plans call for the construction of one of the largest shipbuilding and repair plants on the Atlantic coast. The company has an option on a site at Baltimore. The new plant will cost more than \$2,000,000 and will furnish employment to 2,000 additional men.

On April 1 of this year there were in the United States 152 shipyards, marine engine and boiler shops and 238 repair plants, including drydocks and marine railways.

Some idea of what the shipbuilding capacity of Great Britain is may be gleaned from the fact that at the beginning of the war, exclusive of the plants in her colonies, she had 453 shipyards, marine engine and boiler shops, while her repair plants included 572 drydocks and marine railways. The United Kingdom turned out 700,000 tons in 1916 and 650,000 tons in 1915. This year it is estimated the amount will reach 1,250,000 tons. At the beginning of the present year there were 403 vessels, with a tonnage of 1,405,601, building in the yards of the United States. This number was made up as follows: Freighters, 294; oil and molasses tankers, 76; passenger and cargo vessels, 7; car floats and ferries, 8; miscellaneous craft, 15.

Orders For New Ships.

Since the first of the year orders for new ships have swamped the builders. The Bethlehem Steel company furnishes an illustration of this. Today the company in its various subsidiary yards is building more than 175 vessels. About sixty are under construction at the Fore River yard and a similar number at the Union Iron works, two of its largest plants.

The same conditions prevail among the shipyards on the coast. The case of the Hamilton Dry Dock and Shipbuilding company of Oakland, Cal., is typical. On Jan. 1 its employees numbered 350. It has so many contracts for vessels now that it is enlarging its plant to such an extent that by June 1 it will have 2,500 men at work.

On April 13 thirty-five shipbuilders called at the offices of the Federal Shipping Board at Washington and signed contracts for a large number of the 1,000 wooden vessels of 3,000 tons each which the United States government, under the direction of Major General George W. Goethals, will have constructed "to bridge the Atlantic," carrying supplies to our allies on the other side.

Only recently Joseph P. Day, the

real estate broker, leased to the government and to the Foundation company of New York a tract of fifty-five acres of land in the Newark meadows, with a frontage of 1,650 feet on the Passaic river, for the location of an immense shipyard.

American Merchant Marine.

The Foundation company has received a large contract for the construction of the fleet of ships for the American merchant marine. The company will begin work at once on the plant, as the contract with the government allows only thirty days for the work. The building of wooden ships does not require an elaborate plant. Practically all that is needed are the ways (a ship railway), housing for the tools and a power plant.

Ten ways, each 100 feet wide, will be constructed, and there will be a space of sixty feet between the ways so that material may be easily handled. The ways will be so constructed that the vessels, when the hulls are accomplished, will slide into the Passaic river, which will be dredged to a sufficient depth at this point to float them.

Big Lumber Mills.

Incidental to the building of the Goethals fleet of wooden ships it was learned that the government is cornering the product of big lumber mills all over the country. It is understood that the federal authorities have requisitioned 3,000,000,000 feet from the southern mills alone, principally Georgia, Florida and Louisiana yellow pine.

It is going to be extremely difficult, according to A. R. Smith, editor of the Marine News, to get a sufficient number of ship carpenters to build the fleet of wooden vessels as fast as the government wants them turned out.

With the building of all steel ships and the lessened demand for wooden ones the big majority of ship carpenters have had to look for other employment.

"There are a few hundred ship carpenters still plying their trade along the coast of the New England states, in the southern gulf states and on the coast," said Mr. Smith. "These are mostly men who know no other business and who were too old to turn to other lines of employment when steel ships superseded wooden ones."

Unwilling to Leave.

"Most of these men were born and raised and have lived in one town all their lives, and I doubt if many of them would be willing, even at the request of the government, to leave the small shipyards for the big ones which will be established to build many of the fleet of wooden ships."

"There are other old ship carpenters who have retired who will be invaluable in training ordinary carpenters to ship carpentry if the government can induce them to go to these large plants."

The table appended below shows approximately the number of vessels and their tonnage (in various stages of completion or contracted for) available for carrying supplies to Europe which are being built in American shipyards. These figures are based on reports of the department of commerce and labor, accurate information gathered from other sources and estimates of prominent shipping men:

	Steel.	Wooden.
	No. Tonnage.	No. Tonnage.
Am. owners...	34 430,413	345 974,222
Build's act...	16 70,214	15 22,868
Undisclosed owners...	34 164,850	14 26,800
Foreign acct...	112 603,964	29 40,610
Total	250 1,229,531	394 1,064,500
Total steel and wooden, 644; tonnage, 2,294,031.		

