

THE CUSTOMS JOURNAL

OFFICIAL JOURNAL EST. 1904 CUSTOMS & EXCISE

PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

Vol. 38. No. 949.

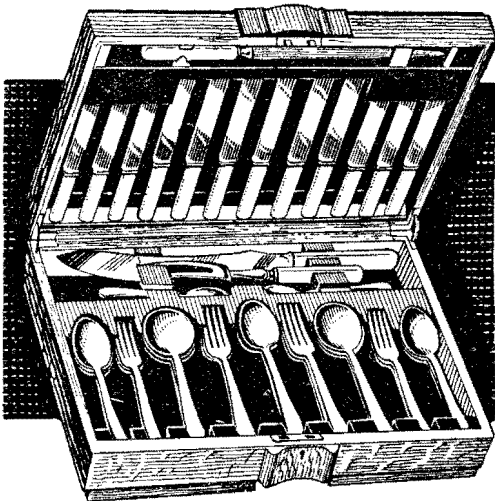
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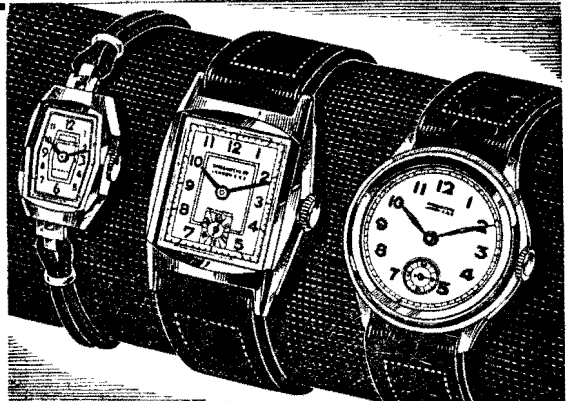
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Preventive Staff Association

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O Wad Some Power

And here I must say a word in praise of H.M. Customs officials. What soldier in these days of luxuries shortage in England would dare come home from a land of plenty like Iceland without some little surprises for those at home?

Pick any kitbag at random out of the hundreds lying around. If you don't find a couple of pairs of stockings for the wife, some American candies for the children, and some cigarettes or tobacco for father, I will be very surprised. So, I bet, would H.M. Customs be surprised.

It is not my business to inquire exactly how these courteous officials, who board the ship when she anchors, go about their business. But I do know that those I have talked to who had been on leave before were unanimous in their praise of the human attitude adopted by the Customs towards these little presents from serving men to their families.

To find something human in officialdom is like a breath of fresh air in a desert, and I am glad to be able to record it.—MARQUESS OF DONEGALL, *Sunday Dispatch*, 12/10/41.

Wisdom from the Past (25)

Prevention is better than knowing who did it.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF

to 13th October, 1941.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENT.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER.

Bridges, E. H., Sheerness, London

DEATHS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS.

Bray, P., Lydney, Newport.

Stevens, B. C., London.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Bisson, F. H., Assistant Preventive Officer.

Eagle, W. C., Preventive Officer.

Hodgkinson, G., Chief Preventive Officer, Lower Section.

Hodgkinson, J., Preventive Officer.

Kelly, J., Preventive Officer.

Ross, A., Preventive Man.

Yeal, R., Inspector, Waterguard.

OBITUARY

Mr. PHILIP BRAY, A.P.O./c, Lydney.

It was with deep regret that the staff in the Newport Collection heard that Mr. Bray had passed away after an operation.

He had been in failing health for some time but his passing came as a shock to those who knew him and had spoken to him recently.

The interment took place at Lydney on Saturday, September 20th, 1941.

The well attended funeral testified to the esteem in which Mr. Bray was held locally.

Colleagues, in uniform, from Newport, Sharpness and Chepstow attended as bearers.

Mr. C. W. Morgan, Wgd. Surv., Cardiff; Mr. A. H. Rolls, C.P.O., Newport, and Mr. Smillie, L.O., Chepstow, were in the cortège.

Representatives from the local Ship Brokers and Agents, from the Canal officials and from the British Legion were present.

The floral tributes were numerous and the service, held in the Parish Church, was simple, sincere and impressive.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the widow, son and daughter.

The son was granted army leave to attend his father's funeral.

F.S.L.

Mr. F. W. WEEKS, A.P.O., London.

With deep regret we have learnt the sad news that Mr. F. W. Weeks, A.P.O., has been reported lost while serving with H.M. Navy. Billy, as we all knew him, was liked by all, always ready and willing to give a helping hand. Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing him will realise what a pal we have lost. It appears that Billy was serving on the first Corvette to be lost this war. This Department has given yet another in the cause of freedom. To his parents and family we extend our deepest sympathy.

A.S.R.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN.

IN the March, 1941, issue we referred to the serious illness of Sir John S. Sutton, and we expressed a sincere wish for his speedy recovery.

To-day we are pleased to refer to Sir John's return to official duties, and although his recovery was far from speedy, we hope that it is complete.

MAN POWER.

In the report of the September meeting of the Departmental Council, it will be noted that discussions on this important issue are proceeding. In particular, those two outstanding items, "*cutting out of less essential work*" and "*full use of the ability and energy of the staff*," are to be the subject of joint examination by the two sides, and the Staff side have promised full co-operation.

All P.S.A. Districts have been circularised in this connection, and it is hoped from this source to secure some useful contributions to the discussions.

LEAVE.

Since our "grouse" in the last issue, much has happened under this head, and by this time members will be well aware of the advantages of the new arrangements.

Again, we thank the Official Side for their sympathetic consideration.

SUBSISTENCE—A.P.O.s.

The Association's claim that Assistant Preventive Officers should be re-classified for subsistence purposes and placed in Class "C" was tabled before the Departmental Council at the September meeting. The Staff Side presented the case and the arguments in support, and the item was adjourned for examination by the Official Side.

RANK DISTINCTIONS—A.P.O.s.

This matter, which was the subject of a disagreement on the Waterguard Sectional Committee, came up for re-argument at the last Council Meeting. There is little we can say at this stage, since the matter has been taken away by the Official Side for further consideration; but those who were present at the discussions were impressed with the Chairman's clear understanding of the reasons which prompted the claim.

WAR BONUS AND OVERTIME.

The negotiations proceeding on this matter between the Secretary of the National Staff Side and Treasury have developed to a stage at which the fact that the full benefits of the first bonus settlement had been withheld from officers on flat rates of overtime has now become an important point.

We are hopeful, indeed, that at a not too distant date we shall be in a position to report a satisfactory conclusion to this item.

UNIFORM AND COUPONS.

We learn that the coupon value of uniform clothing issued by the Government has now been decided. The number of coupons to be surrendered *each year* by those in receipt of uniforms is as follows:—

For the inner garments (jacket, vest and trousers) 9
For the outer garments (overcoat or mackintosh,
 or both) 3

As we understand the position, Waterguard Officers, to whom all these garments are issued, will have to surrender twelve coupons annually, and this irrespective of the number and type of garments issued during a particular period of twelve months.

Taking it by and large, these coupons values appear quite reasonable.

We now await developments Departmentally as to the method of application.

LIFE-SAVING GEAR.

We understand that the Board are considering the provision of additional life-saving gear on Customs launches. It is proposed that each launch shall be equipped with a number of life-saving waistcoats equivalent to the maximum number of persons now carried, and that a sufficient quantity of jacket life-lights be provided to allow one for each member of the staff who goes afloat at night. In addition, a number of lifebuoys will be fitted with a self-igniting buoyant light.

