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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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MARCH, 1941.

MONTHLY

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CORRESPONDENCE, LITERARY MATTER, ETC.—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 monthly issue should reach the Editor on or before the 25th of the month. Articles submitted need not be typewritten, but the use of one side of the paper renders a great assistance.

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THE CUSTOMS FUND

NOTICE.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of Subscribers to the CUSTOMS ANNUITY AND BENEVOLENT FUND, INCORPORATED, will be held at ROOM 6, CUSTOM HOUSE, LONDON, E.C.3, on THURSDAY, the 17th APRIL, 1941, at Five o'clock p.m., in accordance with the provisions of Rule 23; also for the purpose of electing Three Directors and One Auditor in the place of the undermentioned Gentlemen, who, in accordance with the provisions of Rules 20 and 21, go out of office on that day, but are respectively eligible for re-election.

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Customs Fund Office,
H.M. Customs & Excise,
LONDON. 27th February, 1941.

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CHANGES IN THE STAFF TO 17th FEBRUARY, 1941.

TRANSFER.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Lucy, J., Newport (Mon.) to Liverpool.

PLYMOUTH PRESENTATION

On 8th February, on the occasion of his departure from Plymouth on transfer to Avonmouth, a presentation was made to Mr. R. Sinnott, C.P.O. The warmth of the speeches made by members of all grades—and the fact that practically the whole of the waterguard and launch staffs turned out for the occasion—was a striking tribute to his deserved popularity.

Mr. G. Stanford, Waterguard Superintendent, took the chair, and speeches were made by Messrs. Finley, Waterguard Surveyor; Goddard, C.P.O.; Pender, P.O.; Low and Clarke, A.P.O.s.; and Cook, Mate-in-Charge. Each in his own way brought out examples of Mr. Sinnott's kindness and consideration for his staff. All were agreed that we should miss him very much, particularly, as Mr. Clarke said, on the Baggage Floor, where his infallible human touch brought the friendliest of relations with passengers—even when they had to pay out large compromise penalties. A well-deserved tribute was that he knew all there was to know about controlling staffs by kindness, without advantage being taken. The natural conclusion to be drawn from all the speakers was that he was in every respect a gentleman. All wished him a safe journey, a happy landing and a safe passage through the air-raids.

The chairman then called on Mr. Stone, P.O., to make the presentation. After one of his inimitable speeches, Mr. Stone formally handed over a Parker Pen Set, and a Condiment Set for Mrs. Sinnott.

Expressing his thanks, Mr. Sinnott said how sorry he was to be leaving a port where he had served for ten happy years with congenial companions and a happy staff. He would not, he said, be leaving but for the fact that a recent severe operation had caused him to look around for a port where there would be no launch work and no Jacob's ladders to climb. He said it had always been his aim to get the best out of his staff for the ultimate good of the service, and he had found that the best way to do this was by kindly consideration and trying to understand the personalities of all those with whom he came in contact. Obviously deeply touched by the parting he wished everyone health and happiness and successful careers; and expressed the hope that the war would soon end and so open up the way to promotion for the younger men.

After the presentation the whole assembly for-gathered "up the road" to drink to Mr. Sinnott's long life and happiness.

C. H. S.

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CURRENT COMMENTS

MEMBERS will have noted that recently the issue of the "Customs Journal" has been a little later than the day of the month originally fixed for publication.

Experience has shown that to keep strictly to the first of the month would mean the shutting out of matters of interest. In particular, the report of the Departmental Council Meetings. The War Emergency Committee considered the situation, and decided that in future the publishing date should be arranged to ensure the inclusion of these reports.

COST OF LIVING

The negotiations which have been proceeding between the two sides of the National Whitley Council since the 22nd of January on the question of compensation to Civil Servants for the increased cost of living have now reached a conclusion.

The final offer authorised by the Government was as follows:—

Age.	Remuneration (without the present bonus).	New Bonus (including the existing one).	Present bonus (given for purposes of comparison).
Under 18	—	3/- per week	1/6 per week
18 and over, but under 21	—	5/- per week	2/6 per week
21 and over	Up to £250 per annum	10/- per week	5/- per week
	Over £250 and up to £350	5/- per week.	

