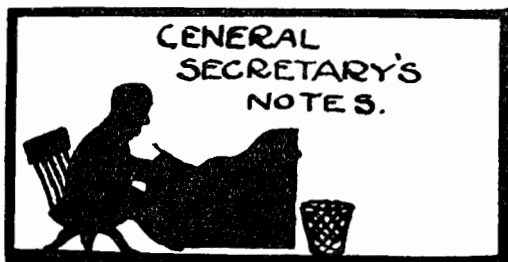


The Customs Journal.

No. 585.

March 26th, 1927.

Fortnightly.



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

It is difficult to decide whether to be amused or alarmed at the suggestions that are now being made for the scrapping of the present National Council, and for the formation, instead, of separate National Councils to suit the requirements of any section of the Service happening to be unduly self-conscious on the question of status. Much depends upon what backing there is for the suggestion, and one can hardly think there is in the Service a sufficient preponderance of the required mentality to carry the idea into effect.

So far the proposal is simply to split the National Council, so that the Higher Grades could have separate representation from the Lower Grades. But the matter could not possibly rest there. It must be obvious that the adoption of such a course would be the beginning of many serious complications in Civil Service organisation. The spirit underlying the desire for a breakaway on the part of the Higher Grades is just as prevalent in the Lower Grades. At the moment it occupies a subordinate position, and is kept in subjection by the commendable broadmindedness of the majority. One might be forgiven, indeed, for expecting to find such a spirit burning more fiercely in the Lower Grades where, it is generally supposed, the advantages of University education have had no broadening influence. In any case, the proposal,

which aims at splitting the Service according to status rather than to salary scale, would almost certainly give powerful encouragement to the tiny-minded ones in all grades of Civil Servants, arousing those despicable sentiments which never fail in their devastating effects on peace and unity.

It seems extremely improbable that the Higher Grades could ever bring themselves to adopt the suggestion that has been thrown out. To anyone having experience in organisation for mutual interest, the arguments put forward in favour of the scheme must ring false. Dissatisfaction with the present constitution of the National Staff Side can easily be understood, and there are many who would side with the Higher Grades in this respect; but to attempt to solve the difficulty by the adoption of methods traitorous to the principles held sacred in Civil Service organisations both high and low is quite a different matter.

It would not be unreasonable to expect really sound and statesmanlike proposals coming from the higher branches of the Service for carrying out any necessary reforms of the National Staff Side. Co-operation in developing the present proposals for establishing Sectional and Grade Committees in the National Council would be a constructive line of action indicative of good faith and a genuine desire to improve things. It would be much more dignified than to adopt a proposal which can never be regarded by straight thinking people as anything but mischievous and disloyal.

* * * *

The Press agitation for baggage examination on the train bringing continental passengers to Victoria Station has culminated in a statement in Parliament that examination of baggage in Pullman cars may be allowed if the Southern Railway would approach the Government in the matter.

It is not to be expected that causes of complaint regarding delay will be removed by the

adoption of this system. As a matter of fact, the Customs examination is not responsible for the delays we so frequently hear about in the newspapers. The responsibility lies with the railway companies and their methods of handling baggage.

* * * *

Trans-Atlantic passengers landing at Liverpool have much for which to thank the Customs. It is well known that the methods in force at that port facilitate the passenger very greatly. Without the existence of a Customs baggage shed everything would be chaos. The baggage, reaching the shed by means of special conveyers, is soon sorted out, examined, and dispatched. But for the Customs examination the passenger would not have so easy a time mobilising his effects.

* * * *

It is interesting to note that baggage conveyers have been used at Liverpool for at least twenty years. There are five or six in use at the present time. It must have been amusing to Liverpool officers to see the big splash the London papers made regarding the installation of the first and only machine of this description at Victoria Station quite recently.

* * * *

It is not beyond possibility that within a year or two, Customs Officers will not only travel in Pullman cars, but also in aeroplanes. A very interesting machine, referred to as a "flying wing," is now being built in Germany, and will have accommodation for one hundred passengers. Completion is expected before the end of the year. It is an entirely new type of machine and consists of a single wing. There is no body, and all the accommodation is inside the wing, which is 9 feet deep. There are dining rooms capable of seating 72 persons, a smoke room, postal sorting office, crew's quarters, and so forth. The whole machine will weigh 50 tons.

If this kind of aeroplane proves successful it will not be long before many similar are built, and there can be no doubt that experienced Waterguard Officers will be required for rummage purposes and for baggage examination. At the moment the simple structure of the average foreign-going 'plane renders it unneces-

sary to employ skilled officers for purposes of search.

One cannot help thinking what an incongruous picture it would be to see a Waterguard Officer, clambering aboard such an ultra-modern craft as the "flying wing," armed with an old-fashioned bull's-eye lantern.

* * * *

Those of our members interested in the Workers' Travel Association will be glad to hear that this organisation has now been appointed agent to the Great Western, London Midland and Scottish, Southern, and London and North Eastern Railways.