These proposals, though a couple of years overdue, are nevertheless very welcome.

C. & E. SOCIAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION.

At a General Meeting of the above Association held in London on the 14th October, it was decided that the Association be wound up at the 30th September, 1941. The reason for this move is, of course, the disappearance of the "distressed areas" as such and the discontinuance of the need for assistance.

As from the current period, deductions from salary for this purpose will cease, and we would appeal to those who were subscribers to this one-time worthy cause to consider passing on their subscriptions to one of those Service movements whose needs have not merely not disappeared, but have, indeed, increased.

May we recommend them in this order:—

C. & E. Orphans' and Widows' Fund.

Civil Service Benevolent Fund.

Civil Service War Distress Fund.

OLD "CUSTOMS' JOURNALS."

Soon after the destruction of Beer Lane, we appealed for back copies to replace those lost, and Mr. A. W. Purdye, late Deputy I.G.W., responded very generously to our call. Following on his retirement, we received a very bulky parcel of old issue Journals, all in their original covers. Each year was meticulously separated, tied with string, and finished off with a reef knot. Shades of the time when the Waterguard were more than dry dock sailors.

We are now able to give the numbers of the missing copies and in the hope that members may be prompted to emulate Mr. Purdye's example (with or without reef knots), we give them here:—

1904: 1, 2, 3. 1908: 120. 1909: 125. 1910: 158, 165. 1911: 187. 1914: 259, 263, 264, 266, 267, 268, 269. 1915: 270, 271, 291. 1916: 304, 306, 307, 309, 313, 314, 315, 317. 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921: all issues required. 1922: all issues with the *exception* of Nos. 469 to 474. 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934: all issues required.

By the way, we believe that amongst the 200-year-old archives at Whitehaven Custom House are bound volumes of our Journal from 1904 to 1912. It is understood, too, that the Customs and Excise Library can boast of possessing Volumes 1 and 2.

Museum tomes, indeed!

C. & E. National Whitley Council

The two hundred and forty-third meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 24th September, 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 Chairman extended a welcome to Sir John Sutton, on his return from his long absence on sick leave. The Vice-Chairman associated the Staff Side with the Chairman's remarks, and said they were all pleased to see Sir John looking so well.

Sir John Sutton thanked the Council for their welcome. He was pleased to be present again at the office and at the Council meeting. There was still trouble present in his foot which would necessitate care for a time, but otherwise he had been advised he had recovered.

The Vice-Chairman intimated the appointment of Mr. F. Godfrey, M.B.E., as a member of the Staff Side in place of Mr. H. Jones.

MAN POWER.

(a) The Staff Side referred to the informal discussions held prior to the issue of G.O. 32/1941, and to the Official Side's letter of 2nd August, in which the allowances for additional work in Units Stations and Women Pension Officer Stations were regarded as anomalous by comparison with the conditions applicable to general Civil Service classes. They could not admit that the conditions applicable to departmental classes were comparable to the conditions of general Civil Service classes, and consequently they could not admit the existence of any anomaly.

They felt that the question of **remuneration for extra work performed by any Customs and Excise Departmental grade** fell to be dealt with in this Council where conditions of service and salary scales for such grades had already been settled. A case existed for payment of extra work performed by these grades, and the present trend in the world of industry was to pay for extra work performed.

The Official Side said that in the matter of a 51-hour week they must see how salaries and conditions of services of Departmental grades were related to Treasury class salary scales and conditions. They felt that comparison with outside industry might be more applicable to classes who received overtime as a condition of service, but they would examine the matter.

(b) G.O. 32/41. The Staff Side said that they must still maintain their previously stated objections to the general extension of the relaxations of work originally embodied in G.O. 57/40, and now given in Appendix E., G.O. 32/41. These objections could be briefly restated under the following general heads:—

1. Relaxations of Surveys.
2. Relaxations of Scales of Visits, etc.
3. Delivery of O.A.P. Order Books.
4. Other Relaxations.

Under the first head.—Five of the relaxations of surveys concerned the control of spirits, and the Staff Side were unable to see that war conditions had given rise to any new factors which justified the abandonment of a system of control which had been arrived at after many years of experience.

Under the second head.—The Staff Side felt that as a result of constant examination of the scales of visits, etc., for packings for exportation and for process prior to the war, the resulting scales had then reached the safe limit.

As regards head three. The question of personal deliveries had also been the subject of close attention prior to the war, with the result that the Staff Side felt that the small number of personal visits then decided upon had already been minimised to the utmost limit, bearing in mind the importance of the opportunity for reinvestigation of circumstances which personal visits afforded. Generally the remaining relaxations further extenuated already close-hauled methods of revenue control.

The Official Side said that note would be taken of this statement, but the relaxations could also be considered in relation to the need for reducing less essential work.

As regards the employment of Officers on Departmental Clerical Officer work, the Staff Side said they must maintain their view that this type of employment was a negation of the spirit of the Man Power Treasury Circular.

On the calculation of the units effect of a 51-hour week for the Officer Grade, the Staff Side thought that the basis adopted by the Official Side viz.:—

1 week at 54 hours less 6 meal hours=48 hours
 1 week at 48 hours less 5 meal hours=43 hours
 Per 12 days=91 hours

Hours per annum=307×7 7/12=2,330 (approx.), was less fair than the basis adopted by the Staff Side, viz.:
 307×7½=2,300 (approx.).

They felt also that the scale of remuneration for the extra hours proposed by the Official Side was unreasonable, and would give rise to glaring anomalies in its operation, and they must still adhere to their proposal that extra allowances should be paid on all units in excess of 1980 at a rate appropriate to the overtime rate of the Officer concerned. They were not concerned with the question of cost as they believed that there was little difference on that score, but the differences in remuneration for extra work involved in the Official Side proposals as between units and time attendance Stations and as between individual Officers were both wide and undesirable. It would be most marked in cases where Officers on relief, etc., duties performed work in both types of Station.

Similar Staff Side objections existed in regard to the 51-hour week basis for Women Pension Officers upon which their calculations gave a figure of 1,200 units as against the Official Side figure of 1,225. The Official Side scale of remuneration was also objectionable in that it took no account of the fact that the majority of Women Pension Officers were at the maximum of their salary scale, and the Staff Side must adhere to their formula that payment should be made in excess of 1,200 equivalents on the following scale:—

1,201 - 1,300	...	...	...	£30
1,301 - 1,400	...	...	...	£60
1,401 - 1,500	...	...	...	£90

The Official Side said that they felt it would be profitless to pursue the question of the close relation of allowances to overtime rates in units Stations, but they felt that their scheme would obviate many difficulties in the practical working of a 51-hour week, and that on balance it was reasonably fair. They must, therefore, adhere to that scheme, and also to the related scheme covering Woman Pension Officer Stations.

With reference to the Purchase Tax verification unit adopted for the purpose of this General Order, the Staff Side objected to the adoption of a fixed unit for this work on a revenue basis, and they still believed that treatment under Schedule 2 of the Rescheming Instructions was the only fair basis of assessment. Recent developments and changes in this work and in War Damage work had served to strengthen their view that a fixed unit was not reasonable at present.

The Official Side said that they would take note of the Staff Side points relating to Purchase Tax work, but it must be remembered that the unit at present in dispute was for the purposes of G.O. 32/41 only.