Escalator clauses to operate upwards from the limits of £250 and £350 mentioned above.

Part-time employees to be separately considered on the lines followed last May.

Provincial differentiation in "ceilings" to be abolished.

The date of operation for overtime calculations for weekly-paid staff to be slightly later than the date for pay purposes (this for administrative convenience).

This offer had features which made the Staff Side negotiators unwilling to recommend its acceptance. The Official Side, being unable to make any further concessions to meet the Staff Side's difficulties, decided that the state of disagreement left no alternative but to take executive action. The terms of their offer have accordingly been put into operation by Government decision, with effect for pay purposes from the 1st of March, 1941.

It will be observed that, despite its unsatisfactory features, the offer, which was only forthcoming after the most strenuous efforts by the Staff Side, represents a substantial advance on the existing arrangements. It was secured notwithstanding the rejection by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the claim presented to him by a Staff Side deputation at the end of November.

WAR BONUS AND OVERTIME

The Association claim under this head is that the addition of bonus to basic salary for the purpose of deciding the appropriate flat rate of overtime to be applied to A.P.O.'s is strictly in accordance with the National Agreement. Further, that this opinion has the support of members of the National Staff Side.

The case was presented at the February meeting of the Departmental Council and, although the Official Side contended against the claim, it was eventually agreed to adjourn the item for their consideration.

It would be fairly easy for this matter to become involved especially in developing the argument that "inclusion" in this instance results in "bonus on bonus," but it is our desire and intention to keep the discussion to the simple issue, i.e., that by an agreement the rate of overtime changes at £175, and that in accordance with the National Agreement the inclusion of bonus is a legitimate means of reaching that figure.

OVERTIME ADJUSTMENTS

Six months ago it was agreed that the flat rate of overtime of A.P.O.'s should be increased by a bonus element of one penny per hour, and in O.W.O. 40/1940 it was stated that the A. & C.G. would notify Collectors of the necessary adjustments in respect of July to October, 1940. So far these adjustments have not yet been notified, and we are receiving complaints in increasing numbers.

From enquiries made we understand that the delay is due to shortage of staff in the A. & C.G.'s department, but that the calculation of the adjustments is almost complete.

WAR BONUS AND SMALL PORT ALLOWANCE

The discussion on this matter is still proceeding on the Departmental Council, as will be seen by reference to the report in this issue. In spite of the line of opposition of the Official Side we cannot help feeling that the merit of the claim of these few officers has been overshadowed by the Treasury fear of repercussions in other parts of the Service.

This new proposal of the Official Side to split the allowances for this purpose is short of the claim, but provided the apportioning is a little more generous than plain 50-50, it may form the basis of a settlement.

DEFERRED RETIREMENTS AND PROMOTION

In the recently published Appropriation Accounts for Revenue Departments, 1940, there are some interesting figures. The C. & E. Department ended the year with a surplus of Estimates over Expenditure of £100,000. The two main savings were £80,000 on Salaries, etc., of which £56,000 was due to the non-filling of vacancies, and £30,000 on Superannuation etc., which is mainly due to deferred retirements.

This saving would appear to be a splendid war economy effort, and one which reflects credit on the Department. But though the Department as a whole may take this credit we are not unmindful of the fact that the bulk of this saving is at the expense of those officers who would, but for the War, have been promoted.

This is a war of efforts and sacrifices, and everyone is expected to take their share, but it is wrong to expect a few to give in excess and to the point of hardship.

In this connection we remember those seven or eight A.P.O.'s who were successful at the last but one examination for Preventive Officership held in March, 1937. Four years of waiting for the results of long study and hard work.

Several attempts have been made to get these unfortunate colleagues promoted but without success. The question is to be raised again.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

We learn, with very sincere regret, of the serious illness of Sir John S. Sutton, and in expressing our hope for his speedy and complete recovery we know we are speaking for the whole of the Waterguard Staff.

