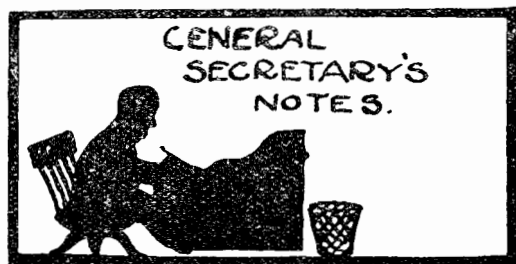


The Customs Journal.

No. 564.

June 5th, 1926.

Fortnightly.



Communications relative to this column should be addressed to Mr. J. Merron, 167, Clive Road, West Dulwich, London, S.E.21.

It was with some reluctance that the decision was taken to postpone the Executive meeting fixed for the last week in May. Great efforts had been made to speed things up so that the meeting could take place, but, at the last moment, as announced in the previous issue of the "Journal," it was found necessary to cancel arrangements. A result of this postponement will be that the Annual Conference will not now be held before the middle of July.

No doubt it will be generally understood that the unsettled industrial conditions have been the cause of the departure from our programme. The meeting could, of course, have been held, but owing to its importance, as being the one immediately preceding the Conference, it was thought inadvisable to call the members to London before every detail was ready for report and discussion.

The strike crisis was responsible for a great deal of disorganisation in the preparations that were being made, because during that period the Secretaries had little opportunity for applying themselves to serious Association work.

Another factor which influenced the decision was the hope of being able to arrange for a full

meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee in time to report progress to the Conference. When the Councillors come to London there will be a demand for detailed information regarding the position in connection with such questions as Waterguard Recruitment, Electric Lamps, Uniform, and several other things. There will be great disappointment if news is not forthcoming.

* * * *

Arrangements are now being pushed forward, and it is expected that by the time the Annual Meeting takes place the conditions will be favourable for the successful dispatch of the rather heavy load of business due for discussion. The only thing to fear is the possibility of Councillors being held up by interference with travel facilities as a result of exhausted coal stocks—that is, of course, if the strike lasts that long.

• • • •

Speaking of the coal trouble reminds me that the Waterguard has once again risen to the occasion. The Department always manages to shine most when there is a real need for efficiency to meet emergency conditions.

All kinds of instructions, directions, and regulations regarding coal and its movements were deluged upon Waterguard Officers. No one, except those actually engaged in carrying out those regulations, can have any idea of the difficulties encountered in applying them.

To begin with, the most crusty individual on earth is the man who wants coal urgently and cannot get it. A good many people have suffered from this kind of irritation lately, and Waterguard Officers have had to exercise a more than ordinary amount of patience with some who apparently took the view that the "Customs" were to blame for the whole business.

But these trifles do not have an undue effect on our normal good temper, and certainly did not interfere with the workmanlike operations of the staff in assisting the authorities to keep strict control over coal stocks.

I wonder if anybody will think of organising a fund for giving us recognition for our valuable services. The very respectable amount subscribed for the police gives one a certain amount of encouragement. About one-third of that sum would enable a free gift to the Waterguard staff of a year's average overtime.

However, we have been told before that we must never expect to get as much remuneration as policemen—there is really something exceptional in truncheon technique to which there is no comparison in the work of those who, in addition to the performance of a few odd "miscellaneous duties," merely protect His Majesty's Revenue.

* * * *

At the Annual Meeting of the Confederation, which took place on May 29th, a great deal of consideration was given to the unsatisfactory state of affairs regarding the National Whitley Council.

The meeting was fully in support of the principle that the National Council should be competent to discuss any misapplication of their own agreements.

* * * *

It was decided at this meeting that the Confederation should inform the constituent associations that there did not appear to be a reasonable prospect of the National Staff Side being able to produce an alternative scheme to the State Insurance scheme before the closing date for applications in connection with voluntary insurance, and the advice previously given to await the outcome of the National Staff Side's deliberations be cancelled.

P.S.A. members have already been advised in these columns to take steps to become volun-

tarily insured under the State scheme, but the matter is important enough to mention yet again.