Tickets of all kinds can now be supplied from any London station, and vouchers can be had which can be exchanged for tickets at any station on the railways referred to.

The W.T.A. has had a successful career organising foreign tours on very favourable terms. This recent development will, no doubt, add greatly to its popularity.

* * * *

Recently, Mr. C. G. Ammon, M.P., raised a question in the House of Commons regarding Mr. Churchill's criticism of Naval officers in connection with the strategy used at the Battle of Jutland. Subsequently a question was put to the Prime Minister as to whether public servants criticised or attacked in this way would be allowed to reply in the public Press. The reply was that "This is a free country."

* * * *

The refusal of the Official Side to entertain the Waterguard request for opportunity of promotion to the Officer Grade on conditions similar to those offered to the Departmental Clerks will be received with great disappointment by the Staff. We have many officers who are well up to the necessary educational standard and whose sound Waterguard training would render them eminently suitable and efficient in the performance of Officer Grade duties. It would be difficult to find a more fitting case for the application of the principle of fluidity. The Association will continue to press Waterguard claims in this respect at every opportunity, and until success is achieved.

The Organising Secretary, Mr. Sutton, has issued a circular to District Organisers requesting information which is of much importance for Association purposes. A similar circular issued from Headquarters some time ago was unsuccessful in gleaning the exact information required. On this occasion the document is more explicit, and it is expected that careful attention will be given to this matter by the officials concerned.

* * * *

It is to be hoped that Mr. Bishop's efforts to form a Waterguard Branch of the Hospital Savings Association are meeting with the co-operation they deserve. The cause is good, and the work that is being put in by Mr. Bishop ought not to go unappreciated. District Organisers can, if they will, render valuable assistance in the matter.

* * * *

The cost-of-living figure continues to fall, and for the current month it stands at 71, this being one point less than the previous month. After the recent anxiety regarding the possibility of failing by a fraction to obtain the full two twenty-sixths increase, Civil Servants will be able to look upon this decline with a certain amount of equanimity. There seems plenty of evidence, however, that there will be cause to commence worrying again towards the end of the current six-monthly period.

J. MERRON.

—————
**PRESENTATION AT
 MIDDLESBROUGH.**

At a meeting of the Waterguard Department at Middlesbrough last week, Mr. J. Wilson, who recently retired from the position of Preventive Officer at Stockton after 33 years' service, was presented by his late colleagues with an easy chair and a case of pipes. Good wishes were extended to him by Messrs. Muirden, Kirby, Fulton and Fox, testifying to the happy relations that had existed during his service.

The chair was taken by Mr. Tizard, C.P.O., the presentation being made by Mr. T. Forth, Waterguard Superintendent.

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION.

CARDIFF.

A well-attended meeting was held at the Old Arcade Hotel on Friday, March 11th, the Chairman being Mr. Warne, P.O. Newport and Swansea were represented. A vote of appreciation was passed to Mr. C. H. Goodliffe for the services he has rendered to the Association as District Organising Secretary.

ROTATIONAL DUTIES FOR A.P.O.'s AT CARDIFF.—The general feeling of members present was in favour of a rotation of duties. It was decided to take a vote of all the A.P.O.'s in Cardiff regarding this matter, and should the majority favour the same, as it is anticipated they will, the matter would be taken up by the Association representatives.

GENERAL MESS ROOM ACCOMMODATION.—This question was discussed, and it was decided to instruct the Councillors to press for better accommodation for the Waterguard throughout the country.

HOSPITAL TREATMENT SCHEME.—The meeting signified its intention of bringing this matter to the notice of all members of the Association.

A successful meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the representatives from Newport and Swansea.

♦ ♦ ♦

GLASGOW.

The quarterly District meeting was held at Mavisbank on Wednesday, March 9th. Mr. S. P. Courts, P.O., presided over a none too large attendance.

SUPERVISION OF COAST PREVENTIVE MEN.—Correspondence on this question was read, and it was decided to leave the matter to be dealt with at the Annual Conference.

DEFENCE COMMITTEE.—Acting on instructions it was decided that a payment of 1d. per member from Association funds be given to this Committee.

ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS.—Considerable discussion arose over P.S.A. subscriptions, and correspondence from the General Secretary was read, following which a resolution was passed agreeing that subscriptions should remain as they are.

Mr. Milne, E.C., gave an interesting resumé of the work of the Executive Committee during the year. A vote of thanks accorded Mr. Milne and the Chairman terminated the meeting at 10 p.m.

LEITH.

A good attendance is recorded at the meeting at the Old Ship Hotel on February 23rd, at which Mr. Grieve occupied the chair. A report of the thirteenth meeting of the Executive Committee was presented by Mr. Milne. Particular attention was given to the new Vocational Education Scheme, and the following resolution was passed:—"The members of the Leith District wish to register their approval and thanks to the Committee, and others who assisted, for the able manner in which the Vocational Education Scheme has been launched."

Other items of purely local interest were fully discussed, all present taking an active part.

BETWEEN TIDES.