The Council then recorded disagreements on G.O. 32/41 as under:—

Paragraph 7.—Disagreement on the employment of Officers on Departmental Clerical Officer duties.

Paragraph 10.—Disagreement on the standard unit of 2,330.

Paragraph 11.—Disagreement on the general application of the relaxations authorised under General Order 57/40 (now incorporated in Appendix E of General Order 32/41).

Paragraph 15.—Disagreement on the unit for Purchase Tax verification work.

Paragraph 23.—Disagreement on this paragraph covering both the rates of payment and the limitation of payment to Stations where the net units exceed 2030.

(Note: This involves disagreement on the figure of 2,030 throughout the General Order.)

Paragraph 26.—Disagreement on this paragraph covering both the rates of payment and the limitation of payment to Women Pension Officer Stations where the net equivalents exceed 1,225.

(Note: This involves disagreement on the figure of 1,225 throughout the General Order.)

(c) *Para. 2 of T.C. 10/41 sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii).*

The Staff Side said that they were desirous of knowing the Official Side intentions with regard to the implementation of sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) of paragraph 2 of T.C. 10/41, covering (i) the cutting out of less essential work and (ii) making full use of the ability and energy of every member of the staff. They felt there was scope for an investigation in which they would do their share of the considerable work involved if they could be assured it would be a task made common to both sides by means of discussion. They had given this assurance to the Treasury Liaison Officer.

The Official Side said they had always wanted the co-operation of the Staff in the elimination of unessential work and in the full use of the Staff. This could be most profitably done, as the Staff Side had suggested, by joint examination of specific proposals. As the Staff Side would collect such proposals, the Official Side would do the same, and when both

parties were ready, the form of the joint machinery could be discussed in the light of the types of proposal received—e.g., whether separate discussions should be held on Headquarters and Outdoor Service proposals. The Official Side were already examining some proposals, but added that in their opinion war conditions precluded any major adjustments in Departmental staffing.

(d) *T.C. 13/41.—Interim Report of Kennet Committee.*

In reply to a Staff Side question as to the Official Side intentions with regard to Treasury Circular 13/41, implementing the Interim Report of the Kennet Committee on reservation ages in the Civil Service the Official Side said that they had not yet reached their conclusions, and they would welcome assistance from the Staff Side. The Staff Side said they were willing to co-operate in dealing with this matter.

(e) *Winter Attendance Arrangements.*

In reply to a Staff Side question the Official Side said they had not yet received Treasury Instructions on winter attendance arrangements, but in this connection, and quite generally, they had in mind the necessary consideration of the work and the method of its performance in this Department, in relation to work and methods of performance in other Departments. There had already been a considerable number of transfers to other Departments, and it would now be necessary to check further transfers to ensure the proper performance of the work in this Department under winter attendance conditions.

PETROL ECONOMY.

The Staff Side said they had been ready since the beginning of the month for consultation on this item. The Official Side said their inquiries had only recently been completed. Whilst work had not been allowed to accumulate owing to the efforts of the staff, it was appreciated that difficulties existed in some places, and it had appeared that a greater use had been made of private petrol rations than seemed fair. It appeared, therefore, that there was a case for approaching the Petroleum Department for some modification of the reduction hitherto requested. Informal consultation on the subject would be arranged forthwith and the item was readjourned therefor.

FIRE PREVENTION ORDER.

The Council had information of a further scheme working on a "voluntary compulsory" basis, and the Official Side said there had been a recent development in the control of fire-prevention schemes in dock areas, whereby the Ministry of Transport had become the general authority for those areas, but no material modification of existing fire watching schemes was anticipated.

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF PORTSMOUTH AND SOUTHAMPTON COLLECTIONS.

The Staff Side did not consider that the present was a suitable time to effect the amalgamation of these two Collections. Portsmouth was an important place in war-time, and they were apprehensive that the amalgamation would involve a reduction in the Controlling Grade and of higher posts in the Departmental Clerical Class. The Official Side said that there were other naval ports which were not the seat of a Collection. The Staff Side were not aware of any material decrease in the work at Portsmouth and

asked that the proposed amalgamation might be further considered.

The Official Side suggested an informal discussion on the matter and the item was accordingly adjourned.

FILLING OF VACANCIES AND EMPLOYMENT OF TEMPORARY STAFF.

This item was readjourned at the request of the Staff Side.

STANDARD SUBSISTENCE RATES. STAFF SIDE PROPOSAL THAT ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS BE PLACED IN CLASS C (Establishment Instructions, Volume 3, paragraph 54.)

The Staff Side observed that for some time past Preventive Officers and Assistant Preventive Officers had been entitled for certain periods to the same detention rate of subsistence, but now, after the first month, the Assistant Preventive Officers' rate was lower than the Preventive Officers'. When the Class F' rates were approved the Assistant Preventive Officers' salary maximum was £150 and the Preventive Officers' maximum £250, and the Preventive Officers were then granted Class C rates. The Assistant Preventive Officers were now on a scale £130—£250, and their subsistence rates were lower than those of all the temporary clerical grades in the Department.

The Official Side promised consideration of the Staff Side's proposal, and the item was adjourned.

PURCHASE TAX VERIFICATION.

The Staff Side referred to discussions which had taken place since the last Council meeting. Two of the Sections in the draft General Order had for the present been deferred, i.e., the transfer of certain traders to Purchase Tax Centres, and the verification of accounts of multiple traders.

The third section of the draft had since been agreed and published (G.O. 40/41), but disagreement had been expressed as regards joint visits to traders by members of the special verification staff and of Headquarters Offices, and also as regards the control of the work by members of the Chief Inspector's Office.

The Official Side maintained their attitude on these points, but indicated that some modification could be made if experience showed it to be necessary.

Disagreement was recorded on the two points in question, and the item was re-adjourned.

PROMOTION, TRANSFER AND RECRUITMENT QUESTIONS.

(a) *Promotion to the Officer Grade.*

The Staff Side referred to the difficulties emphasised by the Official Side at the last meeting involved by reversion if promotion to acting posts were not later on made substantive, but observed that such reversions from appointments to the Officer Grade were no different from other acting appointments and were common to the Civil Service generally. Such promotions must be governed by the National agreement on promotions during war-time. The Official Side said that, if a number of promotions were made and later resulted in reversion, the human element would have to be taken into account. They agreed that this factor was common to all promotions, but its importance justified repetition. Reversion in this case would

mean a change of class and prospects as well as of salary, and disappointment would be inevitable.

At the suggestion of the Staff Side the item was re-adjourned.

(b) *Appointees under paragraph 39 of the Reorganisation Report of 1920—Limitation of Period of Service to two years.*

The Staff Side referred to paragraph 39 of the 1920 Report, and instanced cases of Higher Clerical Officers who had been employed under the conditions of that paragraph for a number of years. They were of opinion that promotion should be given to these appointees at the end of two years, or that they should be reverted to Higher Clerical Officer after the expiration of this period, which was, in their opinion, sufficiently long to determine their fitness for promotion.

The Official Side said that whilst they agreed that the fitness of each individual for general executive duties should be clearly established after two years, it was inevitable that their claims for promotion to Higher Executive Officer fell to be determined in the same way as those of the Executive Officer. Questions of relative seniority were involved, and moreover it was not clear whether the Staff Side wanted to close at the end of two years, in the case of Higher Clerical Officers who were left in Executive duties, any avenue of advancement in the Clerical complement.

