

The Customs Journal

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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," 93, Fairfax Road, Hornsey, London, N.8.

It is essential that all matter for insertion in the forthcoming issue should reach the Editor on or before the Monday preceding day of publication.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE recent amendment to the Office Accommodation Instructions in connection with the cleaning of Waterguard Offices is to be withdrawn.

It will be remembered that the Association took up the matter through the Departmental Staff Side on the point that the amendment (actually a reprint of the appropriate paragraph in the recently abolished A.P.O. Instructions) was not in strict accord with the spirit of the agreement registered on the abolition of cleaning duties performed by A.P.O.s.

It must be understood, however, that the withdrawal of this amendment does not change the existing situation, and the position in regard to the few remaining places where A.P.O.s perform minor cleaning duties is not affected by the absence of a printed instruction on the point.

The Secretary of the Staff Side is to be congratulated in helping us to remove the last traces in print of this old derogatory bugbear.

The question of the delay in the issue of uniform clothing has now been answered—somewhat along the lines anticipated, i.e., that the tremendous call on contractors for uniforms for the Coronation had held up deliveries of cloth. Things are now quite normal and issues proceeding.

In addition, an official assurance has been given that the date of future issues remains unaffected. In other words, the period for renewal is calculated from the assumed date of issue and not from the actual (delayed) date.

An announcement appeared in the "London Gazette" to the effect that the official celebra-

tions of the King's Birthday in 1938, will be held on June 9th, except in the Customs and Excise, where the day appointed is June 18th.

On the Departmental Council Agenda at the November meeting, there were many items of Waterguard interest but, probably, the one which creates the greatest interest was the disagreement on the claim for increased leave for A.P.O.s. The Staff Side re-argued the case, with particular reference to officers of less than five years' service, and eventually the Official Side agreed to look again at this aspect of the claim.

Christmas, with its crop of seasonal expenses, approaches and once again the questions of advances of salary and payment of overtime arise.

The Association has raised these matters in the appropriate quarter and we are given to understand that as regards advances of salary the conditions of previous years will apply, i.e., that advances up to £5 may be granted to applicants whose annual salary does not exceed £215.

On the second point, payment of overtime before Xmas, arrangements are to be made to end the December period on the 18th (instead of the 25th), and thus extend the January period to one of five weeks.

Marvel of marvels!! The Official Side has at last found an indelible pencil free from the dangers of methyl violet. There can be no question that it has been a difficult task and, undoubtedly, the number of grades of pencil in this series must be limited. This brings us to another point—indeed, to the point of pencil.

The writer remembers the difficulty experienced in finding, in the wide range of indelible pencils, one that would stand up to the strain of duty-taking under normal but nevertheless hectic conditions at baggage ports and on board ship.

With a crowded baggage hall or a hundred members of crew eager to "pay off," a broken pencil point can be very exasperating and it is hoped that in deciding on the new pencil the Official Side will not be influenced to acceptance merely by the absence of methyl violet.

So much has been said and written about the impending break-up of the C.S. Confederation that some members may be forgiven for thinking it a case of "Cry Wolf" and others for assuming it as already dead, actually the Confederation is still functioning. It will continue to do so, at least until the Half-Yearly Conference and may quite well continue thereafter in spite of secessions of larger bodies.

Nevertheless, the future is always the immediate concern of Associations, and those in the Customs Group continue to give serious consideration to the possibilities of revolutionary changes in the National Field.

Without being directly concerned with this matter and yet having a bearing on it, conversations are taking place between certain Associations in the Customs Group (including this Association) and the Society of Civil Servants. It is impossible to forecast the final result of these talks nor indeed would it be politic to discuss them here, but certainly nothing but good can flow from this first gesture of the executive and allied classes of the Service getting together.

A note about Credit Service—a sad note.

The Association, in common with other associations operating the system, is informed that in future the facilities available cannot be applied to the purchase of motor cars and motor cycles.

An amendment to the circular dealing with this service should be made accordingly, in order to reduce correspondence at Association Offices in returning applications of this type.

Reference has been made previously in these columns to the impending retirement of Mr. Thomas Morton, M.B.E., who since 1924 has held the leading Staff Side Whitley position—that of Vice-Chairman to the Departmental Council.

The date of his departure next month draws near and the December Council Meeting will see him in office for the last time.

In the meantime, a testimonial, open to the Department as a whole, has been launched by the Joint Committee (C. & E. Assns.). All grades and all ranks—both Staff and Official Sides—will join in this token of appreciation and respect.

Many there will be to whom Morton is just a name and many more (sad to relate) to whom

the name conveys nothing. Yet all will understand the value of the services of the one who holds such an important and responsible position and those who know him appreciate particularly his adept and impartial handling of Staff Side matters, irrespective of the grade affected.

Judging by the number and size of orders being received for the Association's Diary, 1938, a long-felt want is being met at last. Indeed, if the rate of reservation-orders continues it would seem that the margin allowed for sales after the Diary has been examined in the districts may disappear.

Delivery is promised for early December and members would be well advised not to delay in making reservation. Remember, orders are being dealt with in strict order of receipt and a reprint is problematic—*verb. sap.*

It is not often that Vice-Chairmen of Local Whitley Committees come into the news but an exception to the rule is to be found in Swansea.

Mr. Hughes, Vice-Chairman of the Swansea Local Whitley Committee since the inception of Whitley, has just retired from the Service and thus sets up a record in continuity of Staff Side activity that will take some beating.

One would think that after meritoriously performing such a job and for so long, all the thanks and appreciation would emanate from one side—our side. Not so with Mr. Hughes. In a letter to the Departmental Staff Side he thanks us for providing him with the elixir of life, thus permitting him to retire feeling younger than ever. This is another and new reason why members should take an active part in Association work and we look for a rush of volunteers for local Whitley and district work.

Changes in the Staff.

(To 15th November, 1937).

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Colling, R.
Midlane, E. J.
Mitchell, A.

TRANSFERS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Haigh, E., Gravesend, London to King's Lynn, Norwich.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Ford, H. L. Southampton to Hull.
Laugharne, D. J., Swansea to Briton Ferry.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENT—ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Symonds, L. E., London.

RESIGNATION—ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Dodds, M., Hull.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Conway, J., Preventive Officer.
Manchip, E., Preventive Officer.
Scarlett, A. W., Waterguard Superintendent,
1st Class.