Great Lakes Vessels.

Vessels building for service on the great lakes include (steel) fourteen, aggregating 66,300 tons; (wooden), six, aggregating 3,300 tons, a total of twenty vessels aggregating 69,600 tons. A number of these vessels could be made available for ocean service.

The following table shows the probable date of launching, including vessels already launched, but not yet ready for service, exclusive of great lake vessels:

Launched.	Steel.	Wooden.
	No. Tonnage.	No. Tonnage.
Present	61 229,947	66 38,910
Spring	19 49,682	23 21,033
Summer	22 135,440	44 12,281
Fall	15 73,223	40 126,616
Winter	61 308,678	89 304,600
Delivery 1917.	8 21,160	4 2,000
Delivery 1918.	361 1,385,331	107 371,400
Total	567 1,885,331	283 1,088,900
Total steel and wood—number, 644; tonnage, 2,286,941.		
* Contract term.		

Contract term.

All vessels building in American yards, regardless of whether for foreign owners, undisclosed owners or builders' accounts, can be taken over by this government in time of war. The vessels being built or contracted for here are chiefly for Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries.

Whether the United States would take over vessels being built for British owners, in view of Great Britain being one of our allies in the war, is a question. No such question could be raised, however, over the vessels being built for owners in the Scandinavian countries.

OUR FLAG



1,000 SURGEONS GOING TO FRANCE IN THREE MONTHS

Pick of America's Physicians to Bolster Up Medical Corps of Our Allies.

Plans for sending 1,000 American surgeons to Europe for service in the allied armies have been made known by the general medical board of the Council of National Defense. The men will be picked by the American College of Surgeons, and the aim is to have them on the firing line within three months.

The offer of surgeons for the allies' fronts came from the regents of the College of Surgeons and won the immediate approval of the medical board. It was inspired by Colonel T. H. Goodwin's story of the difficulties Great Britain and France are having in keeping their medical ranks filled and awaits only the formal sanction of the government before selection of the men begins.

In addition to offering surgeons for the allies, the College of Surgeons, with the American Medical association, put at the medical board's disposal its entire organization. The College of Surgeons offered the medical board for service throughout the war its director and office staff.

Deans of forty-six medical schools said that they had decided to make changes in their courses toward shortening systems of instruction, so that a continuous stream of trained young medical men may be supplied to the army and navy if the war lasts a number of years. All, it was announced, will reduce their teaching staffs to free men for military service.

Hospitals, too, will cut down their staffs to give the military forces the largest number of physicians possible. To hasten the manufacture of hospital supplies they will be asked to use only standardized articles recommended by the medical board. The hospital committee of the board will make a study of special hospitals required for the wounded.

Dental surgeons of the country, it was announced, also are mobilizing forces for the army and for service with the allies. Dr. Franklin Martin, chairman of the medical board, said that Colonel Goodwin put vividly before the board the medical situation abroad.

"It was apparent to every one present," he said, "that all we, as medical men, can offer is ourselves and all medical men who can be spared. We can fill this need, and the great medical organizations of the United States are prepared, with the aid of their officers and members, to co-operate with the surgeon generals of the army and navy and with the Red Cross."

MAKE ARTIFICIAL SUNSHINE.

England Hopes to Raise Crops More Quickly by Using Electricity.

As part of a great national effort to defeat the Germans' U boat campaign England is attempting to aid growing crops by means of artificial sunshine. It is a scientific theory that the overhead discharge of electricity may exert the same influence upon a planted field as the rays of the sun—in other words, create life.

The experiments with electrical discharge as affecting agriculture are being supervised by Professor V. H. Blackman, professor of plant physiology and pathology at South Kensington, a special grant having been made for this research work, which is to be carried out at Huntington Court farm, near Hereford.

Professor Blackman is quoted as saying that the purpose of the experiments "is to carry to a larger scale the successful work which has been done during the last few years near Dumfries, where in 1916 an increase of about 50 per cent in grain and 85 per cent in straw was obtained on oats as a result of overhead electrical discharge. This was on a small scale—only one acre only. At Huntington Court farm we shall experiment with forty or fifty acres of cereal and other field crops."

The scientific world is much interested in this experiment, which may yield results invaluable to the agriculture of all nations.