The matter was adjourned for the Staff Side to review.

(c) *Promotion of Sub-Clerical Grades to Clerical Officer Posts (Treasury and Departmental).*

The Staff Side proposed that in view of the number of years of established service performed by senior members of the sub-clerical grades, and the vacancies for Clerical Officers occurring in other Departments, promotion of eligible members of these grades should be proceeded with, any redundancy in the Clerical Grade (Treasury and/or Departmental) being met by transfers to other Departments, and any shortage in the sub-clerical grades being met by recruitment or transfer from other Departments of temporary staff.

The Official Side said that it was not possible to make promotions in advance of vacancies and inquired, in as far as movements of staff might be practicable, which of the two alternatives that appeared possible, i.e., the transfer of clericals and moving up of sub-clericals or transferring the sub-clericals, was preferable to the Staff Side. The Staff Side preferred the former. The Official Side said that while they could not adopt the terms of the Staff Side proposal, they thought that it would shortly be possible to fill some clerical vacancies, and indicated that a number of departmental promotions from sub-clerical grades were probable at an early date.

The item was adjourned.

(d) *Promotion of Established Paperkeepers to the Clerical Class.*

In reply to a Staff Side inquiry the Official Side said that the 1938 agreement, viz., to consider Established Paperkeepers exceptionally for promotion to the Clerical Class had been implemented, and that further consideration would be given to the matter in connection with any promotions under the previous item (c).

The item was adjourned.

(e) *Avenue of Promotion to the Clerical Class for the Grades of Principal Warehouseman and Warehouseman.*

The Staff Side referred to a meeting on the 12th June, 1941, of Emergency Committee A, at which discussions took place regarding the promotion of, and appointments for, minor grades generally. In this connection they felt that a case existed for the creation of an avenue of promotion to the Clerical Class for the grades of Principal Warehouseman and Warehouseman, and in addition the normal promotion prospects of these grades were poor. The Official Side said they had received no general instruction to Departments arising from the discussions referred to, but on the understanding that these promotions would be exceptional on the same lines as in the case of Established Paperkeepers (Item (d)), they were prepared to consider suitable cases as a war-time measure. Any resulting promotions would, of course, be on an acting basis, and there would be a trial period of six months with liability to reversion.

(f) *Recruitment to the Treasury Clerical Class Grade III of Unestablished Paperkeepers and Unestablished Messengers.*

The Staff Side said this claim also arose from the National discussions referred to under item (e), and their claim was restricted to recruitment to the Temporary Clerical Class Grade III of those Unestablished Paperkeepers and Unestablished Messengers who desired such appointments. They understood that the men desiring such appointments were few in number, and in reply to an Official Side question said they appreciated that the posts held by these men were quasi-permanent posts, whereas a risk of loss of employment was involved in the Temporary Clerical Class Grade III, and difficulty might arise as to reversion if the vacated Unestablished Paperkeeper and Messenger posts were filled. Subject to this the Official Side said they were prepared to consider suitably qualified Unestablished Paperkeepers and Unestablished Messengers for transfer to Temporary Clerical posts.

(g) *Recruitment to the Unestablished Paperkeeper Grade of the Packer Grade (Stores Branch).*

The Staff Side said this item also followed from the National discussions, and the proposal was limited to the Packers desiring such a change.

The Official Side said that the normal field of selection for the Unestablished Paperkeeper posts was the Unestablished Messenger grade, and they proposed that this should remain the position; but as a war-time measure they were prepared to consider exceptionally the transfer of members of the Packer Grade to fill vacancies of Unestablished Paperkeeper in London.

(h) *Launch Service—Retention beyond normal retiring age of established personnel.*

The Staff Side drew attention to the risk of hardship resulting in the Launch Service from the retention of a number of established men beyond the normal retirement age. A number of unestablished Deckhands and Stoker Deckhands who would normally be eligible for appointment to established posts were

approaching the age of fifty years and would be debarred from establishment. The Official Side promised investigation of a special case of retention of an unestablished man beyond the age of 65 quoted by the Staff Side, and said they would give consideration to the matter generally as they agreed that the factor of deprivation of establishment merited special attention.

(i) *Promotion Procedure.*

The Council adopted the final report of an ad hoc Committee on this subject embodying agreements, already implemented, on the application of promotion procedure to posts with salaries rising to £1,100 per annum and on the forwarding to other Departments of annual reports on transferred officials. A disagreement on a Staff side proposal to set up an Appeal Panel was also embodied in the report.

UNIFORM RANK DISTINCTIONS FOR ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS.

The Staff Side in re-arguing a disagreement reached in the Waterguard Sectional Committee pressed for a reconsideration of the arguments advanced in Committee. Since the war the lack of a rank distinguishing mark had been a disadvantage to the Assistant Preventive Officers vis-a-vis the Naval personnel, merchant seamen, and other persons with whom they were in regular contact. Other officials in similar contact were provided with rank distinctions, and as Assistant Preventive Officers were not always working with Preventive Officers in larger ports, and were in fact in charge at small ports they had found them increasingly desirable both for the efficient performance of their work and for the prestige of the Department.

The Official Side observed that the naval curl requested was not appropriate to personnel not supervising other junior staff and they thought that the consequential alteration of the Preventive Officers' uniform would complicate the already difficult questions of supply and cost of gold braid. They would re-examine the matter with the view of avoiding this complication, but they thought that a more satisfactory solution would be possible if the question were left for treatment at a more timely date in the future.

The item was adjourned.

RESCHERING AND METHODS OF WORK.

An agreement was ratified from the Waterguard Sectional Committee covering the formation at certain ports of self-contained groups of Chief Preventive Officers for leave, sickness, etc. Three local staffing agreements were confirmed, but one was referred back for further local consideration, whilst the fifth was adjourned. Three local disagreements were also dealt with, one by reference back to the local Committee and two by confirmation. The Official Side promised enquiry into a Staff Side complaint on the local implementation of one disagreement whilst still under discussion.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Council approved a revised scale of leave for Warehousemen (Stores Branch), and dealt with a schedule of suggestions covered by the Suggestions Committee.

It was decided to hold the next meeting on Wednesday, 22nd October, 1941.

The Lads o' London

I have been literally inundated with letters from colleagues in the Forces this month, so one is restricted, therefore, by reason of space, to mentioning just a brief word about each of them. The outstanding feature in all of their letters is this: each correspondent, be he officer or man, is looking forward to the day when he will once again don the Waterguard uniform (in spite of all its imperfections) and be in his place ready to perform his allotted duties. They evidently love the job, and enjoy working with us, and we who are still in the department look forward to their return.

Several of the lads have not seen a copy of the "Journal" since they joined the Forces, but arrangements have now been made for them to receive one each month. If any reader of this column is expecting to be called up in the near future, before you leave your civil situation send your name and permanent home address to the Editor, who will arrange for you to have copies sent directly from the printer to your homes.

Now for some news, and proceeding alphabetically, Sub-Lieut. Jimmy Ayton, R.N.V.R., writes:—"I saw Micky Meyers and George Bain in the West India Dock when my ship docked there some time ago." He then went on to H.M.S. "King Alfred" for a course of training, and received his commission shortly after. He has just enjoyed a brief spell of leave at his home in Londonderry.