CIVIL SERVICE WAR DISTRESS FUND

The gigantic task of organising collection of subscriptions in each of the various Government Departments is proceeding. Committees have been set up, and the scheme should be under way fairly soon. In the meantime, early claims may have to be dealt with, and one of the methods adopted to get funds to meet this was to ask every association to make a donation.

The P.S.A. has responded to this urgent call by a donation of £25 from our own little Distress Fund.

YE OLD RIVERITES

"The King's enemies notwithstanding, the Riverites shall forgather each year . . ." The 20th Annual Reunion was held on the 1st March in London, and the number present established the sincerity of that pledge carried with acclamation at a previous reunion.

Some things were, of course, different. For instance, the Dinner was replaced by Lunch, and the usual elaborated long rehearsed stage-play was replaced by the spontaneous (almost) efforts of Messrs. Flatman, Sheppard, Farmer, and others. But the absolute absence of formality and the general free-and-easy atmosphere of this war-time reunion was pleasing to us.

We were glad to see the Chairman of the Board among the guests of the Inspector-General, and also to note a fair smattering of Waterguard officers present. But as all guests must "abandon rank on entry," perhaps we should not have mentioned these things.

"Old Sko," the founder, was in the chair.

A PAST GENERAL SECRETARY

Just as we go to press we received some very sad news. It was that Mrs. Howell, wife of Mr. A. E. Howell, passed away on the 5th March.

We extend to our old friend our deepest sympathy for this tremendous blow that has fallen so suddenly upon him.

Southampton Notes

This month we open our comments with congratulations to Paddy O'Boyle upon his recent fortunate escape, when the vessel he was aboard sank after hitting a mine. Although there were several lives lost, Paddy received hand injuries, and he is now making good progress after his unpleasant experience.

Another victim of misfortune early in 1941 was our old friend, Fred Farthing, who suffered a simple but painful accident when on duty. We are glad to hear that he is now fit again. Fred sends his good wishes to you all.

You will be glad to know that the Navy is keeping Cliff Pearson in good trim. I met him not so long ago in Manchester, when he was home on leave. In spite of foggy weather, Cliff remembered his bearings, and we had a good yarn together in a well-known city joint. He sends his remembrances to the lads at home and away, and in particular to the Soton P.O., whose autograph appears on the duty slip now in Cliff's possession. A busman's holiday with a vengeance!

Cliff met Joe while he was on leave, and it is evident that the latter is also in good form, as news via Soton tells of some of his exploits in the Pompey blitz. Joe's well-known enthusiasm for any job which is going has led him into one or two tender spots, which provide the listener with many laughs. I prefer to leave the details to Joe himself when the day comes for him to give us a verbal session, complete with actions.

The news of the type of reception which some of the boys have received from the kindly folk "across the water" is as cheering to hear as it is appreciated by those who have shared their time ashore with our Canadian cousins.

Several of this month's letters tell of the well-being of the other lads in the Forces, and of chance meetings in unexpected places. No doubt the Liverpool friends of — Collins (this may be a misspelling of R. Colling), who called at the Southampton Watchhouse recently and had a yarn with some of the lads. He is keeping fit, and asks to be remembered to the boys on Merseyside. While he is in Soton he will be assured of a warm welcome whenever he has time to fraternise off duty.

News from the exiles and from Soton is favourable, apart from one of the former crowd, who was away on relief duty in the N.W. and had to put up at accommodation which was overrun with mice. Strange, but true, G.O.S. 23/40 and 33/40 suffered badly from the activities of these creatures, who not only took a liking to official stationery, but presented him with a litter (?) of five inside his personal effects before his relief ceased.

The exiles are well scattered now, and the A.P.O.s who left Soton in July, 1940, can hardly regard Merseyside as their base any more.

Our representative in Maryport (no prizes for identity guessing!) is progressing in the matter of introducing table-tennis to the local maidens and youths. His chief moan is the absence of Coca-Cola, but regular pressure is being applied to the refreshment providers, and results are expected.