* * * *

In view of some rather misleading newspaper statements regarding the obligations of organisations affiliated to the Labour Party, it might be well to clear the atmosphere by explaining that the Preventive Staff Association has no obligations to anybody but its own members. Affiliation to the Labour Party does not imply adherence to the Political Labour Party. The true fact is that we are affiliated to an organisation composed of Staff Associations and Unions having similar aims to ourselves, i.e., to promote the industrial welfare of the members.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that there is absolutely no political aspect to the matter. The P.S.A. is entirely independent in action, and confines its activity solely to Waterguard affairs and general service interests.

As some of our members are anxious to have full details of our connection with the Labour Party, the item will form a subject for discussion at the Conference.

* * * *

The Joint Committee has decided to ask the Official Side of the Departmental Council if the fact of volunteering or not volunteering during the recent strike emergency will be noted on an officer's record.

It has already been reported to the C.S. Confederation that in some Departments of the Civil Service notification of records has taken place.

* * * *

The cost-of-living figure for the month of May showed a further decline.

The average increase for all items now stands at 67 per cent., and the figure for food only is 67.

J. MERRON.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

BRISTOL.

A special meeting of the above was held at the Central Restaurant, Bristol, on May 20th. Mr. Logan presided over a good attendance.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.—The Executive Committee's scheme was discussed and approved, and the following suggestion was recommended: "That for the information of all Association members, rulings obtained by the Central Committee should be published in the 'Journal.'"

LOAN TO HOUSING ASSOCIATION.—After discussion it was decided that it was not desirable or necessary to make an investment from P.S. Association funds.

REVISION OF LIST 142.—The following suggestion was approved: "That notices similar to 'Notice to Passengers No. 2A' (suitably amended) be supplied to masters of foreign going vessels, particularly regular traders; to be exhibited on board in places accessible to the crew; and also that a list of dutiable goods be printed in large type on the reverse blank side of List 142."

PRESENTATION TO Mr. R. STANLEY, P.O.

A pleasant function took place at the Landing Stage, Liverpool, on Thursday, May 20th, when Mr. Paisley, Waterguard Superintendent, on behalf of the staff, presented a splendid clock to mark the occasion of Mr. Stanley's retirement from the Service.

Mr. Paisley said that it gave him the greatest pleasure to be asked to take the chair on such an occasion. He had known Mr. Stanley for about 30 years and had been in close contact with him during the greater part of that time. He felt that in saying Mr. Stanley was a good and conscientious officer who had always done his duty to the Crown he was voicing the opinion

of everyone, but he would like to go further and say that he had an intimate knowledge of the kindness and splendid character of the man. He had always been ready to do good, and although Mr. Stanley had not got all he should have got in the Service, it was because such things were in the "lap of the gods." Mr. Stanley had always been a pattern and an example for other officers to follow.

Mr. Moss, Waterguard Superintendent, said the first officer he met at Liverpool when he came there many years ago was Mr. Stanley, and since then he had been looking for a better one. If they were all like Mr. Stanley, he would not have his present position. Mr. Stanley was an ideal officer and he wished him health and happiness during his well-earned rest.

Mr. Collings, P.O., said he had worked almost continuously with Mr. Stanley since he first came to Liverpool, and he had never known a straighter or better colleague. Mr. Francis, A.P.O., said he had worked under him on many occasions and had never had a more considerate and kindly "boss." A number of other officers spoke of his many splendid qualities.

Mr. Stanley suitably responded and said that although he was severing his connection with the Service, he would still continue associating with his friends in it. He thanked them all for their kind words and the token of their regard.

C. & E. and Government Chemist's Departmental Councils.

At a joint meeting of the above Councils held on May 19th, 1926, a disagreement was registered on the following Staff Side proposal:—"That the number of Officers of Customs and Excise in the Government Laboratory be increased to a sufficient number to deal with all Revenue testing (with the exception of Key Industry duty and other specially reserved sections of work), provided that no Laboratory Assistant at present employed is dismissed as a result of the process."



Curious how a death is often the signal for arraying the past virtues of the lamented one to the almost total exclusion of the vices, assuming, of course, that one or two vices of some sort have existed. It seems to be a natural trait of human nature that this should be so, for it is a very common happening, and is not altogether limited to the friends and relations of the departed: but if one has been sufficiently well known to warrant Press comment, this almost invariably follows the same strain, despite the fact that a few days previously the same person may have been the victim of one of those attacks which the Civil Service knows only too well the Press is capable of.