PARAGRAPHS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

LONDON.

Our periodical in the past has given prominence to accomplishments of merit obtained by our sons and our daughters. They are items of news and are always worthy of publication. I have just heard that the Editor's eldest son has been successful in a Chamber of Commerce examination, and understand that out of a possible twelve subjects, Mr. Standring, Junior, took ten and passed in all, with distinction in French and Bookkeeping. We wish him luck and hope to hear of further successes.

CARDIFF WHIST DRIVE AND DANCE.

Yet another social success was attained by the Social Committee on Monday, March 14th, when a Whist Drive and Dance was held at the Central Hotel, Cardiff. There was a very good attendance.

The whist prizes were awarded as follows:—Ladies: 1st prize, Miss E. E. Williams; 2nd prize, Mrs. L. Kennerell; hidden number and consolation, Mrs. K. Wickham. Gentlemen: 1st

prize, Mr. H. Cooper; 2nd prize, Mr. Wickham; hidden number, Mr. H. Hemsley; consolation, Mr. Connor.

The prizes were presented by Mrs. Howell, who was present with Mr. Howell, C.P.O.

The dance was a great and new achievement, and for its success we feel greatly indebted to Madame Davies, who so ably acted as M.C.

"Bravo" to the members of the Social Committee. Carry on the good work, for there is no doubt that the members of the Association are desirous of further pleasant evenings of this description.

* * * *

BOOKS FOR ALCOHOLIC LOVERS.

"All is not Gin that's Bitters," by H. U. L. Skamp.

"Green and Yellow," by Cha. Truse.

"Starboard Light," by Krem. Demon, Th.

"Egg Flip," by Avo. Carr.

"For the Sweet," by Anne Sette.

B.J.B.

PORT TALBOT.

A peculiar legal case ended in favour of a French seaman recently at a special sitting of the Aberavon magistrates, when the seaman was charged with concealing 11½ lb. of cigarettes on board the s.s. "Pasteur," of which he was the mate. A search of the ship revealed 350 cigarettes which he had not declared, and on a subsequent search 10,250 cigarettes were found in a wardrobe. Accused said he had forgotten them. Through an interpreter he said he was authorised by the captain to purchase a stock of cigarettes for distribution among the crew. He bought them at Dunkirk for a crew of thirty-one, and the reason he did not declare them was that he forgot all about them for the time.

The Bench accepted the excuse, Mr. Moses Thomas, the Chairman, remarking that no illegal importation had been established. The case was dismissed.

The captain opposed an application for the confiscation of the cigarettes on the ground that they were for the crew, but the Bench said it was not a question for the magistrates.

LONDON BRANCH MEETING.

A Special Meeting of the London Branch was held on March 17th at St. Katharine Dock Hotel to consider the report of the Port Committee on the re-scheming of the whole of London proper. A good attendance was again recorded in spite of the short notice and the festivities of St. Patrick. The whole of the report was keenly debated, and, in consequence, slightly amended.

The tone of the discussion proved how anxious the staff were for some such scheme, and that the time had arrived when the local machinery of the Department should receive its badly-needed overhaul. Another aspect of the discussion was the readiness of the members to judge the scheme as far as possible from an official point of view, in order to give full and proper consideration.

The meeting was one of the longest and latest we have recently had, terminating at 11 p.m. after four hours of careful discussion. In the absence of the Chairman, this important meeting was very ably controlled by that Association stalwart, Mr. C. R. Purser, P.O.



We cannot bring before the notice of our Customs Fund readers too often the importance of supporting the candidature of Mr. Fitzsimons for the Fund Directorate. Every Waterguard member of the Fund should let no opportunity pass of keeping this matter within the view of all who have a vote. From figures that have been supplied us, the total electorate is about 3,600, of which there are 400 Waterguard subscribers. The last Waterguard candidate, Mr. Hawkins, polled 899 votes, but was unsuccessful. No stretch of the imagination is needed to realise that we have got to go all out if our candidate is to get in.

There are likely to be three vacancies, but although electors have as many votes as there are candidates, no more than one vote can be given to any one candidate. We must endeavour to enlist support from outside the Waterguard, and we urge members to do their utmost to obtain this support from those members known to them on the Landing and Clerical staffs, etc. A vote given to our candidate will not preclude them from giving a vote to their own man.

Do not lose sight of the fact that Mr. Fitzsimons possesses a knowledge of accountancy and has had some commercial experience.

* * * *

“Brighter Sunday” in a letter this week shows the trend of progress from an official point of view, though we really don’t like to think that the state of affairs in the port mentioned is desirable from the official point of view. As our correspondent shows very pointedly, the relaxation of vigilance during the week-end is the very thing that would be welcomed in quarters where there is no intention of paying duty if it can possibly be avoided.

* * * *

A CHESS CHALLENGE has been received from Newport (Mon.), and we are asked to pass it on to London. This we willingly do, and sincerely hope that London will take it up. As yet there is no organisation in London for the receiving of a challenge, although steps are being taken for the forming of a Waterguard Chess Club. In fact, we shall be in a position to publish the proposed rules for the club in our next issue.