Our colleagues at Swansea survived their blitz safely I am glad to say, and they are quite fit. W. P. sends news of George Haywood, now in the region of Exeter, and he who made Southampton "swimming conscious" joins in the good wishes sent to the lads in Soton and to those who are away.

Recent arrivals in Liverpool include several familiar London colleagues, whom we used to meet twice a year at the inter-port Soccer matches, and one who was with us in Soton at the time of the Coronation influx. We hope they will soon settle on Merseyside and avoid any Lupton Cup controversy!

Another exile from Hull gives us good tidings of one of our former Journal correspondents, H. L. Ford, who is fit and well settled on the East Coast.

Bert Fry, on leave as I write this, will move to Runcorn on his return, so ending what has certainly been "some tour."

Peter Ryan and Johnny Walker are now stationed at Manchester, following the latter's seven months' service at Ellesmere Port.

The home news is full of prophecy for the future, and many are the enquiries from those who think they may follow our 1940 detachment. All we can say here is that the first six months are the worst; after that you get used to it! Any tips we can pass on individually will be given when, and if, the occasion demands them.

Fire-watching and fighting is the subject of much discussion now up and down the coast. The Soton scheme has been decided upon satisfactorily, and is now in operation, with practically 100 per cent. water-guard volunteers. It is worthy of note, whilst on this topic, that, when the occasion has demanded it, the boys have done all they could, efficiently, in the matter of A.R.P. duties, as outside observers have seen, particularly in the ports which have been subjected to concentrated bombing. Although the following are only a couple among many who have "done their stuff," I record the good work put in by Bill Martin (Soton) and Bob Greenman (Swansea), because I know you will be interested.

Conscientious A.R.P. duty under heavy bombing demands just plain "guts," as also does stretcher-bearing work from 11 p.m. to noon the following day, after a 2—10 p.m. duty, whilst a "blitz" is in operation from dusk to dawn.

One or two recent letters have contained a discreet nudge or a polite moan about slight delays in receipt of this Journal, so I am passing them on as a well-earned tribute to those responsible for the publication of the "C.J." Like "Players," absence makes the heart grow fonder, and I may add that this applies not only to the "C.J." but very much to the Water-guard Department. The local distribution and despatch of the Journal is also a point to note, and several correspondents (Forces) express their appreciation to the A.P.O.s, who see to it that the Forces get their copies. I am glad to pass this on to those concerned.

A timely arrival of uniform, like other things, in a rationed state, reminds us of another old friend at Soton, Simmy, who was "in the pink" at Christmas, and is still "going strong," despite the blitz, etc.

The Civil Service Distress Fund will be assured of full Waterguard support, without doubt, and will

please those in Soton and Liverpool, who, to our knowledge, have often attempted to formulate a practical local fund with War (and Sick) Distress as its object.

Finally, since November, the P.S.A. subs. received have been conspicuous by their absence. One or two exiles have a good habit of showing practical support of the Association by enclosing a P.O. when they write to me, and I commend this method to the defaulters. The benefits received in 1939 can surely not have faded from memory already! Those "full-house" meetings we had at Quilter's in 1938 did not show any lack of interest.

Cheerio, Forces!

L. B.

REFLECTIONS

Just in my second year in the Forces and in reflective mood! The atmosphere is perfect—a dark, crisp, cold night, somewhere in England, but—miles from "my" port. Alone, except for a coke stove crackling quietly and cosily, its long, rusty pipe disappearing through the roof of the shack. There are no windows in the iron frames, but that's nothing, for I feel cosy, sunk in my greatcoat. Probably I look headless from behind, I idly reflect—if anyone were there to see me. Where I am, what my job is, what my orders are, I dare not say a word. It has been instilled into my deepest fibres that something I might say, perfectly innocuous to me, may provide some mysterious person with some little point he may want to know. I have a luxury of time on my hands! I nestle further into my greatcoat and invite my thoughts to meander. How different are things I mustn't talk about now to what I had to keep under my peaked cap before. I hadn't to tell a passenger that he was allowed to bring in ½lb. of tobacco free of duty. My eyes almost goggle when I read the Whitley "White Paper," so frankly revealing the "ins and outs" of Waterguard progress. I amuse myself picturing what an upheaval there'd be if some military matter were so printed by mistake. Perhaps I do this—albeit subconsciously—to place certain officers and N.C.O.s, of whom I have a private opinion, in the awful presence of their superiors, to watch them writhe. It's a pleasant change, anyway.