Excerpts from
"The Customs Journal,"
 November 19th, 1904.

LIVERPOOL'S NEW CUSTOM HOUSE.

It is stated that the proposal to build a New Custom House for Liverpool on the George's Dock site is likely to collapse. Now that the Dock Board are building new offices on the same site, it is suggested that, for the convenience of shipowners and merchants, the Custom House should go along with the Board to the pierhead. With the new Dock Board Offices at the foot of James Street, and the new Custom House at the foot of Water Street—such is the scheme—they would be as close to each other as they are now, under one roof in Canning Place, and the new Custom House would be enormously more convenient to the Flags than the old one is, nearly a mile away; but the whole scheme likely to be upset by the niggardliness of the Government.

In reply to a request as to what terms they would offer for the site at the foot of Water Street, the Board of Trade, as it is stated, have offered only £100,000. Now the land cost the Corporation, when they bought it from the Dock Board, £280,000.

It is valued at £30 per square yard, while the value of the site of the present Custom House in Canning Place is not more than £3 or £4 per square yard. A more liberal offer was, therefore, expected from the Government, £100,000, in fact, being considerably less than they paid for the Canning Place site, but the Board of Trade appears to be more anxious to consult their convenience than that of the commercial community of Liverpool and intimate that they are quite content to stay where they are, rather than pay more than £100,000.

Obituary.

The deepest sympathy from all his colleagues is extended to Mr. F. G. H. Smith, P.O., Bristol, in his recent sad bereavement.

On returning home from night duty he found his wife dead. The deceased lady leaves three young children.

Customs Waterguard Associations
 An Offer Worth **COUPON** Privileges to
 Accepting Members
To KENDAL & DENT
 WATCHMAKERS TO THE ADMIRALTY, &c
 Gold Medal, Paris Exhibition
 Manufacturing Goldsmiths, Wholesale Jewellers, &c
106 Cheapside, London, E.C.2.

Please send me, free of charge, a PRIVILEGE TICKET relating to your offer of Special Discount to members

Name..... Office.....
 Address

This Coupon can be posted in an envelope under ½d. stamp

Plymouth Prosecution.

An interesting and very unusual case was heard before the Plymouth magistrates on Friday, 12th November. It concerned H. Martin, Master of the "Moelfre Rose," and the unusual feature was that a conviction was obtained despite the absence of the goods forming the basis of the charge.

The "Moelfre Rose," having shipped bonded stores, left Cardiff on 5th November with coal for Morlaix. From Morlaix, she came to Plymouth to load and called at Brixham for bunkers.

The Plymouth rummage crew visited the vessel and Mr. Ross, P.O., noticed a victualling bill showing that 3 lbs. tobacco and 2,500 cigarettes had been shipped at Cardiff only six days previously. In view of the fact that no surplus stores were reported, Mr. Ross asked the master to account for the disposal of his bonded stores. The master stated that he had sold all his stock to the crew: but verification of the stores taken by each member of the crew left about 1,000 cigarettes unaccounted for. Confronted with this fact, Martin, after much prevarication, finally stated that he had thrown overboard between Brixham and Plymouth, 940 cigarettes. When it was definitely established that the master had stated at Brixham that the only stores aboard the ship were those shown on list 142, it was decided to prosecute him—the charges being evasion of duty on 940 cigarettes and destruction of the goods.

Mr. O'Flynn, Waterguard Superintendent, Plymouth, conducted the prosecution and Martin was defended. A protracted but well-fought case ended with Martin being fined double the duty-paid value, £4 3s. 6d., on the first count. The second count was withdrawn on request from the bench.

Principal credit in the case must go to Mr. Ross, P.O., for his detective work, and to Mr. O'Flynn for his conduct of a difficult case.

C.H.S.

Tyne District Topics.

The Whist Drive and Dance held under the auspices of the Tennis Club was held on the 29th October, and was a striking success.

Whist prizes, so kindly awarded by Messrs. Green, Clough, MacEnaney, Reilly and Leatherbarrow, were won as follows:—

Ladies: 1, Mrs. Forster; 2, Mrs. Clough; 3, Mrs. P. Green.

Gentlemen: 1, Mr. Stephenson; 2, Mr. W. Green; 3, Mrs. Milburn.

The lucky couple for dancing spot prizes were Mrs. P. Green and Mr. W. Green—the Greens were not so green!

As several enquiries in the nature of "When is the next to be held," were received, I am asked by the Secretary, Mr. R. West, to add that it is hoped to hold another Drive and Dance in the near future.

Bristol District Meeting.

The thick fog which enveloped the West of England, causing passenger transport by land and sea to come to a standstill on Tuesday, 2nd November, did not prevent the brave lads of Bristol from gathering from near and far to hold a Meeting at "Hurford's," Broad Quay.

Under the able chairmanship of Mr. P. W. Grinham, a very useful evening was spent. The Secretary reported the satisfactory completion of bicycle accommodation at Avonmouth, and the installation of a gas cooker. Other necessities were applied for, and instructions given.

Whitley Representatives elected were Mr. A. G. Colburn, P.O., and Mr. H. G. Glass, A.P.O. Other local items were dealt with, and when we reached "Conference Agenda" the only item discussed was A.P.O.s' leave. Opinion was expressed in favour of acceptance of the Official Side offer.

Strangely enough, the word "Re-organisation" did not pass our lips, and it was a relief not to be squabbling about "J.P.O." and "P.S. I and II." The Meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair, and members eventually all began to feel their way home.

Alas! Not all. Well, he didn't even arrive! Anyone able to give any information concerning the whereabouts of our Area Representative, who left his home at Newport about 6 p.m., and who may be wandering among the mountains of his native country, please communicate with me. Last seen at Cacrleon! F.S.

Hull Annual Dinner.