* * * *

Yes, the vices are put on one side, and we contemplate the good things. It is well that we should do so. After all, we benefit by losing sight of the weeds sometimes in order to contemplate the beauty of the flowers.

* * * *

It is especially true of leaders of men that opinion often veers in especial circumstances. A politician, for instance, is on the spot in a national emergency. He handles a difficult situation with skill, and receives the applause of the whole country. All sections of the Press unite in lauding him. His name is on everybody's tongue. He is the lion. A point of policy demands a certain line of action shortly afterwards, and the worst criminals assume a halo in comparison with the one-time hero when he receives his Press slating. However, a wise politician usually expects this treatment as one

of the perquisites of his office, and is prepared to get more kicks than ha'pence. It happens to the dear departed, and as time goes on the bad points begin to show through like a stain.

* * * *

Has anybody ever seen Association officials treated in this way? Who hasn't? They complete a long or short term of office, and when they retire are extolled and told what jolly good fellows they are and what a tremendous amount of good they have done for their colleagues. The outburst of appreciation is always well deserved. It could hardly be otherwise when the whole membership has had a hand in electing them to office, having recognised their peculiar fitness for the particular job to be done. Our own Association, for instance, is not in the habit of electing undesirable men to do its work.

A few months after retirement, however, the usual tendency to judge people by their mistakes shows itself, and a reaction takes place which is calculated to prevent most good and fit men from hesitating to accept nomination for the vacant post. We have repeatedly heard the remark that such and such a job is a thankless one.

All jobs will be thankless while we allow the idea to remain at the back of our minds that all people make mistakes but ourselves.

* * * *

Correspondence in these last two issues has assumed a subject that is rare in these pages. The merits and demerits of the various big ports are often the cause of much good humoured banter in Waterguard circles, and any station that boasts champions of London, Liverpool, Southampton and other large ports of similar importance is kept alive by sharp passages of repartee which often is of a high order and nearly always ends in a good laugh. There is room in these pages for good humoured banter, for we are not anxious to be always technical and dry-as-dust.

So, while the little village on the Thames joins in the laugh and reserves its defiance, we

are willing to publish in each issue anything up to about a column from any of the other premier ports scattered around the coast, providing that such articles pass the censor's blue pencil. NOTE OUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS, and send your articles by the Saturday preceding the date of publication.

* * * *

A word in the ear of Councillors, District Officers and our own Special Correspondents: The General Strike is a thing of the past, and there is no fear of communications being delayed in the post any longer than is usual. Please send along local and general Service news items and accounts of meetings, etc.

APPEAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

The following letter has been addressed to the Prime Minister:—

DEAR SIR,

I am requested by the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council for the Civil Service to acquaint you with the fact that the Staff Side view with grave concern recent difficulties that have arisen in connection with the working of Whitley Councils in the Civil Service, and to ask that you will receive a deputation in order that the dissatisfaction which exists may be represented to the Head of the Government in person. I am to assure you that the Staff Side have not lightly taken the step of asking your personal attention to the grievances felt by the Service, but no other course, short of troubling the House of Commons with the complaints of Civil Servants, would suffice to give effective expression to the intense feeling of dissatisfaction now existing in the Service. All ordinary methods of securing a solution of the difficulties felt by the Staff Side have been employed without success.

I am to call attention to what the Staff Side regard as the failure of the Official Side of the

National Council, consisting of the Heads of Departments, plus three Members of Parliament nominated by the Government of the day, to work Civil Service Whitleyism in the spirit in which it was conceived. The main points of difficulty are three in number, and these constitute barriers to co-operation between the Government and its servants which the Staff Side feel should be removed without delay.

In passing I may say that the recent settlement, behind the back of the Staff Side, between the Government and the Association of ex-Service Civil Servants, which has brought into the Civil Service a new class of permanent unestablished officers, was in itself a grave violation of Whitley working, and is an instance of a lack of loyalty to Whitley principles in tackling Service problems.