Funny thing, I'm still as much a Waterguard chap as ever, in spite of my second year in war uniform. I feel I might be picking up the threads on Monday, back with my P.O. No! not picking up the threads, for the moment I donned my Waterguard uniform—how it must be creased by now in that tight brown parcel, along with the others up there in charge of the "store-basher!" I know it will be life in the Forces that will quickly recede to an illogical and somewhat tangled set of memories. I hardly remember what my "brass" looked like on my uniform. Wonder I didn't try to polish it in peace-time! Marvellous stuff brass! Brass is to me now what those fine old "ever readys" were in the job—very important, but a damned nuisance. Wonder if I shall feel lost without my "gaspirator" and tin hat. Wish some of those fellows so eager for one could carry my "Grade 1, manganese steel" about for me.

Though I'll never know when I'll want it! Rifles and tin hats are "mother and father" to me they tell me now.

Wonder what I'll feel like when they say "you're demobbed." I shall then get a commission anyway! Wonderful things commissions! Wonder if I shall find my heart beating a little faster when confronted with an officer off a trooper. I shall probably feel the right arm itching to do "the longest way up and the shortest way down" with a profusion of "sirs." If he has a red band round his cap he'll be on a par with the I.G.W. himself. Maybe, I reflect, and really know it, I shall step right back into the old atmosphere, and take him as a matter of course. Reckon it will be with mixed feelings that I watch the first German ship come slowly alongside. Don't suppose there'll be many pictures of Hitler in the saloon! Anyway, there'll be a good rummage, on principle! Wouldn't be too difficult to get a seizure "made" if there's any stuff to be found. I recall a very pleasant dream I had as a probationer of "unearthing" twenty large deep blue packets of Dobbelman's dark shag. Bet there was a smile on my slumbering face! Away with such retrospection! I feel a bit ashamed of my sentimentality, but the quiet, the crackling stove —. Wonder how long it will be before I'm back in the job. Pity my codes are all behind again. Wonder if the war will alter them much, and if "P.O.-ship" is as far off! How those "going up" loved to say "twenty years' time" to me! Perhaps the next green book will show me well up the list, I tell myself. Still, bit early for that, maybe overseas and some "Tobbruking" before that time! Anyway, when I get back on the job I'm never going to grumble again, except to make sure my bread is fairly buttered!!

"AIRMAN."

To TOM COLLINS (a river boatman)

Still no ship for the river, Tom,
And the flow is full and plenty.
The tide has topped yon dolphin pile,
But still the berth is empty.

Tell me, Tom, in the Neptune now
Do they tak of busier days?
Drinking ale to the lonesome ship,
And the river's quiet ways.

And tell me, Tom, what have you learned,
From the brimming silent river?
Undismayed by the tricks of tide,
In patient, waiting, ever.

Many a tide she's overdue,
And many a berth to give her,
And eager eyes still looking down,
The brimming silent river.

JOHN KENNEDY.

Wisdom from the Past (18)

WHITLEY'S WAR-TIME LULL.

I have begun many things many times and have often succeeded at last. I will sit down now; the time will come when you will hear me.—*Disraeli*.

Customs and Excise Departmental Whitley Council

The two hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 26th February, 1941, the Chair being taken by Sir Wilfrid Eady, Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

Prior to the commencement of the business on the Agenda the Staff Side said that they had just heard of the illness of the Deputy Chairman, Sir John Sutton, and they would appreciate any news. The Chairman said that Sir John was likely to be away for at least a month, and the Staff Side expressed their sympathy and their hopes for a speedy and complete recovery.

