

The Customs Journal

No. 677

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Fortnightly

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Letters to the Editor, and articles and correspondence intended for publication, should be addressed to the Editor, "The Customs Journal," 91 Tressillian Road, Brockley, London, S.E. 4.

All matter for insertion in the forthcoming issue should reach the Editor on or before the Monday preceding the day of publication

THE EXAMINATION

THERE is a saying of the superstitiously-minded which has it that there is "luck in a seven." We do not suppose that many of our colleagues who have an important engagement on the 7th instant will have found any consolation in the date, and for that reason we will refrain from congratulations on that score. There are, however, some things upon which it is possible to "cheer the troubled soul," and fortunately they are based upon a more solid foundation than superstition.

It seems a strange contrast, but whilst the great majority have apparently reached the conclusion that the new examination for C.P.O. will provide a stiffer hurdle to negotiate than has previously been the case, we should hear from a once-rejected candidate of his delight that the new method has been introduced. Rightly, in our opinion, he has welcomed the opportunity of proving beyond all doubt the mistake the selectors made in turning him down on the last occasion. There is food for thought in this paradoxical situation, and we firmly believe that our colleague will justify his confidence. He knows that the good that he does will "live after him," and in examinations, as

in all other things, that is something to be thankful for.

It is not our wish to stress that factor in the new examination, and we merely mention the case to point the inevitable moral. It is our view that every candidate can console himself with the knowledge that in this examination there is no longer any chance of being considered wanting without a semblance of a trial. This cannot but reduce the nervous tension that pervades such necessary evils as examinations, and anything which has that effect is to be appreciated. We can obtain some satisfaction also in the plain fact that quite a few C.P.O.s are likely to be required in the near future, and more still in the knowledge that there is a greater desire to give a "leg-up" than a "knock-out." After all, a test of the manner in which our individual ability has absorbed the experience and knowledge to be gained from going through the mill, is not so terrible an ordeal as to warrant a large amount of nerves. We will leave it at that, for it would be presumptuous on our part to give advice. We can, however, convey good wishes and we do that to each and every one.

CURRENT COMMENTS.

ONE can safely predict that the chief topic of interest in Preventive Staff circles during the forthcoming week will be the examination for promotion to the Chief Preventive Officer Grade. Everyone is anxious to know what kind of question can be anticipated under the new examination scheme, and there will be a great demand for an early view of the papers set. More anxious than anyone, of course, are the candidates; but they will be in the position of pioneers who must suffer the inconveniences of exploring the unknown, whilst those who come after will benefit from their experiences. This is inevitable. The new examination is a step in the right direction, and every reform that is worth while is attended with a certain measure of disturbance. One can sympathise with the candidates in that on this occasion it is their lot to have to break new ground, but they have at least the satisfaction of knowing that ultimately, whether they are successful or not, they will share with their colleagues the general benefits that must accrue from a much overdue reform.

* * * *

It is more than probable that those candidates who have grasped the meaning of the charges that are going on within the Preventive Service will find the ordeal to be not so formidable after all. They will have studied along the right lines, keeping in mind that revenue protection in these days requires from supervising officers something more than a rule-of-thumb outlook.

* * * *

There is some hope that one day there will be a sufficient number of people within the Waterguard who will be able to relieve people outside the Waterguard from the job of propounding theories on how to manage the Waterguard. These theory mongers are far too numerous. One meets them in every grade of the C. & E. Department. The reason of their existence is not far to seek. It is up to us to remove the reason—but it is a slow process.

* * * *

It seems a pity, in view of the persistent nervousness displayed generally regarding modern smuggling methods and contrivances, that some consideration has not been given to the possibilities of utilising the unique experience that members of the Preventive Service obtain in the art of

detection. Seizures as described on a "458" frequently seem to be quite commonplace affairs. Yet, in many cases the seizures are the result of clever detective work. But, this side of the business rarely comes to light. The officers regard it as all in the day's work. The smuggler regards it as rather uncanny, or, alternatively, he asserts that he has been "given away," and refuses to believe that he could be otherwise detected. The Preventive Staff do not, of course, work by information. They discover things for themselves, and very often a clue is followed up for weeks and months before the cold official report on the "458" indicates that another smuggler is hid by the heels.

Preventive Staff work offers facilities than can be had nowhere else for the training of officers and fitting them to deal with any kind of revenue fraud. The defect at the moment is that officers who have a natural ability for investigation are not encouraged to make the best use of the advantages of their daily work to develop that ability.

* * * *

Proposed terms of reference to the Arbitration Court have now been sent by the Association to the Board, in connection with the disagreement on our claim for increased pay for the Preventive Officer and Assistant Preventive Officer Grades.

The Superintendent and the Chief Preventive Officer Grades have definitely decided not to take arbitration proceedings.