For the purposes of the present challenge, any reply addressed “Chess,” c/o The Editor, “Customs Journal,” will be promptly forwarded to the right quarter.

Now then, London!

—————

C. & E. DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL.

The eighty-second meeting of the Council was held in the Custom House, London, on February 23rd, 1927, the chair being taken by Sir H. P. Hamilton, K.C.B., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

RECRUITMENT OF OFFICER GRADE.

With reference to the forthcoming open competition and to the proposed selection of a small number of Departmental Clerks for promotion to the Grade, the Official Side stated that the new entrants would all rank junior to the existing members of the Grade. The promotees would rank senior to the open competition recruits, and, among themselves, would retain their relative seniority as now existing. The question of Whitley discussion on certain points concerning the methods of selection would be considered.

The extension of the field of recruitment to (a) Women Pension Officers, (b) Waterguard Staff, and (c) to all Clerical Officers in the Department, was urged by the respective representatives of these classes.

The Official Side stated that the whole ground had been carefully explored before the announcement was made. There was no intention of departing from the conclusions reached in 1921 respecting the position of women in the Outdoor Service, and the general position respecting filling vacancies by promotion had been stated by the Official Side of the National Council at its last meeting. It was considered essential, on this occasion, to obtain the bulk of the recruits at the normal entrance age, and the first claim to the small number of posts available by promotion was held by the Departmental Clerks of the Outdoor Service. The arrangements proposed on this occasion were without prejudice to any action which might be taken in future.

RECRUITMENT OF WATERGUARD SERVICE.

In reply to Staff Side enquiries, the Official Side stated that no definite information could yet be given as to the prospect of an examination for entrance to this Service, but the matter was under consideration.

PROMOTION.

The Staff Side enquired whether the claims of Clerical Officers holding "Acting" higher appointments in the Statistical Office had been considered in connection with promotion to substantive appointments made in the Secretaries' and Accountant-General's Offices. The Official Side replied that the cases were under consideration, and that it was hoped that some information would be available shortly.

In regard to the promotion of Typists to the Clerical Grade, the Official Side stated that while it was clear from the relative Report of the National Council that the Shorthand Typist had a prior claim to promotion, the Typist was not debarred, and this point would be borne in mind.

TRANSFER OF OLD AGE PENSION WORK.

In reply to Staff Side enquiries, the Official Side stated that there had been no development in this matter since it was last mentioned in the September meeting, and it was agreed to re-adourn the subject until July, 1927, it being understood that the Staff Side would be informed of any developments in the meantime.

SPECIAL STATIONS.

Arising out of a local discussion of proposals to establish a special Betting Duty Station, the Staff Side stated objections to local consideration preceding central treatment of the principles involved, and the Official Side said that there would be no objection offered to a reference on the general question being sent to the Outdoor Service Sectional Committee.

DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE.

It was agreed that the Disturbance Allowance otherwise payable to an Unattached Officer shall not be discontinued in respect of short periods of absence on sick leave (up to seven days), provided he retains his habitation in the Station and returns thereto immediately after his period of sick leave has expired.

UNITS OF WORK.

Agreements were recorded on unit allowances for Private Brewers (visits) and Chemists receiving Industrial Methylated Spirits under G.O. 2/1922.

At the Staff Side request it was agreed to adjourn until July the question of providing a unit allowance in respect of time spent on members of the public in stations where no public office is provided.

COMPENSATION LEAVE.

The Council confirmed an Officer Grade Committee disagreement on the question of compensation leave for Officers in Excise General Stations for attendance on Sundays and Public Holidays, including the King's Birthday.

SUGGESTIONS.

The Council received and noted a Schedule of Suggestions which had been forwarded by the Board for information.

OTHER BUSINESS.

The Council dealt with a number of Local, Office and Grade Committee decisions, with results that have been advised to the Committees concerned. The Local agreements included a Waterguard scheme for Dover, and the establishment of Fixed Officiator Centres at Leicester and North Shields.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday, March 30th, 1927.

CIVIL SERVICE CONFEDERATION.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, March 14th, 1927, at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Mr. W. H. James presided over an attendance of thirty.

Estimates of Income and Expenditure for the financial year 1927-28, as presented by the Finance and Organisation Committee, were adopted.

It was reported that certain questions were being placed on the Paper of the House of Commons on the subject of the Bonus Super-cut Award; and that it was intended to raise the question of Annual Leave with Pay for Established Workmen in the Dockyards on the Navy Estimates. Various other activities were reported upon by the Parliamentary and Publicity Committee, including the circulation, at the request of the Foremen's Association of India, to Members of Parliament with Indian sympathies and to the principal newspapers, of a printed statement supplied by the Association concerning the grievances of the civilian mechanics of the Indian Ordnance Department in respect of pay and allowances.