Filling of Vacancies and Employment of Temporary Staff.

In reply to a question from the Staff Side, the Official Side stated that as a result of recent interviews, four appointments as Temporary Assistants filling Executive Officer posts had been offered, of which two only had become effective. The Staff Side felt convinced that the Department was particularly endowed with promotable material, that the field was by no means exhausted, and that this material was better than that afforded by Temporary Assistants. The Official Side remarked that the filling of vacancies from the Central and Supplementary Register was general service practice, and that they had already adopted all the expedients suggested by the Staff Side prior to using this method. Their recent experience might necessitate a re-examination of their position, and they would consult with the Staff Side as the situation developed. As regards the *reservation age*, there was still no information, but the matter would be before the Cabinet at an early date. The Staff Side referred to an announcement in Parliament regarding the assessment of claims for chattels under the *War Damage Bill* being performed by this Department and they thought this would make a considerable addition to the work of the Department. The Official Side said that there were few Departments with personnel widely spread throughout the country and they had felt obliged to accept the work, particularly in view of the confidence they had in Officers after their experience in handling the Purchase Tax to date. Many details had yet to be worked out, but the scheme as at present mooted visualised recommendations as to amount of compensation being reported by the Officer to the Board. The Board's approval was deemed to be necessary to cover the position of the Officer, and it was intended that locally agreed recommendations would be given immediate approval. Whether this new work would have any effect on the reservation age would depend on various factors including the Government's general policy.

The item was then re-adjourned.

Fire Prevention Order.

The Staff Side referred to the consultations which had taken place since the last meeting and which had resulted in the issue of General Order 5/41. This Order was resulting in considerable work to Collectors and Vice-Chairmen of Local Committees and they inquired if any particular difficulties had been brought to the notice of the Official Side. Where offices were shared with other occupiers it would appear that incidental expenses in connection with fire prevention should be shared. The Official Side said this was a point which would no doubt emerge in Collectors' reports and would be looked into. The Staff Side mentioned also that the night-time fire fighters at the Custom House were now reduced to two in number owing to the transfer of personnel to City Gate House. The day-time position would also become difficult when the staff now supplying fire fighters was removed. The Official Side agreed that the position was not satisfactory and the matter would be examined forthwith.

The item was re-adjourned for the Official Side.

Steel Helmets and Protective Clothing for Officials Employed in Exposed Places.

The Staff Side referred to the discussions with the Chairman which had taken place on this matter and to O.W.O. 8/1941, Part 3, which had just been published regarding a general issue of steel helmets to Civil Servants. They thought the latter would give rise to some confusion and might prejudice the priority of supplies which had been promised in the earlier discussions on the subject unless it was made clear to Collectors that the two types of issue were quite separate and distinct.

The Official Side said in regard to the O.W.O. 8/1941, Part 3, that this would not be allowed to affect the priority of supply already promised to employees in exposed places.

The item was re-adjourned.

Promotion to the Officer Grade.

The Staff Side said that this item represented implementation of their general policy on filling of vacancies in its particular application to the Officer Grade. They referred to the changes during the last twelve months in the work and conditions of the Officer Grade, the reduction of leave, relaxation of certain duties, the additional work of the Purchase Tax and the contemplated addition under the War Damage Bill. These various increases of work indicated that the time might soon come when further recruitment to the Grade would be necessary. Notwithstanding the retention of men due to retire and recall of others from retirement, the position might soon arise when promotion from lower grades or recruitment of temporary staff must be decided. In the Staff Side view, men of suitable calibre within the Department, trained Civil Servants of proved ability, would be preferable to temporary employees of doubtful and unknown ability who would require training. Furthermore, seeing that all promotions during the war period were on an acting basis in accordance with a National decision, the reversion of promotees to their former grade would be easier to accomplish than the demobilisation of temporary appointees.