Was Ready For the Germans.

Leaving his field when he heard New York had been bombarded, Jersey farm hand walked twenty-five miles to Newark and enlisted.

Country's Biggest Baby.

Biggest baby born in this country weighed twenty-two and a half pounds at birth and is son of Frank Jacoboli of Alliance O.

ITALY'S SPY SYSTEM DISCOVERS PLOT

INNER CIRCLES OF VATICAN INVOLVED IN SECRET WORK WITH GERMAN EMBASSY AT VIENNA.

CARDINAL GERLACH LEAVES ITALY—CROSSES BORDER

Famous Italian Cafe Crackers, Serving Time in Jail, Are Released and Given \$10,000 Each to Commit Robbery in Certain House in Vienna, Austria—Many Prominent Names Connected With Plot.

BY FRANK GETTY

(United Press Staff Correspondent.) London, May 1.—(By Mail)—A tale of German intrigue reaching into the inner circles of the Vatican, involving the hasty flight of Cardinal Gerlach from Italy, the cracking of a safe in the secret headquarters of the German Embassy at Vienna, and the mysterious escape from prison of Italy's two most notorious criminals, was told for the first time today to the United Press by a reliable authority.

Stranger than fiction, the true story of the inside workings of the Italian secret service in tracking down the pro-German element of the Pope's court forms a dramatic chapter in the secret history of the war.

On the sixth of April, Vienna dispatches announced the burglary of a house, adjoining "but having no connection with," the German Embassy. A large sum of money was said to have been secured by the robbers, who escaped.

The same night a sensation was caused in Rome by the flight of Cardinal Gerlach across the Swiss border. Italian secret service agents burst in the doors of His Eminence's house two hours after his escape and discovered the machinations of a score of pro-German plots. The next day more than three hundred arrests resulted throughout Italy.

This, for ten days, was all the world knew concerning the workings of the German espionage system. No one connected an insignificant robbery in the Austrian capital with the Cardinal's disappearance and the wholesale arrests of German agents.

Another event which caused little interest at the time of its occurrence, yet which had a direct bearing on the successful breaking up of the Teuton spy-net, was the reported "escape," early in January, of two of Italy's most notorious safe-crackers, who had been incarcerated for life in prison at Rome.

What has never been disclosed until today is the fact that a warrant for their release was signed by the Prefect of all the Italian police himself, and that each of the criminals was later given \$10,000 by the Italian government. The service they rendered the government proved well-worth the price.

For more than two years the Italian secret service, extending its research over a far greater ground than one realizes even today, had succeeded in tracing certain pro-German plots and intrigue in Italy to Vienna. In the Austrian capital, spies succeeded in narrowing the search down to a certain house, adjoining "but having no connection with," the German Embassy.

Had they acted hastily, the spies might have burgled the house, robbed the safe, and even laid hands on a certain set of precious papers the Italian government was keenly interested in. But that is as far as they would have gotten. For attached to the bundle of documents so highly desired by three governments was an intricate series of wires. With almost devilish ingenuity the Germans had provided that if the safe were opened and the papers moved, a cloud of poison gas, deadly in effect, would envelop the disturber and render the entire room in which the safe was located uninhabitable. At the same time a cleverly devised burglar alarm would call sufficient military police to the scene to deal with any number of intruders.

When every detail of the hiding place of the papers had been learned, the secret service agents reported in detail to Rome. On a favorable dark night the "escape" of the famous safe-crackers from the prison outside of the Italian capital was arranged and effected. Promised their freedom, and ten thousand dollars apiece if they succeeded, the criminals had agreed to undertake the dangerous

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How they were smuggled into Vienna no one will ever know, but when they did undertake the robbery of the safe, they were provided with gas-masks and every tool for safe-opening known to the police or criminal world. Cracking the safe and evading the certain death of the alarm signals was a comparatively simple matter for these Jimmy Valentine's of Italy, and the papers, which incriminated prominent personages throughout Italy were soon in the possession of the secret service.

For obvious reasons they could not instantly communicate their knowledge to headquarters at Rome, and in the meantime, while announcing the robbery of a "large sum of money," the Austrians succeeded, by means of a secret wireless, in communicating with Cardinal Gerlach, who de-

parted unceremoniously from the papal court. With the evidence in hand however, the Italian police were able to round up several hundred of the most dangerous German plotters, and to strike into the heart of a Teutonic element in the highest church circles of Rome.

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