Reports were given of recent meetings of the National Federation of Professional Workers, Civil Service Equal Pay Committee, and the Civil Rights Defence Committee, and of the Deputation from the Civil Rights Defence Committee which had interviewed the Chancellor of the Exchequer on March 1st. At the Annual Conference of the National Federation of Professional Workers, held on February 5th, two Confederation resolutions on the subject of Civil Rights for Civil Servants had been unanimously adopted.

A resolution, moved on behalf of the Ministry of Labour Staff Association, was referred to the General Purposes Committee for consideration and report, in the following terms:—

“That the General Purposes Committee investigate the question of the starting pay of ex-manipulatives promoted to the Clerical Class, and submit a report and recommendation to the next meeting of this Executive.”

Reports were given of recent proceedings of the National Staff Side, particularly on the subjects of Arbitration Procedure—admissibility of quotations from Whitley minutes; “P” Class—Unemployment Insurance Contributions; Sectional and Grade Committees; proposed All-Service Programme; vacant seats on the National Staff Side.

On the subject of the vacant seats on the National Staff Side, it was agreed to consider at the next meeting of the Executive Committee whether or not the Confederation should apply for any of these seats, and in the meantime to

support the further deferment of the filling of the vacancies.

With regard to the admissibility of quotations from Whitley minutes at arbitration proceedings, the Confederation representatives on the National Staff Side were instructed to bring forward again at the National Staff Side the proposal that quotations from all such documents and proceedings should be admissible.

A lengthy discussion took place on the subject of the proposed exception of the “P” Class, and other classes similarly situated in respect of security of tenure, from liability for payment of unemployment insurance contributions, and it was decided to ask the officers of the National Staff Side to convene a special meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the National Staff Side with a view to consider the making of urgent representations on this subject to the Ministry of Labour.

At the request of Group 8 it was agreed that Mr. W. R. Clifton be appointed a member of the Special Committee of the Confederation on Sick Pay for Unestablished Classes in place of Mr. J. Farmer, resigned.

The Annual Council Meeting of the Confederation will be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Saturday, May 21st, 1927, commencing at 10.30 a.m.

HOW TO KILL AN ASSOCIATION.

Don't come to the meetings.

But if you do come, come late.

If the weather doesn't suit you, don't think of coming.

If you do attend a meeting, find fault with the work of the officers and other members.

Never accept an office, as it is easier to criticise than to do things.

Nevertheless, get sore if you are not appointed on a committee; but, if you are, do not attend the committee meetings.

If asked by the chairman to give your opinion regarding some important matter, tell him you have nothing to say. After the meeting, tell everyone how things ought to be done.

Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary; but when other members roll up their sleeves, and willingly, unselfishly use their ability to help matters along, howl that the organisation is run by a clique.

Hold back your dues as long as possible, or don't pay at all.

Don't bother about getting new members. “Let the other fellow do it.”

[From “Irisleabar” (December, 1926). The organ of the Irish C. and E. Federation.]



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

Questions.

(1) A vessel arrives at Blyth from Hamburg in ballast, takes in bunkers, and proceeds to Leith to load foreign cargo outwards. The vessel stays at Blyth six hours, and therefore does not report. State your action at Blyth and again at Leith.

(2) The above question again, but with this alteration: The said vessel arrives with cargo, takes in bunkers, but does not discharge any cargo at Blyth.

(3) A Navy man, going on leave for six nights, when accosted on the quay produces three silk scarves and six silk handkerchiefs, which he claims are for his personal use. There is no landing pass. Your action, please?

(4) Define a "Dip-rod" and state its uses; also define a "Builder's Certificate."

Answers.

(1) There is no detailed procedure laid down in the Regulations to cover such cases. Each port has its own practice.

My procedure at Blyth would be as follows: Health Regulations, Treatment of Dutiable Stores, issue a provisional Clearing Note suitably endorsed, attaching List 142 under cover to the Master for production at Leith. Forward a Letter of Advice (if necessary).

At Leith: Withdraw Clearing Note and List 142, check stores under seal (if any), endorse Clearing Note and Letter of Advice accordingly, and request the Master to make due report of the vessel. Attach the above documents to the ship's file and clear the vessel inwards (on arrival or subsequently), according to local practice.

(2) Deal with vessel similarly as at (1) above, except that Inward Clearance would be effected on completion of discharge.

(3) The answer to this question will be found in paras. 12a, 8, 9, 11 and 12 of G.O. 36/1925; also paras. 26, etc., etc., of Part 9 of Volume 1.

(4) There are no official definitions for these two items.

Herewith a brief description of the former: An instrument similar to a three-foot rule, graduated on each of its four sides, for the purpose of ascertaining the "approximate content" of casks or the ullaged quantity of such.

I have never seen a "Builder's Certificate." Perhaps our "small port" colleagues can oblige us with a description. See Volume III., Part 13, paragraph 5.

Here is another interesting question and answer:—

Question.