The Official Side said that the question of age of any promotees would raise some difficulty in view of the reservation age of clericals and others, but the Staff Side replied that any temporary employees would necessarily have to be of advanced age. The Official Side said that they also saw difficulties in the reversion of promotees after the war, but they would take note of the Staff Side preference for promotion to posts in the Officer grade rather than the employment of temporary staff. They would consult with the Staff Side as the situation developed.

Adjourned for the Official Side.

War Bonus.

Two items under this head were discussed, the first, adjourned from last month, dealing with the *Exclusion of Small Port Allowances from the Basis of Calculation of Bonus* and the Official Side said they had given further careful consideration to what the Staff Side had said at the last meeting on this subject. They felt that it would be very difficult to bring a strong argument for the exclusion of the allowances as these were not wholly allowances in lieu of overtime. To some extent the view would be taken that this was a general Service problem. They would, however, be prepared to give the matter further consideration on the basis of a compromise that half of the allowances might be excluded. At the same time they were not sure that such a proposal would prove acceptable elsewhere.

The item was then re-adjourned for Staff Side consideration of the Official Side's proposed compromise.

The second item, a new one tabled by the Staff Side, concerned the *Effect of War Bonus upon Overtime of Assistant Preventive Officers* and the Staff Side said that a few grades in this Department, including the Assistant Preventive Officer Grade, were paid overtime on a flat rate basis, involving in this particular case a change over from a rate of 1s. 6d. to a rate of 2s. 0d., at a salary point of £175 per annum. This agreed dividing point had no significance other than entitlement to a change in overtime rate. In view of paragraph 5 of the National Agreement on War Bonus, the increase in the scale of remuneration of Assistant Preventive Officers rightly required an adjustment of the basic over-

time rates and this had been offered by the Official Side, and agreed, as 1s. 7d. and 2s. 1d., respectively. The Staff Side had assumed that in order to fulfil the terms of paragraph 5 of the National agreement the increase in remuneration would automatically be taken into account in assessing the change point figure of £175 and in this view they said they were supported by representatives on the National Staff Side; but, in effect, the Official Side appeared to deny that the increased remuneration should be so taken into account, with the result that the change point had really been advanced beyond the agreed figure of £175, and the terms of paragraph 5 of the National agreement had been consequently limited in their application. Arithmetical calculations showed that there was little material difference, but the Staff Side must press their claims as one of principle—a principle fully endorsed by the National Staff Side.

The Official Side said their information had been, at the time the increased flat rates were offered, and still was, that flat rates of overtime were not covered by the terms of paragraph 5 of the National Agreement. It was on this basis that they had come to the conclusion that an increase in the flat rates was justified, and they thought they had fully met the position of the grade affected by offering the increase of 1d. to each flat rate, leaving the classes of Officers who would get these increased rates unaffected. They would, however, give further consideration to the Staff Side claim, and said, in reply to a Staff Side request that repayment of amounts considered to be overpaid should not be asked for whilst the item was under discussion, that they would endeavour to secure favourable treatment for the Assistant Preventive Officers concerned in the matter of refund of amounts overpaid on what could only be regarded as an erroneous interpretation of the position.

Air Raid Shelters.

On resumption of discussion on the question of **Heating of Air Raid Shelters**, the Official Side intimated that as a result of the directions given to Collectors regarding this matter, it was reported that no action was necessary in twenty-one cases; that steps had been taken in six others, and that replies were not yet to hand from twelve Collectors who had been asked to expedite their replies.

The Staff Side were promised details of these, and requested a further adjournment.

Arising from discussions at the January meeting on **Shelter Accommodation at City Gate House**, the Staff Side referred to the issue, on the previous day only, of a Circular to the staff, but commented that the points raised at the previous meeting as to adequacy and position of shelter accommodation had not been covered.