History was made at the City Hotel, Hull, on November 2nd last, when Mr. C. M. Woodford, our Inspector-General, attended the 7th Annual Dinner of the above club. This is the first time that we have had the pleasure of entertaining the head of our department at any of our functions and the Hull Staff felt highly honoured by the distinction conferred upon them. Accompanying Mr. Woodford was Mr. W. E. Kay, Inspector. Mr. C. F. Deslandes, Collector, ably filled the position of Chairman and others present included Mr. Foster, Assistant Collector; Mr. Jones, Waterguard Superintendent; Mr. Cameron, Waterguard Surveyor, and C.P.O.s of the Hull and Goole Staffs. The sister departments and the various shipping interests were also well represented. Mr. Anderton, D.C.O., proposed the toast to "The Department," to which Mr. Woodford, I.G.W., responded, whilst Mr. Cameron, W. Sur., proposed the toast to "Our Visitors," Captain Rowntree making the reply. Mr. Jones, W. Supt., gave the toast to "The Chair." During the evening, Mr. Woodford presented the Burkey Cup to Mr. Stocks, winner of the golf competition, and a trophy to Mr. Dorey to commemorate his achievement of swimming the Humber. Seeing that Mr. Kay himself was the generous donor, the club was delighted at his being able

to present, in person, a cricket bat each to Messrs. Henderson and Head, who topped the club's batting and bowling averages for last season. Our first experience of having Mr. Woodford in our midst at a social event was a very pleasurable one and we sincerely hope that this is only the forerunner of many more appearances amongst us. An excellent concert party entertained the company at intervals during the evening and Mr. Bradley (Hon. Sec.) and the club committee are to be congratulated on the excellent way in which the whole of the arrangements were carried out. R.W.B.

Swansea District Meeting.

A strongly supported District Meeting of the P.S.A. was held at Swansea on Friday, 12th November, 1937.

No question arising from the Minutes of the last meeting, the election of Officers for the ensuing year took place.

The next item on the Agenda—Annual Conference—was dealt with by the P.O. Councillor (Mr. W. J. Bottel). Dealing with the Annual Report he gave us, as the items arose, a detailed account of what had happened at the Conference. Answering numerous questions, he held the floor for the best part of the evening, and when he closed, was warmly appreciated, a vote of thanks being passed. Nothing was dealt with at the meeting arising out of the Report.

Under the heading of "Any other business," considerable and lively discussion arose on local matters, especially with regard to Office accommodation.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman—Mr. W. L. Brown.

Merseyside News.

Football. On Wednesday, 3rd November, Customs visited "Bellefield" to play Liverpool Co-op. F.C., in the 2nd round of the Jenkin Cup, and after a slow start and a one-goal lead at the interval, later assumed command, and added six goals in the second half, making a total of seven, to which Co-op. were unable to reply. Scorers were Billington (4), Abblett, Dixon and Pollock, the last named driving home a typical Pollock goal, crashed into the net from 25 yards and leaving the 'keeper helpless.

On the following Wednesday (10th inst.), we played a friendly (save the mark!) game versus Taylor's Radio F.C., which was more in the nature of a challenge match. Playing three reserves, and without unduly extending ourselves, we won by four goals to one. Scorers in this game were Dinsdale, Billington (2) and Dixon. Our centre-forward is playing on top form nowadays, and maintains his record of scoring in every match in which he has played. No further details are to hand regarding the Hull match, but no doubt the respective secretaries will be able to furnish us with something definite in time for the next issue of the Journal.

General. Dinner tickets are still in great demand and from the list of artists, the entertainment will be of high order. Claude Branston of "Pleasure on Parade" and B.B.C. fame will top the bill, and all the remaining turns will run him close in popularity. You still have a week to get your ticket, so act now!

P.S.A. subscriptions are rising, due in part to the D.O. and his collectors, making nuisances of themselves every pay-day, overtime and seizure reward receipts day, and on any other conceivable occasion.

Those requiring C. & E. diaries, please communicate with J.W.D. at the Stage and don't leave it too long. J.W.D.

London Presentation.

MR. E. S. GAWN.

The "Steam Packet," Lower Thames Street, was yet the scene of another pleasing ceremony on the evening of the 5th inst., when Mr. E. S. Gawn, late P.O., London, was made the recipient of a handsome wireless set, the gift of his old colleagues and friends.

Mr. C. R. Purser, Waterguard Superintendent, London, presided over a large gathering in which all ranks of the Waterguard were represented and amongst those assembled we were pleased to observe no less than four retired officers, namely, Messrs. B. C. White, W. H. Gosling, G. W. Gotts, and H. Page.

The opinion expressed by the numerous speakers was that Mr. Gawn was the man who did his job, was always a good governor, pal and partner, and he had endeared himself not only to his colleagues but to all nationalities. All wished him a long and happy retirement.

In accepting the wireless set, Mr. Gawn suitably replied. He wished to thank all grades for their kindness to him and with special thanks to the Launch Service from whom a telegram of congratulations was received.

A pleasant musical evening followed. Mr. Gotts not only lead the community singing, but gave a humorous turn, aided with a queer musical (?) instrument which emitted strange sounds reminiscent of a wheezy bassoon. Other artists who combined to make the evening a huge success were Messrs. W. E. Standring, C.P.O., R. A. Stocker, T. F. Griggs, P.O.s, who were assisted by "Tony" Colan, A.P.O., at the piano.

Short and Snappy.

Question 1. How are R.N.R. ratings, leaving a ship after training, treated for the purpose of the duty free concessions?

Question 2. The option of being proceeded against by summons as an alternative to being charged forthwith may be offered to responsible Officers of ships. What conditions are necessary?

Question 3. To what ratings are Landing Passes not issued?

Answers on page 281.

Neighbourly Nippits by "Nod."

Avis. (Manchester). What is a night-jar? The telephone bell ringing during the night watch.

Epicure. (Folkestone). Certainly not. Caviare is not eaten with a fork. It is usually ladled out of a tureen and eaten on a knife. All same peas.

New Salt. (Yarmouth). You only "splice the main brace" after 8 bells if you are on the 8 to 4 watch.

Neat. (Bristol). Yes, perhaps a handkerchief pocket added to our uniforms would enhance the appearance. Of course, only white silk handkerchiefs should be displayed. These would be a much more useful medium of wiping the dip-rod than drawing it under the arm as heretofore.

Rummager. (Grimsby). Yes, intuition is a fine thing. That's why I always get home early on pay day.

Electrician. (London) says that he has surreptitiously run a "live" wire from the electric light switch to the governor's metallic telephone standard. Do I think it a good joke? No, I think it's shocking.

Sage. (Dundee) writes on "Credit where credit is due." I suppose it must be right, but it is not often apparent. I look for it at the end of every month.