A French motor-vessel of 30 tons net register is under "arrest" and temporarily in charge of the Waterguard. She is lying alongside a quay which is situated close to the Custom House, but about a mile from the Waterguard Watch-room. The position of the quay is such that considerable time (say, fifteen minutes) must elapse before the vessel could reach the open sea. You are an A.P.O. posted on the vessel. At about 2 a.m. the master prepares to sail, and, in spite of your warnings, conveys to you evident intentions of departure. No assistance of any kind is visible; no telephone within five minutes' walk; the Custom House is, of course, closed; and no Service Launch is on duty. What action will you take?

Answer.

Your only duty would appear to be to remain on board the vessel, warn the master of the seriousness of his action, also of your intentions, and endeavour to attract attention by whatever means lies in your power.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF.

For the two weeks ending March 17th, 1927.

TRANSFERS.

Preventive Officer: Akister, J., Manchester, to Aberystwyth, Chester.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

Retirement.—Preventive Officer: Francis, T. J., Aberystwyth, Chester.

VACANCIES.

Preventive Officer, London, 19.4.1927; Preventive Officer, Belfast, 2.5.1927; Preventive Officer, Rye, Dover (an allowance of £30 per annum for performing Long Room work, etc., is assigned to Rye).

APPOINTMENTS TO UNESTABLISHED SITUATIONS.

Coast Preventive Men: Simmons, E. J., Tarbert, Greenock; Matten, A., Mallnig, Inverness; Williams, R., Withernsea, Hull; Leonard, J., Tarbert, Inverness; Parker, W., Longhope, Aberdeen; Knight, S., Scalloway, Aberdeen.

CHESS.

We are requested to publish the following rule for the Chess Tournament:—

“Round 2 should commence on March 28th. Owing to the length of time taken in Round 1, each game is now limited to three months. If at the end of this period any games are not completed, the game should be forwarded to Mr. Bishop, who will arrange for its adjudication by an outside authority. Players are therefore requested to endeavour to make three moves per week, if possible. The adjudication will probably be undertaken by Mr. Davies, the Kent County Chess Champion.”

The following is the third game received in Round 1. Only two more games are left in this round.

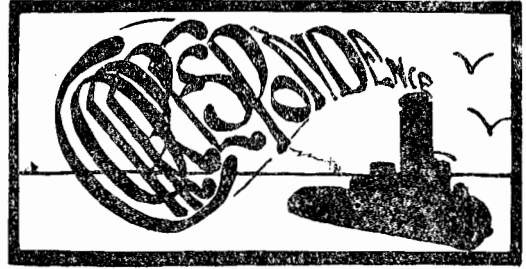
F. M. Mitchell, A.P.O., S. W. H. Hargrove,
Leith. A.P.O., Manchester.
White. Black.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 1. P—K4 | P—K4 |
| 2. P—KB4 | P—QB3 |
| 3. Kt—KB3 | Kt—KB3 |
| 4. Kt x P | Q—QKt3 |
| 5. Kt—B4 | Q—B4 |
| 6. P—Q4 | Q—K2 |
| 7. P—K5 | P—Q4 |
| 8. Kt—Q6 + | K—Q1 |
| 9. B—Q3 | Kt—K5 |
| 10. B x Kt | P x B |
| 11. P—B5 | P—B3 |
| 12. Kt—B3 | BP x P |
| 13. B—Kt5 | Q x B |
| 14. Kt—B7 + | K—K1 |
| 15. Kt x Q | B x P |
| 16. Castles K side | P—KKt3 |
| 17. R x B | P x R |
| 18. Q—R5 + | K—Q2 |
| 19. Q—B7 + | K—QB1 |
| 20. Kt—K6 | B—Q3 |
| 21. P x P | B x P |
| 22. R—Q1 | P—QR4 |
| 23. Kt—QB5 | B—QB2 |
| 24. Q x KBP + | Kt—Q2 |
| 25. R x Kt | K—QKt1 |
| 26. Q—B7 | R—QB1 |
| 27. Kt x P | P—QKt3 |
| 28. Kt—Q6 | P x Kt |
| 29. Q—Kt3 + | K—R2 |
| 30. Q—QKt7 mate | — |

or
B—QKt3

29. Q—Kt3 +
30. Q x B mate

+ means “Check.”



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.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

Sir,—Permit me as one of those A.P.O.’s who have recently taken up the course of study under the Vocational Education Scheme, to congratulate the sponsors of this laudable object, launched by the Association, who deserve great credit for their efforts to improve the efficiency of its younger members.

In my opinion, no better scheme could have been evolved; certainly we all know that classes have been conducted for some time past in the larger ports, but where I am stationed there is such an amount of relieving to be performed, that to hold a class regularly is impossible; also, under this scheme, no matter where an A.P.O. is stationed—port, outport or creek—he gets the same opportunity of careful tuition by competent tutors.

Although the scheme has only been in existence a short time, in my own case I have already found a distinct improvement in my elementary knowledge of the Regulations, and I am so satisfied with the intelligent course of study, that I appeal to other fellow-members to join the scheme and make it such an overwhelming success that the powers-that-be will, ere long, be compelled to recognise the efficiency of this Branch of the Service.—Yours, etc.,

“PROGRESS.”