Members will be informed as soon as news come to hand that agreement has been reached on the terms of reference. It can be expected that very shortly after this has been effected our case will come before the Court.

* * * *

In view of the fact that many experienced people asserted that there was no prospect of recruitment to the Officer Grade for a considerable time, it is surprising to note that an examination has been announced to take place early next year.

At the moment it is not possible to say whether there are to be any promotions made from within the Service. The Sub-Committee of the Departmental Council dealing with this question has not yet reported.

It will interest members to hear that the National Whitley Council is now preparing evidence for the Royal Commission on the question of the introduction of a contributory pensions scheme for Civil Servants, and a widows' and orphans' pension scheme.

* * * *

The cost-of-living figure is now at 57, which is the same as for the preceding month. The figure for food only is said to be 44.

It is noteworthy that though the newspapers took practically no notice of the large demonstration by Civil Servants, on the bonus question, they all "jumped to it," when Mr. Snowden told us that we were ungrateful. That was well broadcast.

We are not ungrateful. There was a definite danger in adopting a complacent attitude when money is taken from us. The Service has many enemies and we must keep fighting to retain what little we have.

* * * *

Arrangements are being made to hold an Executive Committee meeting probably in the last week of October.

Preventive Staff Association

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Telephone : ROYAL 4279

President : W. G. Thomson

General Secretary : J. Merron

Organising Secretary : J. T. Sutton

Assistant Secretary : W. H. Powell

HULL.

Mr. Codd presided over a large and enthusiastic meeting of the Hull members at the Metropole Rooms on Friday, September 19th.

Following a full and clear statement by the local Councillors, the meeting showed its approval of the attitude of the Conference, and expressed its confidence in the ultimate result of the claims of the Waterguard.

Keen discussion took place on a number of local matters.

Attention was drawn to the method of sealing dutiable stores on board ship with wax and tape, and to the not infrequent complaints of its use. A resolution was carried that a different method of sealing dutiable stores should be adopted, and that in lieu of wax and tape an improved type of plonx be employed.

Beach Seizure in Essex.

News comes to hand relative to an attempt at landing dutiable goods on the Essex coast, and which shew that the eyes of the Coast Preventive Staff are certainly put to practical use. The seizure itself was not a large one, but goes to prove that the days are not past when advantage may be taken of a lonely bit of foreshore.

Mr. Pack, C.P.M., Tollesbury, intercepted the skipper of a fishing vessel, and the skipper and deckhand of another vessel of the same class, landing at Tollesbury beach with a small quantity of dutiable goods, which were concealed at the bottom of their sea-bags.

The fishing vessels were returning to Tollesbury after a fortnight's fishing on the South Coast. The goods were obtained from a boatman who came alongside in Harwich harbour. Unfortunately for the fishermen, the revenue defence of our coasts is more real than many people would have the public know, with the result that the beach was the farthest point to which they were allowed to convey their uncustomed goods.

Middlesbrough Prosecution.

At the Middlesbrough Police Court on September 24th, an assistant officer of the s.s. "Svirstroy," from Leningrad, was charged with harbouring 13 lb. tobacco (cav.), 2½ lb. cigars, and 3 lb. tobacco (o.s.). The goods were discovered in the offender's berth in a space between a bottom drawer and the deck by Mr. F. Collier (A.P.O.). The offender, who pleaded guilty, was fined £31/6/- (double duty and value), or in default two month's imprisonment. The fine was paid.

Civil Service Confederation.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Confederation was held on Monday, 15th September, 1930, at Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster, where Mr. George Chase presided over an attendance of twenty-two.

On the subject of the Cost-of-Living Bonus meeting held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on the 4th September, 1930, it was reported that copies of the resolution passed at the meeting had been sent to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, and the Secretaries of the National Staff Side. Formal acknowledgments had been received. It was not yet possible to present a complete financial statement, but it appeared probable that the net cost of the meeting would be about £67.

A letter was received from Miss V. M. Knock, of the Civil Service Clerical Association, notifying her resignation from membership of the Executive Committee on the occasion of her marriage. A letter had been sent to Miss Knock expressing appreciation of the part she had taken in Civil Service activities.

It was agreed that a letter of sympathy be sent to Mr. D. N. Kneath, of the Association of Officers of Taxes, and a member of the Executive Committee, on the death of Mrs. Kneath.

It was decided that the Half-Yearly Council Meeting of the Confederation be held on Friday afternoon, 28th November, 1930.

An invitation was received to appoint fraternal delegates to the Annual Congress of the Greek

Civil Service Association, to be held at Athens on the 15th to 19th October, 1930. It was agreed to reply sending fraternal greetings and expressing regret that Confederation was unable to send delegates.