It is not, however, on that point alone that the Staff Side feel concerned with the working of the Whitley machine, as the following summary of points the suggested deputation would propose to present shows:—

1.—The Official Side of the National Council deny the right of the Staff Side to have any voice in the application of Council agreements: the effect being that complaints of non-application, or misinterpretation, of National Council decisions are barred from discussion by the body responsible for such decisions.

2.—The Staff Side have no remedy when Departments fail to carry out National Council decisions. When complaints of non-application or misapplication of such agreements are made to the Department concerned, the Staff representatives are informed that the Department is acting under Treasury instruction. When the Official Side, representing the Government, is in turn appealed to, the answer is that it is a case for the Department affected.

3.—In regard to the operation of the Civil Service Arbitration Court, the Treasury claim the exclusive right of interpreting the agree-

ment under which the Court was called into being. The consequences of the arbitrary exercise of this power is that cases which Service organisations or Staff Sides of Whitley Councils desire to submit to arbitration are blocked by the Treasury on points of interpretation that are disputed by the Staff Side, or by Staff organisations.

There appears to be no alternative to Government intervention in a dispute of first-rate importance between the Executive authority as representing the Government as employer, and the accredited and recognised representatives of Civil Servants in general. It is impossible on present lines for the National Council successfully to fulfil its purpose; and it is certain that even more serious difficulties to co-operation between the Official Side and the Staff Side will develop unless a new spirit is imported into the direction of National Council matters.

It is considered that Whitley Councils in the Service can be worked beneficially both for the State as employer and the Staff as a whole, provided good faith exists on both sides. The complaints the deputations would state are felt very keenly by the Civil Service; and the National Staff Side, which represents the established employees of the Crown, consider that the time has arrived when the Head of the Government should hear representations on the subject in person. I am accordingly to ask that a representative deputation be received at an early date, in order that the situation that has arisen may be adequately placed before you. The Staff Side are not unmindful of your urgent pre-occupations, and the fact that a personal interview is desired may be taken as an indication of the strength of feeling behind the Staff Side request.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) G. MIDDLETON.



All contributions relative to this column should be addressed to "Scrutator," c/o The Editor, 91, Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E.4.

Answers to questions given at examination held February 9th, 1926.

FIRST PAPER.

Question.

6.—(a) Indicate the action you would take in dealing with dutiable goods landed by Navy men proceeding on leave when—

- (1) in excess of duty-free concession;
- (2) covered by a Landing Pass.

(b) When is a ship deemed a "ship laden with a grain cargo" and what duty devolves on the Waterguard Officer who boards such vessel on arrival from Foreign?

(c) What are the conditions which must be complied with before goods brought in baggage can be admitted to duty at the preferential rates?

Answer.

6 (a).—(1) When the dutiable goods landed exceed the duty-free allowance, the total quantity landed should be shown on a Landing Pass, or the excess covered by a duty slip receipt.

If the quantity landed (whether produced or not) is appreciably in excess of that covered by a Landing Pass, or the duty-free allowance, or duty-free allowance and duty slip receipt, no duty-free allowance is to be made, but the quantity which may have been passed free of

duty may only be delivered on payment of duty. The excess is to be detained and the circumstances, including the name, rank, rating and ship, are to be reported to the Board on Form 458.

(2) When a Landing Pass is produced, the number of nights' leave is to be verified by the liberty ticket, and the quantity of dutiable goods should be approximately correct. If satisfied, the duty-free allowance is to be made from the cheapest sort and duty charged on the remainder, a receipt being given on the approved duty slip. The Landing Pass is to be retained, endorsed, and handed in with the duty money.

(b) A grain laden ship is deemed to be a vessel carrying grain to the extent of more than one-third of the ship's Registered Tonnage, reckoning 100 cubic feet to the ton for capacity and 2 tons weight to 1 ton of the Registered Tonnage.

The Boarding Officer is to report the arrival of any such ship to the local Board of Trade Surveyor in the most expeditious manner possible, and forward Form Survey 124 to him in every case.

(c) When assessing duty at the Preferential rates officers are to satisfy themselves, by reference to the character of the package and the voyage of the ship, that the goods are brought from and are the produce of a British possession or protectorate.