Naturalist. (Holyhead) says that "Already the last of the leaves have fallen fluttering to the ground—the last intimation of the winter to come." Yes, I know all about that, my wife got me to sweep up about two ton of them last week, when I was 4 to 11.

Digs. (Aberdeen). Wants to know what to do. He says that his landlady's eldest will persist in sawing wood when he is trying to sleep during the day after a night watch. Why on earth don't you learn to play the bag-pipes when you are home of an evening?

D'hotel. (London). Although the new enamelled table top is more hygienic, it strikes me as being very cold.

Eye-Strain (Southampton) thinks that daylight lamps should be fitted in the office. What's the matter with the black and white lights?

Par Avion. (Croydon). So the passenger stated in his newspaper report that a policeman went into a police station to get change? After some coppers, I expect.

Impossible Sayings (12).

"I wasn't good enough for promotion," said the failed (A)(C)P.O.

Annual Conference, 1937.

REPORT.

The feature of this Conference, apart from the unavoidable inability of Mr. C. M. Woodford, O.B.E., Inspector-General, to attend to open the proceedings, was the return to normal after the hectic meetings of the past two years, during which period the Reorganisation Scheme was being moulded into shape for presentation to the Official Side. The time given to consideration of this major item has resulted in many issues of less importance being pushed into the background and it will be seen from the following account that Councillors have now been able to focus their attention on many things that, in the usual way, would have been dealt with in a more expeditious manner.

The attendance was as follows:—

Mr. W. E. Standring (Chairman), Messrs. W. H. Powell (General Secretary), A. E. Farmer (Organising Secretary), H. L. Boalch (Assistant Secretary), P. W. Howard, J. T. Sutton, G. Abbott, I. Hill, W. B. Clayson, J. W. Dinsdale, W. J. Bottel, F. S. Lewis, S. Bradley, W. H. Taylor, R. Davies, J. N. S. Moore, R. M. Murray, A. S. MacFarlane, B. C. Reilly, N. G. Brennan, G. T. Clarke, F. S. Worner and D. T. Sutherland (Journal Editor).

Subsistence Allowance—Unattached C.P.O.s

The Council was informed that preparations were now being made to raise this matter before the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal and the Board had been requested to agree the terms of remit.

Uniform.

The ever-recurring complaint about the bad fit of white cap covers resulted in the Executive Committee being instructed to take necessary action to secure an improvement, particular reference being made to the type of cover used in the Navy.

Consideration was given to the Official Side reply to the claim for a general issue of Mackintosh Leggings and the suggestion that individual application should be made in those cases where the issue of these garments could be justified. The Council came to the conclusion that there was an urgent need for every officer to be supplied with these leggings, particularly in view of the large number of private purchases made, and agreed that the full claim be maintained.

It was also decided to take the necessary action to secure the provision of hip pockets to uniform trousers issued to A.P.O.s and thus remove the only outstanding difference, apart from the gold braid, between the uniforms of P.O.s and A.P.O.s.

Reference was made to tight-fitting uniform trousers and the difficulty experienced in obtaining concrete evidence to produce to the Official Side. It was suggested that, in many cases, these tight-fitting trousers conformed to

the specification laid down and that better results might be obtained if action was taken to secure a change in the specification itself. This course was agreed to by Council and the matter has been placed in the hands of the Executive Committee.

Complaints were also made in regard to the delay in the issue of uniforms to new entrants and here again the appropriate action was left to the Executive Committee.

Electric Torches—Attache Cases for Rummage Purposes.

In view of the fact that the reports on the experimental issue of this equipment were not complete, these items were adjourned.

Age of Retirement (Waterguard Superintendents and Inspectors).

The disagreement on the Waterguard Sectional Committee on the Staff Side claim for an earlier retiring age for Waterguard Superintendents and Inspectors gave rise to a discussion as to what further steps might be taken. It was explained that the matter would be given consideration by the Joint Committee (C. & E. Associations) and that action on the Departmental Whitley Council would be governed by the decision of that Committee.

A.P.O.s' Leave.

The Council considered the situation having regard to the recent disagreement on the Waterguard Sectional Committee and decided that every possible effort should be made to press that the full claim be conceded. In the event of failure, it was agreed that, should opportunity present itself, agreement be recorded on the Official Side offer to increase to 21 days the leave of A.P.O.s with over five years' service but safeguarding the possibility of re-opening the question of the leave of those with less than five years' service.

Mobile Crews.

Under this heading much useful information was given as to how these Mobile Crews were operating, the most useful methods to adopt for the purpose of detecting smuggling offences, and light was thrown on the varying conditions laid down for crews in different areas.

The General Secretary gave a detailed report of the discussion with the Official Side arising out of the suggestions put forward by the Staff Side as a considered view on what is admittedly a complex and difficult problem. The Council took the view that no positive action could be taken on the majority of points raised as they were mainly of administrative concern, but the possibility of an allowance for individual members of Mobile Crews should be considered by the Executive Committee with a view to making recommendations to the Council.

Reorganisation.

Councillors were informed that there had been no further developments since the issue of the Annual Report. The C.P.O. Councillors expressed the view that particular hardship would

fall on the members of their grade should there be undue delay on the part of the Official Side in dealing with this matter, and suggested appropriate action which could be taken should such a situation arise.

Deck Cargo.

The following resolution, arising out of the investigations made by a special sub-committee, set up to enquire into the subject of deck cargo in inaccessible unregistered spaces on outward bound vessels, was accepted:—

“That the Secretaries be instructed to seek the adoption by the Board of Customs and the Board of Trade of the principle of acceptance of certificates of Masters (or other responsible persons) in respect of the weight of fuel carried in inaccessible unregistered spaces on O.B. vessels and that the tonnage for Deck Cargo purposes be computed by reference to the cubic capacity per ton of the fuel. The regulations to be amended accordingly.”

Various suggestions were made by Councillors on the main points to be covered in the suggested amendments and were noted for consideration.

Area Representation.

The proposed re-distribution of the Gravesend and South Coast Areas, as outlined in the report of the Executive Committee, was accepted and the necessary amendments to the Constitution made. The two new areas are as follows:—

South East Area including Gravesend, Dover, Folkestone and Harwich.

South West Area including Southampton and Plymouth.