Arising out of the Report of the General Purposes Committee, some discussion took place on the application received from the Association of Admiralty Storehouse and Laboratory Staffs, a constituent organisation of the Confederation, for assistance with regard to its claims concerning (a) leave; (b) salary scales; and (c) representation on the Admiralty Administrative Whitley Council. This matter is in the hands of the Confederation officers and the General Purposes Committee.

The General Purposes Committee also reported on the application received from the Principal Viewers' Association, of Didcot, for assistance with regard to its claim for representation on the War Office Administrative Whitley Council, Outstations Committee, Staff Side. Correspondence is proceeding with the Secretary of the Outstations Committee Staff Side.

Reports were also presented concerning the application of the Royal Parks Employees' Union for assistance with regard to the claims of certain of its members affecting wages and leave. This matter is also in the hands of the General Purposes Committee. It was also reported that particulars of a case submitted by the Royal Parks Employees' Union with regard to the non-payment of gratuity to the next-of-kin of a man dying whilst in Government employment, but leaving no dependants, had been furnished to

the Superannuation Committee of the National Staff Side.

Consideration had been given by the General Purposes Committee to the question of whether it is desirable to take any action to endeavour to secure the adoption in this country of regulations similar to those in force in France with regard to long leave for Civil Servants suffering from tuberculosis. On the suggestion of the Confederation, the National Staff Side had agreed to endeavour to obtain official information as to the incidence of tuberculosis in the British Civil Service over a period of years.

It was also reported that the National Staff Side had adopted the suggestion of the Confederation that action should be taken on the Standing Joint Committee on Reorganisation, with a view to ultimate discussion on the National Whitley Council, concerning the refusal of the Official Side to continue discussions on the Provincial Differentiation Sub-Committee on the ground that the question of Provincial Differentiation was before the Royal Commission.

On the subject of Sick Pay for Unestablished Classes, it was reported that a letter had been received from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, under date of the 3rd September, 1930, arising from which Departmental negotiations would be resumed, except in the case of Women Cleaners, and in the case of Women Cleaners the Financial Secretary had indicated his willingness to open discussions with the Confederation at an early date.

Reports were given of recent proceedings of the National Staff Side, with especial reference to the subjects of (a) Establishment of certain unestablished grades; (b) Draft Report of Superannuation Committee; (c) Unestablished Sick Leave; (d) Royal Commission Evidence; (e) Suggestions and Awards; and (f) Medical Rejects.

The Executive Committee agreed to place on record its appreciation of the successful efforts of the Superannuation Committee of the National Staff Side in reaching a satisfactory agreement with the Official Side on the subject of the establishment of Medical Rejects.

Changes in the Staff

To September 22nd, 1930.

TRANSFERS.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER, LOWER SECTION :—

Dove, G. C., Unattached, Office of I.G.W., to Newhaven, Brighton.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

Goldfinch, A., Briton Ferry, Swansea to Teignmouth, Plymouth.

Rooney, M. T., Maldon, Ipswich, to Littlehampton, Brighton.

PROMOTION.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Woodward, F. A., Hull to Sunderland.

VACANCIES.

PREVENTIVE OFFICERS :—

*Southend, London.

West Hartlepool, Sunderland, 8.11.30.

London, 15.11.30.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER :—

Bristol, 23.10.30.

* An official residence is provided at a reduced rental, and there is an allowance of £35 per annum for performing Long Room work, etc.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS

Scantlebury, H. M., Preventive Man.

Goole Prosecution.

A seaman concealed on board the s.s. "River Ribble" 2 lbs. 2 ozs. of Cavendish Tobacco, using a space inside a small enclosed wooden platform in the tunnel of the engine room. The tobacco was subsequently found by Mr. Barnett (A.P.O.), and the offender was, at Goole Police Court, fined £37, on September 22nd.

BY THE WAY.

I must confess that I was in no way surprised at the very meagre amount of publicity given by the daily Press to the bonus demonstration at the Central Hall, Westminster, early last month. Experience would hardly lead us to expect much from that quarter. I found the longest account in the "Times." Half-an-inch was apparently all that could be spared in the "Daily Mail." Several papers contained nothing at all. Such is the measure of sympathy and support. However, pens gained a little more life when an opportunity later occurred to make some play with the word "ingratitude." The "well-informed" press often does get busy when it gains possession of that extremely dangerous commodity, a little knowledge.

* * * *

I wonder if anything will come of the suggestion that has been mentioned in the last two issues on the subject of holiday arrangements. I see no reason why the idea should not spread. It is eminently workable, and exchange of residences for this purpose is much more common than is generally supposed. It is done in a large number of cases without organisation, and is the direct result of personal arrangements between two friends or acquaintances. A scheme to make the practice more general would certainly multiply the possibilities and would increase the range of available houses. I am looking forward with some interest to next summer, for there is ample time in which to perfect a system calculated to spread these facilities for the mutual benefit of our members.