Llew. Barnes was married in April last. He is a cadet in the Royal Navy, and is now in Alexandria. Best wishes to you and the wife, Llew.

Ben Buttle is undergoing a course of massage training at Netley, Hants, and expects to go overseas early in the New Year. He told me of how he heard a Norwegian skipper and steward talking in an inn one evening, and after whispering the magic word "skoll" to them, found that he and his three Service companions had enough liquid refreshment offered them for a month!

Alan Bee rang me up early in the month and explained how he had missed a draft to India. Stationed now in Lincolnshire in the Signal Corps, he is seeking a transfer to the Field Security Police. His many friends can have his full address from me upon application.

Wally Blake is a prisoner of war in Germany, and is now quite well, although at first he was very ill.

Jack Bushell is a L/Bdr. somewhere on the South Coast, and is in the R.A.s. Jack married last year, and we send him and his good lady our belated congratulations. Harry Chivers, a corporal-instructor in the R.A.C., sends his kind regards to all, and said: "I am having quite a good time."

Ted Crowther has seen some of the detached officers from London in the Orkneys. He would like to hear from Bob Douglas, Alec Gerrie, and Cecil Johnson. So would I, gentlemen. Ted is the only one of our lads in the Marines.

Frank Dowdell writes in a cheerful strain. He has reason to do so, as he has just left the Infantry (East Surreys) and gone into the Signal Corps. He had the brazen temerity to say " 'Twould do you no end of good, Bob, to be in the P.B.I."

Jimmy Dunn sailed overseas some time ago, and I am awaiting news of him at his new station.

Max Dunstone, who was loaned to Stranraer last October, became an A.B. in the Navy, and Harry Farren is having the time of his life in the Emerald Isle.

Mark Flynn sails the seas in a destroyer. He chose the right service—the "silent service."

Ken. Ford's father informed me that Ken. is a gunner-signaller in the R.H.A.s, and his headquarters are in Surrey.

Lawrence Fozard has also joined the Navy, and is training to be a telegraphist in a Gloucestershire camp.

Fred Harvey, the now proud father of a bonny baby son—congratulations, Fred!—has toured Essex since the war began. No word has been received by him from anyone in the service for two years. It would be a good idea if some London officers would drop a line to chaps like him now and again.

Sub-Lieut. Freddie Kippin shamefully informed me that he cannot remember me! He can recollect somebody relieving Charlie Stocker in the West India Dock office last year, but what my face (incidentally it is my only fortune!) looked like he cannot remember. He met Jack Sides up North, and Freddie has a Southampton colleague serving in the same ship as himself (H.M.S. "Trelawney"), and Stan Roberts is the Southampton lad.

John Lamble and Eric Langton wrote from Yorkshire, and, strangely enough, are 2nd Lieuts. in the same battalion of the Royal Tank Regt. Neither mentioned that fact to me in their letters, and I wonder if they are aware of it now! John was married in Liverpool on the 4th inst., and promised to call in, but no doubt was prevented by a very good reason.

John McKenzie, true to his Scottish ancestry, has found his way into the Scottish Horse Division of the R.A.s. He is a bombardier.

Harry Newlyn has been touring the country at the Crown's expense, and is learning how to tap out the V call on the old buzzer. He is hoping to return to K.G.V. Dock before long, and sends his best wishes to all.

Signaller George Pearce, who told of his stay in Stornoway until June of this year, mentioned that after paying the cost of the journey of his wife and himself back to Aberdeen, was called up in July, and he is now in Huddersfield.

I have heard from Joe Thompson's mother that he is on his way overseas. An A/C 1 in the R.A.F., he received his promotion some time ago. As soon as any news is received of him it will be passed on to those interested.

Second Lieut. Stan. Wandless, remembered for his active life—he was always doing something out of the ordinary—'phoned and said that he is about to become a para-trooper. Stan., who is in the Argyll and Sutherland Highland Regt., occasionally wears a kilt, and the Editor, who is a Sutherland, is looking forward to having your kilt after use, Stan., so look after same!

Sergeant Cyril Warner asked, "Who have Commissions?" I gathered he is about to offer his services as

a batman. He wants to be remembered to Ted Ray, Wally Eldridge, and Bob Elton. He can just about accommodate himself inside a Bren gun carrier. Carry on, Sergeant!

Ted Waters, who, like Wally Blake, is a prisoner-of-war in Germany, related his capture thus:—"I was driving along a country road when I suddenly came to a slight obstruction in the road. I was very tired at the time, it was 5 a.m., and after opening my eyes a little wider found that the obstruction consisted of 25 tanks, 7 machine gun nests, and a large number of polite gentlemen, who asked me if I would like to see Germany." He now sings at camp concerts in Stalag XXI, B.

Little Alec Wheatley is employed at an Army School of Cooking, in Essex, and if he does well and gets his "tea-maker's certificate," he will be appointed assistant to Chef George Baldwin, at Surrey Dock, after the war is over.

Well, that completes the list so far, except for the tragic news of the loss of our friend and colleague, Bill Weeks. The staff will have already seen the announcement of his death in an O.W.O. Bill was lost at sea. We shall miss a good colleague and a pal who, wherever he went, endeavoured to cast rays of happiness. His loss (Harold Brumell's was the first) is the second that London has sustained. Our thoughts are with his parents at this time.

Mr. George Camburn is the secretary-treasurer of the London Prisoner-of-War Comforts Fund, and has sent parcels of cigarettes, etc., to Ted Waters and Wally Blake. It has been established that they have each received one parcel and have written expressing their gratitude. Mr. Camburn would be grateful for a "few bob" from London Officers who are on detached duty. All contributions will be acknowledged, and should be sent to King George V Dock, London, E.16.

We have learned with sorrow, too, of the deaths of George Crabb, who was for so many years ship-keeper at the Harpy, and of Bert Stevens, late of K.G.V. Dock.

Let's hear from you, then.

Till the lights of London shine again.

R. J. L.

Merseyside News

There is some news of three of our Liverpool colleagues now serving with the Forces, and even if several of us do not recollect them, their good wishes are ours. Many of us recall wee Donald Fraser, who is now officiating in one of our minesweepers somewhere in the South, and who is doing well, and perfectly happy.

Another of our ex-A.P.O.s is Jim Thompson, now stationed in the Midlands. Jim was never a chap very much aligned to humour, but he tells me that in his department he sees many smiling faces in his presence on a certain day of the week. Work it out, my comrades! Our third ex-colleague, Charlie Webster, writes from somewhere in South Africa, where he is convalescing from serious leg wounds sustained by hand grenades. Charlie was for three months a prisoner of war in Italian hands, and after being released without the latter's permission, he ran

into this slice of bad luck. It may be that he will never be the strong and virile chap we knew once, but our hopes for his complete recovery have been conveyed to him. I, for my part, sincerely hope that after the sordid business is over and done with, I may be privileged to rummage an Italian vessel with our dear Irish friend.

There are so many seizures, big and small, happening these days that they cannot all be recorded in this column, but those seizures most outstanding deserve full notice and attention.

There is one case that provided much excitement. The vessel concerned was the m/v "Pacific Explorer," which arrived in Liverpool from an American port. There was quite a goodly supply of contraband, comprising:—

- 6,400 (No.) cigarettes.
- 3 lb. o.s. tobacco
- 4 10/16 lb. cav. tobacco
- 15 pairs silk stockings.
- 5 mechanical lighters.