This re-allocation will also have the effect of slightly increasing the area from which members of the Executive Committee are drawn and the composition of that committee will now be:—

The Officers of the Association and
The London and South-Eastern Area Councillors.

The question of whether the existing Councillors for the Gravesend and South Coast Areas shall complete their normal terms of office or seek re-election has been left for the decision of the Executive Committee.

The C.P.O. Councillors gave notice of motion, for the Half-Yearly Conference, 1938, that representation on the Council, apart from the Officers of the Association, shall be equal for all grades, and requested the Executive Committee to give consideration to the application of this principle if such was adopted.

Accidents on Duty.

The detailed statement, given in the Annual Report, of the progress of negotiations on the question of the liability of masters or ship-owners to provide proper means of access to vessels received full consideration, and recommendations were made for the guidance of the Executive Committee. A further point regarding the boarding of vessels in motion was included in the instruction.

Aerodrome Staffing, Control, etc.

The Council was informed that the report of the sub-committee set up to consider the Staffing, Control, etc., of Aerodromes had been formally adopted by the Departmental Council.

Copies of this report have already been circulated to Districts.

Allocation of Part Pension.

The Executive Committee were instructed to inquire into the operation of that clause in the scheme requiring satisfactory proof of good health of retiring officials desiring to make allocation of part pension to dependants, with particular reference to the standard of health required in relation to age.

Civil Service Confederation.

The General Secretary outlined the present situation of the Civil Service Confederation, its possible break-up and, in this event, the various methods, now being considered by the C. & E. Group of Associations, whereby continuity of contact with the National Staff Side could best be maintained. In view of the present uncertainty this was not an issue upon which the Council could come to a firm decision and the existing instructions to the Executive Committee were endorsed.

Publications.

The Organising Secretary drew attention to the fact that the cost of the “Customs Journal” had steadily decreased over the past few years despite the fact that the normal issue now contained 12 pages. He gave details of a proposal, made by a well-known firm of advertising agents, to take over the whole of the advertising at a flat rate per page for an average of six pages per issue throughout the year. In addition they were prepared to supply copies of a revised Shopping List to all members free of charge. Assurance had been given that the provincial side of this new Shopping List would not be overlooked.

After some discussion authority was given to continue negotiations on both of these propositions.

It was also mentioned that the first issue of a “P.S.A. Service Diary,” having many unique features, was in course of preparation and would be available as from 1st December next at the price of 1/6d. per copy.

V.E.S.

Some concern was expressed at the deletion of the names of tutors from the application forms appearing in the “Customs Journal,” it being considered that students should have the right of selection of tutors. It was pointed out that, in the past, this system of selection had resulted in some tutors being overloaded whilst others, particularly those who were newly appointed, had difficulty in securing sufficient work to justify them in retaining the position. The interests of pupils were quite adequately safeguarded by the fact that the Committee exercised a very careful selection in the appoint-

ment of tutors and applicants could be assured that they would receive the best possible tuition from any tutor with whom they studied. It was agreed that the present system should be continued.

Financial Statement.

The Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1937, were presented by the Organising Secretary and adopted after detailed consideration.

The Executive Committee were instructed to secure details of the operation of the recent amendments to the Establishment. Instructions on the subject of deductions from salary when special leave is taken for Association purposes.

Other Resolutions.

The following items were referred to the Executive Committee for necessary action:—

1. The filling of vacancies in all grades without undue delay.
2. Heating arrangements on launches with particular reference to the safety requirements on petrol-driven launches.

Secretariat.

The possible situation arising out of the expected promotions of two of the Secretaries was discussed at some length, and it was accepted that there was no urgent need to deal with this matter before the Half-Yearly Conference, 1938.

Election of Officers.

President: Mr. W. E. Standing.
 General Secretary: Mr. W. H. Powell.
 Organising Secretary: Mr. A. E. Farmer.
 Assistant Secretary: Mr. H. L. Boalch.
 Editor, "Customs Journal": Mr. D. T. Sutherland.
 Treasurer, "Customs Journal": Mr. A. E. Farmer.
 Secretary—V.E.S.: Mr. H. L. Boalch.
 Treasurer—V.E.S.: Mr. A. E. Farmer.

Election of Representatives.

Joint Committee (C. & E. Associations)—
 Messrs. Powell, Boalch, Reilly and Farmer.
 Departmental Whitley Council—
 Messrs. Powell and Farmer.
 Civil Service Confederation Council—
 Messrs. Powell, Farmer, Abbott and Boalch.
 Suggestions Committee—
 Mr. Reilly.

Small Port Sport.

"Small Port Short," in issue of November 6th, tickled my tender spot. I remembered the time when the baby-in-arms was brought to X'port Long Room to be vaccinated!

If the worries and troubles of a regular P.O./c are amusing (to the Reader!) spare a thought for he of the big port, who manages to grab a three weeks' period of officiating about once in a decade.

Imagine the breezy confidence of his last few days at his home port. Tranquilly he regards his growing pile of "files" and quite complacently he reaches a large envelope and addresses

them to himself at Smallport. "Plenty of time there," he murmurs, fortified by a hasty scan of the Super's State of Trade returns. "Three foreign arrivals a week and scarcely any bonds."

His bag packed and impedimenta gathered ("Mustn't forget the golf clubs—plenty of time for golf."), he toddles off, tasting already the joy of an official windsor (9 to 4), while his night watch and 4/12 roll by.

On his way to the Smallport office, he regards with paternal and benevolent eye the tiny dock where a few "scufflers" are working cargo. Inside, the P.O./c. is unfeignedly glad to see him. "Gets a bit monotonous at times, I suppose," says our hero, "pottering round here?" The P.O./c. smiled enigmatically and hopes that Mr. Relief has booked digs? No, he hasn't done much golf this year. One gets into a rut, perhaps Meantime, before he goes, there are a few items which perhaps (diffidently) he might explain? Here will be the monthly returns—yes, just the usual. H'm, let's see. There's a list there covering forward dates; a few items in the Droit Book are outstanding; here is an advice for Seaman's Money Order, came in this morning; specifications and manifests are to come in for so-and-so sailings; these are awaiting Marking Notes; Discharge Book and account of wages from Southampton—he'll call for that; the "Max" has lights to pay—she's for Bremen; these men go for R.N.K. training on the 14th; here you are, cash £12 9s. 1d.; bank £40 10s. 7d.; cheque book, pass book, receipt books, etc., as per stock account. Sign there, Ta! Well, good-bye, old man. I have left my address, in case

Scene: 7 p.m. on the 31st. Mr. Relief, P.O., is surrounded by forms and books. He is slightly distraught. "Now, just the shipping return. Let's see, from Inverness to Smallport with cargo for Belfast and Dublin—that will do—where's that Vol. 5, part 5—P.Q. are U.K. ports and X.Y. are foreign. P to Q, and Q to Y (try Appendix C)—departure M—No, H—what the !! Start again. From P to Q—I wonder if I got that mortgage right. Transcript, 5/-; Deeds Book; Curtain.