* * * *

I have seen a list of the fixtures for the coming winter of the Preventive Staff Chess Club, and have come to the conclusion that the club has a very interesting season before it. In all, there are fourteen matches, three of which are to be played at home. One contest, on December 4th, between the Civil Service and the London Commercial Chess League (150 tables), will find our club members taking their places among their Service colleagues. All the fixtures are arranged under the Civil Service League.

Mention is made elsewhere of the examination of Preventive Officers next week. Service interest is well focused on this event, the first to be held under the new conditions. It will be possible to give clearer views after the examination is over. In the meantime, the candidates are now making their final preparations for next Tuesday, and I certainly cannot do better at the moment than wish them each and all every success. I do not think that any time will be lost, after the scrutiny of the papers, in publishing the result. P.A.R.

C. & E. Preventive Service Sports Club.

FOOTBALL SECTION.

The draw for the first round of the Customs and Excise Competition has resulted as follows—

A. and C.G. v. Long Room.

London Dock (Clerical Office) v. Mount Pleasant

Statistical Office v. Gravesend Waterguard.

Secretaries' Office v. C. & E. Preventive Service.

The match between the Secretaries' Office and the Preventive Service will be played at the P.L.A. Sports Ground, Cranbrook Rise, Ilford, on Wednesday, October 15th. It would materially help Waterguard Sport if as many supporters as possible would attend this match.

SWIMMING SECTION.

The club will be represented at the C. & E. Gala on October 7th at the Holborn Baths, London, by a relay team which has been entered in the inter-departmental event. Our team will be Messrs. Almond, Blake, Browne, Coppard, Dilling and Fisk.

Come and give them your encouragement.

ANNUAL DINNER.

October 29th, at Auderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, London, is the date of the first Club Dinner and Dance.

Hull Prosecution.

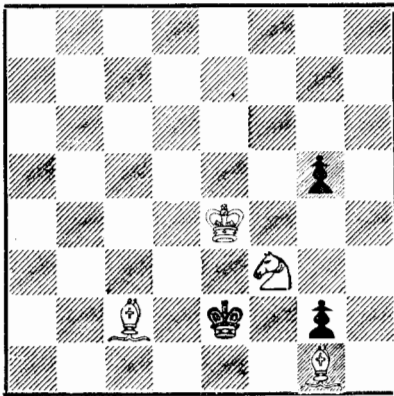
At the Hull City Police Court on September 16th, a seaman of the Icelandic ship "Selfoss," from Hamburg, was charged with concealing 21/100 proof gallon of imitation rum, 10/100 proof gallon of brandy, and 27/100 proof gallon of U.U. spirits. He was fined £2/10/8 (single value and duty) and 10/- interpreter's fee. The goods were discovered by Mr. W. Thompson (A.P.O.) in the lining of the seamen's fore-castle.

SPORT AND SOCIAL

Customs Preventive Staff Chess Club.

PROBLEM NO. 62 by SAM LLOYD.

Black.



White.

White mate in four.

Solution to No. 61.

1. R—Q5+ K—B3.
2. Q—Kt5 or Kt7.

GAMES OF CHESS AT ODDS.

38. At the odds of **Pawn and move**, and **Pawn and two moves**, the Pawn to be given shall be the King's Bishop's Pawn. A player receiving the odds of two moves must make them together as his first move in the game, but they shall count as two moves for the purpose of the time limit, and the first move made by the giver of the odds shall also count as two moves for the same purpose.

39. At the odds of **Knigh**t and **Rook**, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, the Knight to be given shall be the Queen's Knight, and the Rook, the Queen's Rook. The Player giving these odds shall be entitled to first move.

40. At the odds of a **Rook**, the giver of such odds may move the King as in Castling, on the side from which the Rook has been omitted, subject to Law 15, and to the **further condition** that the square from which the Rook has been omitted has not previously been occupied.

PROHIBITION OF EXTRANEOUS ASSISTANCE.

41. Neither the Player nor the Opponent shall, during the course of the game, refer to any written or printed matter which bears upon such game, nor request the advice of any other person as to the conduct of such game.

42. Spectators are not permitted to call attention to any breach of these Laws they may observe committed, or to interfere in any way with the conduct of the game, except to determine any disputed question of fact under Law 44.

GAMES FORFEITED.

43. The Player or the Opponent forfeits the game:—

- (a) If he wilfully upset the board or disarrange the men;
- (b) if he ceases to play and refuses to resume it within a reasonable time;
- (c) if he exceed the time limit;
- (d) if he refuses to comply with a legal requirement of his opponent;
- (e) if he refuses to obey these Laws.

Any game forfeited by a player is scored as a win to his antagonist.

(Conclusion of B.C.F. Laws next issue.)

Customs & Excise Orphans' Widows' & War Memorial Fund

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