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PICKERING SWIM CHANNEL RECORD.

Last words of encouragement from world record holder Florence Chadwick, of America, go to Staffordshire swimming baths manager Bill Pickering at Dover before Bill's attempt to crack her England to France channel record. On leave from his work at Blexwich, near Walsall, Bill prepares for a "do-it-or-die" attempt - for he had been called back to work after waiting nearly a month for suitable conditions.

Mrs. Pickering watches as her husband's large frame is greased for the Channel Swim at St. Margaret's Bay. Big Bill was said to have swum with a chip on his shoulder about his summons back to work, but there is no sign of anger in these last minute scenes.

Night has fallen before Bill enters the cold waters of the Channel for that arduous task which has defeated so many attempts. Only fourteen persons have ever made a successful England to France swim.

Pushing his 18-stone untiringly forwards towards France, Bill gets constant encouragement from his father, who crossed in the pilot-boat.

Fourteen hours six minutes after entering the water Bill reaches land again. Finishing in great style, he has lapped 36 minutes off the record. The day before he said "I'll give them a swim for their money" referring to the people of Blexwich who financed the channel bid. Not only Blexwich now, but all Britain can be proud of the new record holder - Big Bill Pickering!