The following items were also discovered, but, unfortunately, no owners could be verified:—

- 1 lb. cav. tobacco.
- 4,100 (No.) cigarettes
- ½ lb. o.s. tobacco.
- 1 revolver.

These goods, and also those mentioned previously, were found in the engine room generally, in places which every good and workmanlike rummaging officer knows only too well.

The investigation was carried out by Mr. Annis, C.P.O., who settled a very difficult case most admirably. The total deposits amounted to £103 4s. 3d., the offenders being three engineers, who, besides being culprits, were also responsible officers. The successful rummage crew were Mr. R. W. Merchant, P.O., and Messrs. Wardell, Ralph, Hill and Howe, A.P.O.s. E.G.H.

Gravesend Meeting

At a General Meeting held in the Custom House on September 22nd, the following officials were elected for the ensuing year:

Chairman—Mr. Wall (Erith).

Vice-Chairman—Mr. Ramsay.

District Organiser—Mr. Smith.

District Secretary—Mr. Churck.

P.O. Whitley Representative—Mr. Reilly.

A.P.O. Whitley Representatives—

Mr. Wall.

Mr. Churck.

A.P.O. Local Whitley Representatives—

Mr. Bush.

Mr. Hill (Chatham).

Journal Correspondent—Mr. Churck.

The meeting was poorly attended, only eleven members being present. It is hoped that better support will be given on future occasions. The staff send their best wishes to all old colleagues serving at other ports, and to our chums in the Forces. We have had the pleasure of a visit from Henry Hall, recently returned from Canada, looking well after his long journey

E. A. C.

Southampton Notes

During September our Maryport representative, Jack Welsh, received the expected calling-up papers, but some misunderstanding has arisen over his ultimate vocation in one of the three Services. As we go to press Jack is with the Waterguard, but will probably be otherwise engaged when this issue of the "C.J." reaches you. News from many quarters is good, and we are glad to know that Johnnie Walker has already made progress in collecting his first stripe. The new life suits him very well, and he is evidently in good form.

We hear that Jimmy (D.B.) James was seen recently in Liverpool, and that he is in good trim.

News of D.P.H. and Twenty tells of their well-being in different quarters of the globe; the former completing his training in Canada, and the latter doing the same in the land of the Springboks.

The last time we heard from Steve Goodyear was during his early training with the 10th Hussars, but last week news was received, indirectly, of his activities under the heading of the Intelligence Corps, somewhere in the South, where he is apparently quite fit and is performing baggage examination duties (inward) (in the regrettable absence of sufficient Waterguard Staff!) We knew that Steve had a preference for the original F.S.P., but when he went to the 10th H., we thought he had missed the boat.

A chance meeting in Manchester recently, solved the puzzle as to the whereabouts of George Haywood, who is now training as a R.A.F. Navigator. George was home on seven days' leave early in September, and very fit he appeared to be with a slight increase in his fighting weight since last we saw him in Southampton. His address is available for those who are interested.

I fancy the exiles must have been leaning upon the laurels handed out by H.G.R. in August, as news of them is in sharp contrast to that of the Forces this month, inasmuch as it is entirely lacking apart from the knowledge of those in Greenock, Liverpool and Manchester, all of whom are A.I. You will be pleased to hear of our old friend, A. C. Hobbs, now A.B. Hobbs, on Clydeside, and recently in the company of Colin Mac and Jimmy Agnew. This news comes from Jimmy, who is recovering steadily, albeit impatiently, together with the news that Joe has left Clydeside. No details available. Home news is interesting when supplemented by personal contact, and recent leave visits have been enjoyed.

George C. has had the anticipated operation, and he is, to the best of our knowledge, getting over the after-effects fairly satisfactorily. The staff remain well, and many were the inquiries after men who have been long absent from 29th Berth. Current items under discussion when there were (a) Fire-watching (a fashionable subject in many places!) (b) coupons for uniforms? (c) Post-war traffic and staffing, and last but decidedly not least, our perennial friend, Rotation of Duties.

Shades of Quilters and Yesteryear!

An old cliché says: "it will all come out in the wash," and several weeks ago, 6,000 cigarettes did come out in the washing, close by the Old Watch House, much to the interest of Messrs. Worner and Oliver, who ironed out the case pretty thoroughly by collecting a further 8,000 cigarettes at the residence of this businesslike laundryman. The prosecution which followed this gentleman's activities resulted in two persons being fined £50 each on the former quantity, and one of them an additional £75 on the latter quantity, plus a deposit of £10 on his van. That will take some working off (nearly wrote washing out) at three-bob-a-dozen, methinks!

A more recent prosecution, which brings Poole into the news again, was preceded by some quick work by Bill Pugh, whose nostrils were attracted by the odour of burning paraffin, from a stationary lorry outside the Custom House. A Southern Press report tells of the Court proceedings, which resulted in a Father and Son being fined £10 each, plus £3 7s. costs for mixing paraffin with petrol. Nice work if you can smell it!

Cheerio, Forces!

L.B.

"Sunderland Calling"

Hello, Forces!

Sorry I haven't much news for you this month. Charlie Scorfe hopes to be on leave on the 10th. I hear he had an argument with his motor-cycle; the bike won, and Charles was minus slacks and a boot; fortunately he was unhurt.

No news of Eddie Ladbrook, though I have reason to believe he has been enjoying a spot of leave. Hurry up that letter, Eddie.

Since asking for news of Ron Greenhalgh, we have had another of his cheery letters. Congratulations on the L.A.C., Ron. Happy landings!

I hear Brian Horn is undergoing a Junior N.C.O.'s Course. Does this mean promotion, Brian?

Jack Gaston is now across the pond under training as pilot. Plenty of ceiling, and happy landings, Jack!

Harold Coulson has been on sick leave. Hope you're now fit, Harold.

No news from the rest of the Navy this month. Keep smiling, the old craft is still hot, and Sunderland still smiles in spite of what rumours you have heard. Our neighbour was not so lucky.

Our belated congratulations to Bert Shortland on his rescue of a kiddie from the Wear. According to the local rag, Bert did a good job, of which he won't talk. Atta, Boy!

I hear that Peter Hodge is under orders for overseas. It's a bit warmer there than here. Good luck, Pete!

Our congratulations to Roy Hodge on his L.A.C.; he also is overseas. Happy landings, Roy!

Ted Robson's lads are fit; I hear they're getting browned off, waiting for action. Keep smiling, lads!

To my pals in Liverpool may I say the Gunner Lad has been discharged, having suffered injury in action, his hearing being affected. Otherwise he's O.K. and now with Civil Defence (part time).

Buster (R.A.F.) is still within easy distance of home. He is waiting to join an air crew. The lass is O.K. and going strong.

Cheerio, Forces!

Over to you.

O. H. L.

Tyne District News

Latest news of Mr. Frank Cox is that he is an "Ord. Tel." at Ipswich. He has demanded his copies of the "C.J.," justifying his demand by a declaration that he intends to continue payment of his Association subs. Well, Frank, you'd probably have had your "C.J.s" in any case, but in face of such nobility it's a snip. I can't see much reason why many other of our Forces members cannot emulate you.

Frank's filling of a gap in the Navy has left a gap at Corpach, and we wonder where the finger will point. Frank, who desires nothing better than a few miles of barren heath, was fairly content, and some of the staff professed to envy him.