The Official Side observed that the shelters at City Gate House were more than adequate for the staff likely to be employed in the building. Where any strengthening or reinforcing was required the work was being executed by the Ministry of Works. The construction of this modern building was such as to render it more secure than the Custom House, and the instructions already issued were regarded as adequate for the present, but they would be revised if circumstances rendered this necessary. As pointed out in the circular issued on the 24th instant, there would be no compulsion on the staff to go down if they wished to remain at work, and no loss of compensation for injury sustained while remaining at their place of work. It was understood that the bays reserved for military personnel at present in the building would become available on the evacuation of this personnel, which was shortly to be effected.

The item was then re-adjourned for the Official Side.

Re-Scheming, Office Accommodation, etc.

Only one local re-scheming agreement, covering Excise Stations in Southampton Collection, came up for consideration, and this was ratified.

Many office accommodation agreements were approved, and one disagreement on the surrender of accommodation in London Port was confirmed, the Staff Side supporting the disagreement on a point of principle.

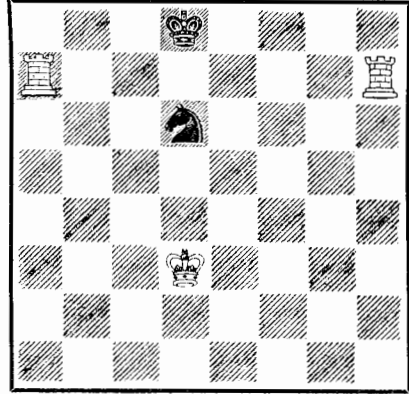
A schedule of suggestions dealt with by the Suggestions Committee was treated, and the Council decided to hold its next meeting on Wednesday, 26th March, 1941.

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C H E S S .

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(BLACK).



(WHITE).

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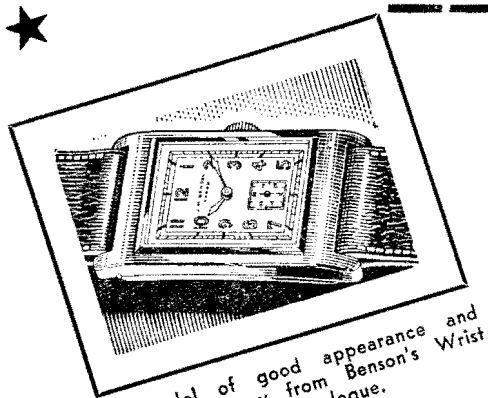
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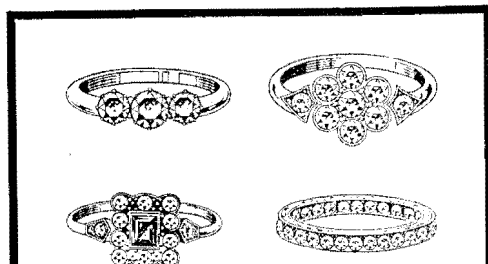
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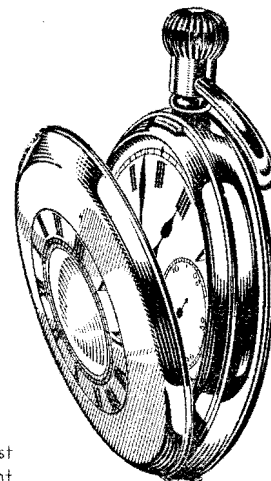


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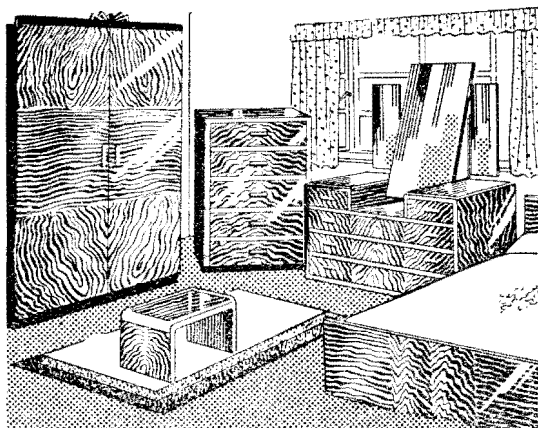
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