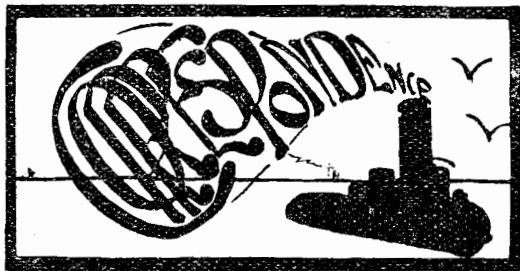
Preference can only be given on board when the duty on the goods (except tea) at the full rate does not exceed £1.

If preference is claimed in respect of larger quantities, the goods are to be removed to the King's or Baggage Warehouse for assessment.

Preference may be given on any quantity of tea.

CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

The Annual Council Meeting of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Saturday, May 29th, in the Council Chamber, Caxton Hall, Westminster. Up to the time of publication no report has been received of the conference, but we hope to be able to publish an account in our next issue.



The name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication) should be given in all letters to the Editor, who accepts no responsibility for the views expressed.

Sir,—Replying to a letter by "Interested" in the last issue of the "Journal," I venture to state that no port in the kingdom wishes to compare—even for a wager—with Southampton "for volume and intricate dealings."

Crews of vessels are entitled to import dutiable presents, etc., provided duty is paid on any quantities exceeding the duty-free allowance and such are duly declared on one of the approved Customs forms.

Much regret will be expressed with the Preventive Officers of his port—"who have been tied up in knots"—"when faced with the List 142 of one particular vessel," and to show our practical sympathy with these officers, "The Knotted P.O.'s Fund," headed by "Interested"

with his proposed wager, might be started: and regarding the "one particular ship" referred to, perhaps it would be advisable to have her reported to the Board, for suitable action. It would certainly be interesting to learn where this would terminate!

It is very unfair, if exciting and romantic, that many an A.P.O. "has to track each individual" who "has in some form or other declared goods." This system was tolerated before List 142 was introduced, when each member of a ship's crew had to be interviewed with regard to his dutiable stores, but it is antiquated. The onus of the due production of crews' dutiable effects rests on the master of the vessel, and the law should apply at his "vital port" as elsewhere.

For all the tracking down and the collection of approximately £279 in one ship to be accomplished by "the most ill-equipped port of any," and "without an extra staff," is a state of affairs serious enough to move the powers that be to action far stronger than looking on the horizon and hoping, and casting aspersions on the powers that *have been*.

Regarding the promise of more anon, may his attention be drawn to the fact that during the recent General Strike the Premier resorted to broadcasting by wireless? Why not emulate him? "Little Boy Blue, come, blow up *your* horn." But, remember that the Blue riband of Customs Collectorships goes to the premier port, viz., Liverpool, and the derivation of the name (it may come in useful in your cross-word competition) is: Liver, a large bird now believed extinct: and pool, a body or sheet of water in which the liver used to cool.

It's a long way from Southampton!—Yours sympathetically,

"CHEERIO."

Customs and Excise Orphans', Widows' and War Memorial Fund.

ESTABLISHED 1866.

President : SIR H. P. HAMILTON, K.C.B.

Vice-Presidents :

E. AMBROSE, Esq.; W. DONALDSON, Esq.;
A. J. DYKE, Esq., C.B., C.B.E.; H. GENOCHIO,
Esq.; E. A. HARRIS, Esq., C.B.E.; J. L.
MACKIE, Esq.; F. S. PARRY, Esq., C.B.;
N. THOMPSON, Esq., I.S.O., M.B.E.;
W. YOUNG, Esq., C.B.

Treasurer : H. J. JOHNS, Esq.

Founded for the purpose of assisting in the Maintenance and Education of the Children of deceased Officers, and affording relief to the Widows of Members left in necessitous circumstances.

All established Officers of the Department are eligible for Membership on payment of an Annual Subscription as under :—

For Members with Salaries	
	not exceeding £100 per annum 4/-
Exceeding £100 and not exceeding £160	„ „ 5/-
„ £160	„ £350 „ 10/-
„ £350	„ £500 „ 15/-
„ £500 per annum	„ „ 20/-

Forms of Membership and other particulars may be obtained on application to the

Honorary Secretary,

R. JOHNSON, CUSTOM HOUSE, E.C.