RE MONTHLY SALARIES FOR A.P.O.’s.

Sir,—With reference to the subject of monthly salaries, and the fact that only 526 votes were recorded for and against out of approximately 1,000 A.P.O.’s, I am of opinion it is not representative of the Grade. The only satisfactory method of obtaining a correct return of the wishes of the Grade in such an important matter would appear to be by the Board calling for a return from each station and port in the country.—Yours, etc.,

“OBSERVER.”

[There is no intention to act upon the result of the plebiscite until the matter has been fully discussed by the Council.—Ed.]

Sir,—Being stationed at a Scottish coal port where the Sunday attendance was reduced owing to the strike from three eight-hour watches and Sunday rummage crew once a month to six-hour tidal attendance until normal trade resumed, one is frequently met with the perplexed query, "Why have we not returned to our usual Sunday attendance now that normal trade has resumed?"

Now, Sir, those in authority who direct our duties, and the reasons for them, are fully aware of the state of trade at this port, and also of the fact that the number of foreign arrivals per month is now even greater than those of any month during the last three years; it is therefore quite evident that the vigilant and continuous attendance for revenue protection on Sunday, as previously required here, is now no longer considered necessary.

That the public have at all times an open and ready access to the docks, and is in fact a favourite Sunday haunt for many who seek the entertainment from the various ships which is unobtainable ashore on the strict Scottish sabbath, was no doubt taken into consideration by the authorities who arrange our duties, and since they do not consider it necessary for the presence of Waterguard Officers to prevent possible irregularities occurring on Sunday (as they do on weekdays), we should not imagine we know better than they. Our duty is to perform, not to direct.

The reduction of Sunday duty is a step in the right direction, and the six-hour tidal attendance now in vogue might easily be reduced to four hours, which would give ample time to perform the ordinary Boarding and Immigration duties, as the partial rummage of, say, one out of four or five vessels from dangerous ports appears superfluous, since the station is to be left unguarded for twelve out of the twenty-four hours on Sunday.

The four-hour attendance would also prevent the frequent occurrence under the present system whereby officers are on duty eleven hours at a stretch, i.e., 4 p.m. Saturday till 3 a.m. Sunday, and 9 p.m. Sunday till 8 a.m. Monday. This is an unnecessary hardship, and is neither good for the officers concerned nor for the satisfactory performance of their duties.

Really, we don't want any Sunday duty; but since vessels do actually arrive on Sunday, might not the minimum of time be spent in dealing with them, and the remainder of the day of rest be spent in our various ways of care-free relaxation, to fit us for the pursuit of the wily smuggler who works from midnight Sunday till midnight Saturday.—Yours, etc.,

"BRIGHTER SUNDAY."

Sir,—Please allow me a short space in your columns to reply to "Oliver's" letter in your last issue. Apparently "Oliver" is one of the big noises in the job, and would wipe the floor with all and sundry who may come in his way. I assure him that he does not scare one. I was only expressing my opinion. It may be clumsy;

it may not be absolutely correct. There is nothing really definite. On his own admission he makes the suggestion that the Promotion Board may have made mistakes. I am in the position of being one up so far. As "Hawkeye" away back along started the thought, there may have been injustice. I'm not weeping because I have been turned down once again. I was turned down years back for a decade from becoming a P.O., but I am still like Charley's Aunt, going strong, and am pleased to say I am not wanting any sloppy sympathy; nor, may I add, any abuse. I, with "Hawkeye," have just expressed my opinion, and assume we are entitled to so much consideration while we remain on the map. I am not unmindful of the injustices of the past in the same Waterguard Service that "Oliver" and I are now serving. There was in those days a body which to all intents and purposes constituted a selection or promotion board, and by this means Preventive Men were selected for special promotion to the P.O. Grade. It cannot be denied that the general view of these selections was that, except in two or three cases, they were unsatisfactory both from a revenue and administrative point of view. Does "Oliver" remember so far back? I could name a few other incidents of the past when our Department was treated shabbily and outrageously unfairly, and I am still of the opinion that the present Promotion Board has not always selected the best and most deserving for the higher posts.

And, Mr. Editor, I can hear "Oliver" shouting, roaring in fact, through the corridors of Lower Thames Street, "What a lot of flappoodle this fellow 'Hopeful' is writing." I am still able to carry on with the job, even although he suggests I am such a disappointed man, and although getting nearer the end of the journey than I really care to think or realise, I am still consistent and, as a Revenue officer, still count one.—Yours, etc.,

"HOPEFUL."

Sir,—As a member of the Customs Fund, I entirely agree with the General Secretary that the nomination of Mr. Fitzsimons will be received by the Waterguard with a great deal of satisfaction. Waterguard members have no quarrel in any way with the administration of the Fund, but there is a natural desire that direct representation should be had if possible.

There are few Waterguard Officers willing and eligible for election, and this should make us all the more eager to give support when such a candidate can be found.