Mr. Jock Mackie, A.P.O., who had the extraordinary luck to be pitchforked to his native Kirkcaldy, is still there. Mr. E. Elliott, A.P.O. (the Shields "E. Elliott," not the Newcastle mechanical genius) was returned from Liverpool at his request. We understand that his expectation of a call to the Forces was concerned.

Mr. Ronnie Stephenson, A.P.O., is now 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and stationed fairly near to home. He is said to like it enormously, and continues with his football. A hope has been expressed that the knowledge will be imparted to Ronnie during his Army career that the playing of football with the shirt tails hanging out is definitely and exclusively an Asiatic custom.

"Mr. James Reay, A.P.O., and his bride left for a honeymoon in Greenock." 'Obson's choice, me boy; 'Obson's choice. Mr. Reay happened to be the one whose name came under the official eye when no volunteer was forthcoming, so off he went. It was coincidence that he had recently embraced marriage.

Blyth's list of exiles is easy. Mr. Jock Ness, A.P.O., who was to have been a stalwart of our football team, is now a Leading Signaller on Destroyers, and is at present with the Home Fleet.

That's all about exiles. Let's have you all back soon. We can't even manage to have a comfortable row these days.

The staff here, and P.S.A. members everywhere, will be sorry to hear that Mr. Bob Davies, now P.O.-in-charge at Aberystwyth, but for many years P.O. at North Shields, has had a serious operation, from which, happily, he is recovering. His kindness to the group of probationers, of whom I was one, has not been forgotten. We could do with his loyalty to the Association—and with his chuckle. H.G.R.

London Officers Serving in H.M. Forces

The following list represents the latest information available at the time of going to press. If anyone desires the full address of any person mentioned below I shall be happy to supply same. Write R. J. Lowe, H.M. Customs and Excise, Liverpool.

Name.	Rank.	Branch of Forces in which Serving.
Ayton, J.	Sub-Lieut.	Royal Navy.
Barnes, L. L.	Coder	Royal Navy.
Battle, A. G.	Private	Royal Army Medical Corps
Bee, A. J.	Signaller	Royal Corps Signals.
Berry, J. W. H.	Telegraphist	Royal Navy.
Blake, W. A.	Gunner	Prisoner-of-War.
Bushell, J. F. W.	L/Bombardier	Royal Artillery.
Buttenshaw, K.	Private	Prisoner-of-War.
Chivers, H. J. L.	Corporal-Instructor	Royal Armoured Corps.
Crowther, E. L.	Private	Royal Marines.
Douglas, R. G.	Signaller	Royal Navy.
Dowdell, F. W. H.	Signaller	Royal Corps Signals.
Dunn, J. J.	Trooper	Royal Armoured Corps.
Dunstone, M. F.	Able Seaman	Royal Navy.
Farren, H. G.	Sapper	Royal Engineers.
Flynn, M.	Ordinary Seaman	Royal Navy.
Ford, K. S.	Gunner Signaller	Royal Horse Artillery.
Fozard, L. W. S.	Telegraphist	Royal Navy.
Gerrie, A.	Pilot Officer	Royal Air Force.
Gravett, G. P.	Cadet	Royal Artillery (O.C.T.U.)
Harvey, F. B.	Bombardier	Royal Artillery, S/L. Regt.
Jones, R. E. C.	Gunner	Royal Artillery.
Kidd, R.	Gunner	Royal Artillery, S/L. Regt.
Kippin, F. J.	Sub-Lieut.	Royal Navy.
Lamble, J. S. S.	2nd Lieut.	Royal Tank Regt.
Layton, E. S.	2nd Lieut.	Royal Tank Regt.
McFetrich, G. K.	Sergeant	Royal Artillery.
McKenzie, J.	Bombardier	Royal Artillery (Scottish Horse).
Menzies, W.	Pilot	Royal Air Force.
Newlyn, H. F.	Signaller	Royal Artillery.
Pearce, G. H.	Signaller	Royal Corps Signals.
Robbins, E.	Major	R.T.O.
Sides, J. D.	Coder	Royal Navy.
Sutton, J. D.	Coder	Royal Navy.
Thompson, J. C.	A/C. 1	Royal Air Force.
Wandless, S.	2nd Lieut.	Argyll and Sutherland Highland Regt.
Warner, C. G.	Sergeant	London Rifle Brigade.
Waters, E. F.	Driver	Prisoner-of-War.
Watson, K. F.	Private	Missing.
Wheatley, A.	Private	Infantry Training Corps.

WRITING A STORY OR WAR EXPERIENCES?

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THE WATERGUARD AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT

From recent correspondence in the "Journal" it is evident that there still exists a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst the staff regarding the duties allotted to this Department as a result of the present emergency, and that consequently there is a general feeling of frustration. This is a most regrettable state of affairs, and needs investigation. Whilst one must to some extent blame the authorities for not allocating such duties more logically and for apparently failing to recognise to the full extent the value of the work already performed by us, one must also admit that there is a general tendency amongst the staff to minimise the importance of such duties as have been so far allocated to us and a failure to understand how usefully we can contribute to the common effort of defeating the enemy. This misunderstanding is due to the fact that our role is mainly preventive, i.e., passive. But one should remember that the task of a large portion of our defence forces is also of a passive nature—for the present, at any rate. Our function may be compared to that of the coastal defence units, always ready for an invasion which may never materialise; yet their vigilance dare not be relaxed for one moment. Theirs may not be a very thrilling job (whilst nothing happens), but it is certainly a very necessary one. Their task is to prevent the enemy from arriving en masse; ours is to prevent enemy infiltration in more subtle forms. In this work we co-operate with the defence forces and with other civil departments, but in practice the effective control of shipping from a security point of view devolves upon our own staff. The parties concerned are only too glad of our assistance, and admit the value of our experience in handling such matters. That is only natural, seeing that such work is merely a war-time application of our peace-time duties. Our experience in dealing with seamen of all nationalities and our understanding of their psychology—combined with the opportunities we have for a minute examination of their effects—is of great value in tracking down the potential Fifth Columnist or enemy sympathiser. In addition to work of a security nature, there is the prevention of illegal exportations of goods and currency, and I believe much has already been accomplished in this direction.

From this short survey we can see that the Waterguard, both potentially and in fact, is capable of a very valuable contribution to national defence, and it is the duty of every officer to become as keen and proficient as possible in this direction. Even though our efforts may not receive the recognition they deserve, we have the satisfaction of knowing that the country depends on us as well as the armed forces. The tragic examples of Norway and Holland should make this evident. A Dutchman whose cabin I searched the other day said to me: "I wish our Customs had been as keen as yours in doing their job, then we should not have had a German invasion." That may be an overstatement, but no one will deny

(Continued on page 139, col. 2.)

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, THE CUSTOMS JOURNAL.

Sir,

It is of satisfaction to note the ever-growing interest in the conditions of service and welfare of the scores of men on detached duty, and we who were not present at the all-grade meeting in Liverpool on September 4th are in full agreement with the action taken at that meeting, inasmuch that efforts are at last being made, vigorously, to put right many matters which have been wrong and unjust for two years.

If the E.C. is too busy to handle the interests of D.D. men directly, perhaps an active sub-committee, all grades, could get on with the job and assist the E.C. with practical solutions to the many problems and points of dispute which have arisen. The only men who really understand this detached position are those who are detached. It is asking too much to expect a group of non-detached men to sift, with satisfaction, theoretical evidence. Experience is again the best tutor in this muddled line of business.