Scene: A week later, Saturday morning. Mr. P.O./c. walked in. "Thought you might like to get home for the week-end," he says. "Did you get good weather for the golf?"

"Well, old man," stammers Relief, "I'm afraid there are rather a lot of odds and ends—not very well accustomed to this sort of work, you know—do you mind? These Mercantile Marine circulars. I didn't quite grasp what to do about them. Should I have advised the Inland Revenue about this transfer of registry?" *Ad infinitum*. "No! I didn't get much golf. It's darned good of you to let me away. Thanks very much—if you will attend to them. Yes, I'll be glad to get back home. I have some files to finish!"

"RELIEF."

A Slap at Apathy

This correspondent has refrained from contributing to the "Journal" for some time as he was a little "touchy" about allegations that he was using our paper for self-advertisement. But, realising that those who know him know otherwise, he hereby breaks his silence and suggests that those who think ill of people whose one desire is the betterment of the job can . . . enter the Officer Grade.

So, the subject for our discourse this week, my dear brethren, is Apathy, its Cause and Cure.

In previous correspondence I have shown concern with the apathy in the port in which I am working. An excellent port, with decent bosses and a fine sense of comradeship. But—Association matters were dead. *One* of the things done to awaken interest, as the port had a far-flung membership, was the publication of a monthly bulletin keeping the staff in touch with the latest developments. Such a move produced the inevitable facetiousness, but the reason for ceasing to circulate the bulletin was not that. Its main object was the collection of the staff's grievances and the answering of them. No grievance was forthcoming, so the wrong assumption could be made that either the staff can't write or it is satisfied—even with such an iniquitous business as the Work and Wait Rule. For this and other reasons, the editor became disheartened and decided that apathy was not merely local (compare details of subs. collected in the Financial Report with the number of staff), but was national and was not *solely the fault of the rank and file* of the Association. Evidence of this came quickly in the last Journal where, reading between the lines, it appears that apathy has reached the Council. As one Councillor told me, in a private letter, the "Conference hardly seemed worth while. It was dead and even boring at times." This may be due to the fact that the Reorganisation plan is now before the Official Side (and, if apathy had been as widespread as now, would never have been there. Some would say so much the better, but I will give odds now to any betting member that it will produce definite betterment for the Service). But there were other subjects worth consideration. The continuance of the undemocratic system of non-provincial representation, for instance. And two other topics: One, a proposal from the C.P.O. Representative that representation on the Council shall be equal for all grades. You may say that, when the C.P.O.s show that they are really interested in *our* Association, then such a cry should be raised and even then it would come more fittingly from someone who has not opposed such "counting of heads" so strenuously in the past. The other topic may seem related, but it is not so, for, whereas the C.P.O.s' complaints centre on status (that they are not paid anything like what their position demands) the A.P.O.s' grievance is one of plain bread-and-butter. There was a proposal

that something be done to obtain A.P.O. Representation at Headquarters when the Organising Secretary and Assistant Secretary are promoted. We know perfectly well that if they are lucky and are promoted to London, and can still represent us, they will represent all of us. The same would apply when the General Secretary becomes a C.P.O. But an A.P.O. should also be there. I let that sentence stand without embroidery of the usual arguments. We don't want to lose our present officers, if we can help it. What about an extra post at Headquarters to be held by an A.P.O., and called what you like—ay, Junior Assistant Secretary! There should be plenty for him to do. For instance, despite a motion at last year's conference, which was carried, that the Financial Statement should be circulated at least a month before the Conference, it and the Report were late again this time. Other documents from headquarters are delayed similarly and it is not because Headquarters are slacking. The item for Teas shows how much of their free time is devoted to our interests. They just can't do the work. Why, local branches need twice the officials even in such apathetic times as these to cope with the work and there is no such incentive to give of one's best as there is amongst those who receive honoraria. The point of an A.P.O. at Headquarters is due again at the next Conference. Bear it in mind!

One other point on apathy (though I could think of a hundred) before closing: How can we expect the new-comers to the job to be interested in the only organisation which can protect their interests when there is nothing done even to make them interested in their work? A definite course of instruction, such as the Officers, I hear, are to have is long overdue. I can think of many, including "failed" A.P.O.s, who would make excellent instructors. C.F.S. (Liverpool).

It Pays to Advertise.

Wanted, a gay, smart young gentleman, not over 35. Good-looking, medium height, not jealous—not mean—good rider, good shot, able to keep himself amused, tidy in the house; if there is no powder cupboard in the home, arrangements to be made with the local barber that all powdering of his periwig and person be done on the barber's premises. A good citizen he must be, and able to protect his wife and family from smugglers. 18th Century advertisement:—Love, Smugglers and Naval Heroes.

Short and Snappy Answers.

- Answer 1. Treated as men on leave for 7 nights or more.
- Answer 2. Provided such officers have a permanent address in this country and that their ship is not sailing shortly.
- Answer 3. R.N.R. or R.N.V.R. men whilst under training or to time-expired Naval ratings

Stronsay—a Cameo.

Situated to the east of the Orkney group Stronsay has the distinction of being the most northerly i/c port in the U.K. I might even venture to say that it is also "the youngest port in the Service" if one may use such a phrase, for it was not until 1928 that an office was built and an officer stationed permanently. Prior to that date an A.P.O. officiated during the Summer herring-fishing only, though at one time Stronsay boasted a staff of one P.O. and three A.P.O.s But those were wild days!