In Mr. Fitzsimons we have a candidate who thoroughly understands Waterguard interests. He would be a worthy successor to Mr. Hawkins, and can be relied upon to always present the Waterguard point of view.

Let's put him in, and thereby strike another blow for enhancing Waterguard prestige.—Yours, etc.,

"MANCHESTER."

Sir,—We received in this port to-day a circular from the General Secretary suggesting that Waterguard members of the Customs Fund should do their utmost to ensure the election of a Waterguard representative on the Directorate of the Fund.

I am not addicted to the practice of using these columns to state my points of view, I prefer the District Meeting, but I feel I must encroach on your valuable space to give an expression of gratitude for this *beau geste* on the part of the Association.

It is pleasing to think that the policy of the P.S.A. is not confined to Whitleyism and its adjuncts, and that our Association officials can spare a little of their valuable time for such essential points as Sport, Education, and, now, this.

I think I am right in saying that the last direct representative we had was Mr. J. Hawkins, and that was some years ago. It is up to us to see that, so long as we can find a suitable candidate to stand, a Waterguard representative is continually in office.

An electioneering agent could, no doubt, find a few slogans; but I, in my experience, must resort to plain statement—VOTE, and VOTE SOLID for Mr. FITZSIMONS—the Waterguard representative.—Yours, etc.,

“SCOTTIE.”

◆ ◆ ◆

RE GRADING.

Sir,—Quite recently we have had before us schemes of re-grading. These schemes, I am glad to say, have met with the fate they well deserved. There is nothing whatsoever in either of the two recent ones to commend them to the Waterguard generally or to merit their being adopted.

If we are going to have re-grading, let it be efficient. Let us have a scheme which will materially affect all Grades, and give us that “status” we so desire; the credit for the large responsibilities with which we are already saddled, but which at the same time are not recognised. As far as can be judged, neither of the schemes submitted have any pretence of so doing. What benefit is it for A.P.O.’s to be ranked as P.O.’s if we are still regarded as the “boots”? What benefit is it to the A.P.O. Grade to go up for examination after six years’ service if there are no vacancies for sixteen years, etc., etc.?

The usual response to anyone condemning a motion is to tell him to suggest a better. It is for this reason I have put pen to paper. It is more than possible that some members will pooh-pooh my ideas, but personally I think a scheme evolved on either of the two following suggestions would be far ahead of those already before us. It is obvious to the youngest member of our Association that to have a successful scheme we must have one that meets with the approval of all Grades. At present, personal interest plays a very great part. Everyone has “axes to

grind.” We have P.O.’s nearing the time for examination for senior rank bitterly opposed to any scheme likely to hazard their chances, and we have younger P.O.’s tooth and nail for any scheme which will give them an earlier chance for qualifying for coveted promotion. The same applies to A.P.O.’s.

It has always been that pioneers of any scheme do not profit by their labours. That accrues to those that come after, but to get down to the suggestions, they are:—

No. 1.

Grades.—Collector (Waterguard), Surveyor (Waterguard), Officer (Waterguard), Preventive Officer.

Suggested Collector and Surveyor rank salaries be arranged *pro rata* with status and appointed in like districts to Landing Staff. Abolition of C.P.O. rank. P.O. rank re-graded as Officers (Waterguard) (Salary £180-450). Abolition of excessive supervision. Equalisation of leave privileges to Landing Staff. Officer (W.) Grade brought up to full strength. Sufficient officers promoted to ensure no acting in superior capacity. Entries in the Service to be reduced to such figures as will ensure examination in ten years (plus a reasonable margin for failures and other casualties). This could easily be estimated from past years. All boarding A.P.O.’s to be abolished. P.O.’s to work independently and alone, except on night watch. Thus we would have A.P.O.’s concentrated for baggage purposes, night boarding, and mobile rummage crews.

No. 2 Suggestion.

Abolition of the Waterguard. Waterguard and Landing Staff merged into one Department. Existing C.P.O.’s could be appointed to offices of Landing Staff Surveyors and Collectors to supervise the work that originally came under Waterguard. On their retirement, rank to become extinct. Existing P.O.’s merged with Landing Officers, with equal leave privileges and salary scale, and appointed to various Landing Stations. Thus in a dock or at a wharf, everything connected with a ship would be dealt with at the Landing Office for that ship (except rummaging). The advantages of such a procedure are obvious. Existing stock of A.P.O.’s to be used for rummage and baggage purposes. All entrants into H.M. C. and E. to pass the existing L.O.’s examination and serve a period of probation or apprenticeship, say, six years, part of this time to be spent on L.O.’s duties, part on rummage, baggage, etc., and to pass out as Officers, must pass a departmental examination into Officer Grade.

In conclusion, I would like to say that no one should be above rummaging. Every person serving in H.M. Customs and Excise is there for two very important reasons. Number One is, “The protection of the revenue.” Number Two, “The means of a livelihood.” The sooner we all realise this the better.—Yours, etc.,

PROGRESS.

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

ESTABLISHED 1866.

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