It would be difficult to describe the general outlook of the port, but, with all due respect to the isle of Stronsay, I rather fear that in remote times it was simply a blob of mud, pushed up from the sea by a gigantic hand placed near the centre, and allowed to bake in the sun. The centre has subsided again however, but the coast line still retains that very obvious slope towards the sea. The highest point is 150 ft. above sea-level. The population of approximately 940 is mainly engaged in farming.

It will be obvious that the writer is trying to avoid the mention of work, but I think he would be tactful if he grouped all the work together and made little mention of any particular subject. Stronsay is a fishing port boasting a week-end fleet of some 120 herring drifters. The herring season lasts from the middle of June till the middle of August, both dates being approximate. Total foreign arrivals for one year does not exceed 16 vessels. A cargo of fishing salt comes up from Torrwieja or Cagliari once, or maybe twice, each year. It is the duty of the A.P.O. i/c to take all necessary steps for the safeguarding of the Revenue, then rushing back to the office, he gets behind the counter, and adopting any disguise he may think suitable—prepares to accept the master's report, etc.

When that has been done he may pay out a dozen or so R.N.R. Retainers, rummage a few drifters, board a Swede that has arrived to cure mackerel, issue an outward clearance or examine an outward cargo of cured herrings. Work is done on an unapproved basis.

Outside the fishing season things are different. There are no foreign arrivals from August until the following June, but the most distasteful duty of all creeps in. Since there is nothing else to do all the winter it is wise to emphasise the importance of wreck-work. This bothersome and clinging disease follows one from August to June, with renewed activity about Christmas and New Year. But when one has just about had enough, one pops off to Westray on a tour of the islands under the providential provisions of B.O. 8975/26.

For your hobbies you may adopt any amount of boating and sea-fishing—in the Summer. In the Winter you must take up a handicrafts subject or a book, or if the wind is down you may

take your bicycle or your gun—and walk in circles. One looks forward to the monthly visits of the Waterguard Surveyor, the annual visits of the Collector, the Asst. Collector and the Waterguard Superintendent. Yes, I am all for supervision in small-ports, for they bring with them all the news of the larger ports and keep one in touch with the births, marriages and prospective marriages, and all the flavourings of Waterguard life in the larger ports. It is with a sinking feeling that the A.P.O. i/c bids farewell to his Supervising Officer as the "Earl Thorfinn" bears him away, to leave the A.P.O. with silent tears for another long month.

Oh, by the way, if anyone wants a good grounding in the mysteries of Unapproved Wharves, Vested and Non-vested rights, Wreck, whales, R.N.R., Registry, Mercantile Marine, Coasting Trade and Long-room work—with ample time to devote himself to Customs Regulations in general, with plenty of fresh air and fresh fish—I have great pleasure in drawing his attention to G.O. 115/33, paragraphs 11 and 12, for I heard the other day that the A.P.O. i/c, who has been officiating (haw, haw!) there since 1935, has hinted that he would like to shift to a larger port soon after the New Year. Make no mistake now, G.O. 115/33, paragraphs 11 and 12! Paragraph 13 (of course!) does not apply!

"VIKING."

Correspondence.

Sir,

Ref. Customs Journal, September 11th, page 217, in which it is stated that the Customs hail of "Ooo-oi" is said to be derived from the call of the "watchers" of the Tower calling upon French vessels to stop in the name of "Le Roy."

I have been given to understand that this cry is derived from the days of the Naval Patrol off the Kent Ports. On challenging a craft it was customary to ask who was hailing and the reply was "Q.Y." meaning Queen's Yacht. The same call, "Q.Y." was used to hail the yacht and it eventually became corrupted to "Ooo-oi."

Yours faithfully,
W.W.B.

The Editor, "Customs Journal."

Sir,

I am of the opinion that G.O. 56/29, referring to transfers in the Waterguard Service, is in need of revision.

It seems unfair that an Officer on promotion to a Waterguard port should be required to pay his own expenses if he desires a change. Take the case of an A.P.O. stationed at Southampton, promoted P.O. to a Waterguard port in Scotland or North Ireland. After a year or two he feels like gaining experience somewhere else and wishes to get back to a South England port. If he is a married man,

and has removed his furniture on promotion, the cost of removal to the new port practically puts him bankrupt.

There are many Officers stationed in ports against their better wishes. Men who feel that a change would stimulate their mental and physical powers, and who feel that new experiences gained would be of value both to themselves and to the Crown, yet they must drag on, because of the financial liability involved in a transfer at their own expense. Is it possible that Waterguard Officers could come to an agreement not to apply for a transfer to any port, unless at the Crown's expense? This arrangement would enable everybody to stand a chance of achieving his heart's desire. Otherwise, it is up to the Association to open up this question, and evolve a scheme whereby any Officer would be entitled to a transfer at the Crown's expense, after say two years at a Waterguard port.

Yours faithfully, "DYNAM."

Award?

"Relics of smuggling days were discovered at Deal, Kent, yesterday, when two dozen pairs of French white kid gloves, some 250 years old, perfectly preserved and unsoiled, were unearthed.

The discovery was made by electricians removing the flooring in a house to lay a cable."
—Daily Mail, Nov. 12th, 1937.

Watch House Yarn

Not so many years ago, an East coast port boasted a P.O. whose wiliness was a by-word. He once had to do six months available duty, which meant, very often, sitting in a retiring room in the Custom House.

One morning, when he should have been 8/4, he arrived at the office at 11 a.m. He was just hanging his hat on a hook when he heard the Super.'s voice from the doorway, "Good morning, Mr. —. Going for your lunch?"

Without a flicker, he reversed the motion, put on his hat, said, "Yes, sir, I could do with it," and walked out.
H.G.R.

FREE GIFTS FOR READERS.

Messrs. Mortons, our well-known advertisers, have just issued a large Christmas Catalogue showing a big variety of presents for children and grown-ups, as well as items for home comfort and beauty. As usual, advantageous terms are available, and customers ordering goods to the value of 10/- or more are entitled to a free gift of a 1lb. box of chocolates or a real leather cigarette case of unique design. Readers are invited to send the Coupon on front page for this helpful catalogue.

Fable.

In a certain Eastern country, lived a young man. For many years he had been Assistant to the Vizier, and he thought that he knew as much even as his chief of the intricacies of State management.

The Vizier had grown old, so that his beard fell out, and was scanty. Quoth the young man to himself, "The Vizier (may Allah smile upon him!), cannot live for ever, and who but I, his assistant, should be his successor? There is no diplomatic ruse, no subtle poison, and no soft answer that I know not, but, to refresh my memory, yet I will take a course with Vizier's Et Sultans (called V.E.S. for short)."

So the Assistant took out his papyrus and inscribed a letter. In due course the mighty seat of learning sent to him a question, which read, "What would you do if a traitor were caught poisoning the Sultan's food?" The young man smiled, and replied, "I should disembowel the traitor." After a period of time came the reply, which indicated that, before the traitor was disembowelled, he was to be questioned, fettered and fed with 1½pts. of water every four days, and 2 ozs. coffee with ¾ ozs. bread each day. After one moon he was to be led to a place 3½ furlongs distant, tied with ¾-inch hempen rope, stood facing W.S.W. for 55 minutes, and left for 2½ days in a sitting position, to repent. The whole proceeding was to be reported to the Sultan on Papyrus 458, passing first through the hands of the Caliph's Police Official and the Warrior Superintendent.

The Assistant studied earnestly for a time. Then he smote his chest and tore his beard, and cried, "By Allah, I am Not So Hot!"

Moral:—The human head is the size it looks, and generally not half the size it feels.

H.G.R.

As We See Others.

A well-known British musician, arriving in Budapest by air, was asked by the Customs if he had anything to declare.

"There are whisky, tea and cigarettes in this parcel," he said, pointing to a bulky package.

The Customs officials smiled politely.

"Go away," they said. And he went—with six bottles of whisky, 2,000 cigarettes, and two pounds of tea, duty free.

Honesty is still the best policy—especially when other people don't believe you.

"Answers," Nov. 6th, 1937.

C. and E. Rugby Club.

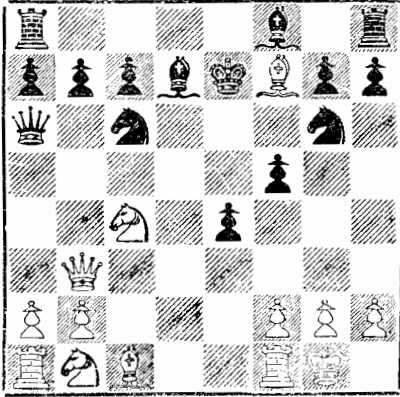
The Customs and Excise Rugby Club extends a hearty welcome to all members of the Department who are interested in the game to come along and join up.

Mr. P. Hodge, Valuation Branch, Custom House, London, E.C.3, will gladly supply all particulars.

Preventive Service Sports Club.

**CHESS SECTION.
PROBLEM No. 167***

BLACK.



WHITE.

Mate in two.

Solution to No. 166—

1. R—B8 ch., K—B2.
2. Q—B4 ch., K—K2(a).
3. R—B7 ch., K—Q1.
4. Q—Q6 ch., K—K1.
5. Q—K7 mate.

- (a) if (2) K—Kt3; (3) R×Rch, K—R4;
(4) Q—Kt5 mate.
if 2 K—Kt2; 3. Q—Kt5 ch, K—B2.
4. R—B7, K moves; 5. Q—K7 mate.

Cyclists and the N.C.U.

There has been a gratifying response to the note published in a recent issue of the "The Customs Journal" in which the Executive Committee of the P.S.S.C., announced that they had agreed to offer members of the Preventive Service Sports Club the opportunity to affiliate with the National Cyclists Union.

That everybody loves a bargain is undeniably true and for this reason above, Customs officers, whether living in London or other parts of the country, should investigate this offer.

Membership of the N.C.U. is undoubtedly a bargain—for Customs officers it is a super-bargain. The N.C.U., incidentally, was formed in 1878 to protect and foster cycling. Its membership of 55,000 comprises cyclists of all types, from professionals to the ordinary man in the street. It is the oldest and largest organisation of its kind in this country.

Ordinarily, private members of the N.C.U. pay 6/6d. a year for membership, but members of the Club are entitled to become affiliated members—benefits for private and affiliated membership are practically the same—for a fee of 2/-. That is the bargain as it applies to Waterguard officers. Now for the common sense of belonging to the N.C.U.

The first important benefit is free £1,000 insurance against claims by third parties arising out of accidents whilst riding or wheeling a cycle. Third-Party Insurance may be regarded by some as unnecessary for cyclists, but no matter how careful one is, accidents do happen and sometimes accidents happen to be the fault of the cyclist. For instance, if a cyclist knocks someone down, a claim against him may result. N.C.U. members ride light-heartedly, knowing that they are covered by insurance against such accidents.

Again, how frequently we hear of cyclists killed or injured on the roads. The interests of all such unfortunate members are always watched automatically by the Union's legal advisers, who, when the cyclist is not at fault and negligence by the other party is apparent, always take up the case for damages. Free legal advice is thus another important benefit which follows membership as a matter of course, and the record of the N.C.U. is that during the past five years £61,000 has been awarded to members through the Union's efforts. The whole of the expenses involved in cases taken up is always borne by the Union.

Free information and advice on touring at home and abroad, free Customs passes, free membership of local N.C.U. centres, special cycle insurance rates, personal insurance at specially reduced rates, the use of maps—these are some of the other benefits a cyclist secures on becoming a member of the N.C.U.

It will be seen from this very brief outline that whether one cycles for pleasure or regards a machine as cheap form of transport to and from work, N.C.U. membership is really worth while. The cycle is the most frail of all road vehicles. That is why cyclists need protection, why the N.C.U. representing cyclists has become such a powerful body. Membership costs so little and benefits are so great. And as Customs officers can become members at a cost less than the ordinary cyclist, the moral need not be printed.

One last word. There is no need to wait until the end of the year before joining. Subscriptions paid now hold good until January 1st, 1939. Get an application form, fill it in and send off to-day.

Forms can be obtained from the General Secretary, Mr. W. W. Bishop, P.S.S.C., Waterguard Office, West India Dock.

Lupton Cup.

Please note that the first round should be played off before December 31st, and the results sent together with the names of both teams immediately after the match. The second round draw cannot be made until all results are known.

Those Secretaries wishing to follow the Gravesend precedent of sending a telegram to Mr. and Mrs. Lupton should address it to them at 7, St. Mary's Avenue, London, N.3.