One thing is now in our favour, and that is that London officers are kicking. The provinces have been kicking for some time with not a great deal of effect, but now that London has added its weight, things may be different (this ought not to be so, but we in the provinces cannot help feeling that it is so). One paragraph in R.J.L.'s letter calls for a little friendly criticism, and that is the one dealing with the length of detached duty service. Surely, if there is anything typically "Waterguardian," the spirit of this proposal is. It is high time that we dropped the attitude of dog in the manger for all time. Ought not all of our efforts to be directed to righting the wrongs, not to an attempt to spread the wrongs out over a wider field of men?

The present conditions of D.D. are wrong—we all know that; so let us keep on at the ultimate goal of improvement, fairness, and practical welfare of our officers who are thus affected. We, by reason of our juniority, have had to be disturbed. Is the disturbance of our senior colleagues going to improve matters? No. Let us improve matters first off our own bat, not waste valuable time trying to exchange places with others. Take the broad outlook, and make things better at this end, not worse at the other end.

As for us who are in the 25-30 years group, we may have to go elsewhere before long, in which case other officers will then have ample opportunity to study our problems from a new angle. No doubt some of our erstwhile colleagues, smugly critical and incredulous, would change their opinions in very quick time were they to take our places, but I doubt if any detached Southampton man will lend himself to the twelve-monthly change-over proposal outlined by the Liverpool (London) meeting.

I hope other opinions will appear in these columns. Meanwhile all success to those in Liverpool and other ports who are sincerely trying to find practical and reasonable solutions to the problems before us.—Yours faithfully,

L.B.

The Editor, THE CUSTOMS JOURNAL.

Sir,

All "Express" reporter who went to B.B.C.-Town to live on the 4/6 per day allowed to R.A.F. men who are called to the mike, reported in the columns of your august contemporary his complete failure. Let me tell you—any A.P.O. who has to go nowadays relieving, in towns which are just as much boom-towns as Radioville, meets the same lack of success. Of course he gets more than 4/6 for the first month, after which he is expected to pay out of his own pockets for the privilege of being sent to work away from home, with all its inconveniences to his wife and family and its personal discomforts. In fact for the first seven days he gets a "top rate," which approaches what the English Walter Winchell found to be the bed-and-breakfast rate at the more flyblown joints. He tried everything, from the local Ritz, where the waiter would not speak to you without an introduction from a bishop, peer or cigarette-shop proprietor, to common doss houses, and he found the **best** he could do for one day was 9/6. Most places charge a shilling more for bed-and-breakfast than our top "all-in" rate. This is confirmed by studying the prices set out in the ads in any Ward Lock's Guide Book and, if it be thought that these hotels and hostels are likely to be high-priced, study "On The Road," the Commercial Travellers' Journal. Let it be recorded that the old-fashioned digs are almost impossible to find in these days of evacuation, high wages and women in industry and, where such places exist, their charge is either as high as the hotel's or they are unprepared to take us on for such short spells as relieving, since our leave was so curtailed, now involves. When presenting the case for increased subsistence, the Association must stress this point of the inflation in the cost of bed and board. What goes for the A.P.O. in this respect applies, in a degree, to the P.O. and the C.P.O.

There are other aspects of Subsistence. Was it ever intended that subsistence should cover other things besides bed and board?—for, if it did once, it doesn't now. Fixed meal times and the inability to buy stuff for "carrying out" may mean an officer relieving may have to buy additional meals: suppers nearly always. There is laundry. There are the "invisible" expenses of train journeys. There is the free time spent in looking for digs, (and the footwear used), going to the local food office, making enquiries at railway stations, etc. There is extra use of postage stamps. There are clothes, one could normally have gone without, to buy; and the consequent attrition of coupons. There is the need, though this point may appear frivolous, that more is spent, when one is away from home, on amusements and reading matter. There's the time, trouble and expense of packing (labels, maybe a new suitcase, etc.). The time element is imponderable but, as to expenses, far from "domestic saving," I reckon it costs the most economical an extra 10/- a week to go relieving.

Increased subsistence rates for A.P.O.'s appear then to be a necessity as well as, as a correspondent pointed out by citing analogous grades, a matter of equity. Finally, they are a matter of the dignity of an officer of Customs. Do the Board wish us to live in flop-houses? When the third class travel on a railway is too "rough" we are entitled to first class. Where the

only lodgings available for the subsistence rate are dirty and with bad food (leading, by the way, to increased sick leave), can we not, without pawning our watches, have something better? SLIPPERY SAM.

The Editor, THE CUSTOMS JOURNAL.

Sir,

A recent letter by "Slippery Sam" raises some points of great interest to the Service, chief amongst them is his statement regarding the delight of the "under thirties" at the prospect of being "called up," mentioning as the probable reason, their tiredness of the futility of the job.

It cannot be denied that, to-day, the Waterguard is seething with discontent. Now why should this be so, and how far are we to blame for this state of affairs?

Yes, it does seem that a lot of the work we are doing is a waste of time, and that certain duties performed by other departments are more proper to the Waterguard, but if we analyse it closely, how many of our duties could be dispensed with entirely? Because the work is of a negative character, it does not follow that it is unimportant, and in deriding it we are being unfair to ourselves.

The practice of apologising for the job has reached an alarming scale, bringing with it an inferiority complex, and marked signs of weakness. It is certainly difficult to deny that the prestige of the Service is on the down grade

Let us, before it is too late, abandon the policy of "the line of least resistance" and proceed to carry out our duties to the full, I agree that, in these days especially, many of them are most unpleasant, no one likes taking a deposit from a seaman, but it is most unfair to the honest men, to let the dishonest go unpunished.

Do we draw sufficient attention to the work we are doing? outward rummage, censorship, currency, etc. Do we report the many cases we deal with as fully as we might? I grant that it is most unsatisfactory that we are unable to follow these cases to the bitter end, but surely that, at the moment, is somewhat beside the point.

You will probably argue that it is of little use making reports when we get no backing from the "powers that be" Here again, I am compelled to admit there have been times when these gentlemen have almost exasperated us by their apparent unwillingness to recognise the potentialities of the Waterguard Officer, and the exceptional conditions and difficulties under which he performs his duties, but in all fairness, have we always submitted our claims in the strongest possible manner?

Can we blame the Association entirely for this? There is no doubt that many of us are very disappointed with its work, but ought we to expect better results while membership remains at anything less than 100 per cent? It must be most disconcerting to face the official side representing such a small proportion of the staff as it does now.

Many members have drifted from the ranks for reasons that should have never occurred, but surely it is time we buried the past. Can we afford to let petty, or even serious, old time grievances stand in the way of an effort to make the future better for all?

SEARCHLIGHT.

History at Random by Buzz

It is somewhat remarkable that, commercially important as Hull appears to have been, even in the infancy of British commerce, it was not till a comparatively recent period that those conveniences for shipping, called docks, were formed. From the position of the town, its advantages in reference to navigation are obvious. Richard II granted the haven of the town to the burgesses, and for about four centuries after that the whole commerce of the port, as regards wharfs and quays, was confined to the river Hull, still known as the Old Harbour. Ships received and discharged their cargoes, to a considerable extent, by means of lighters and other small craft, whilst lying in the roads. In 1767, the period just prior to the commencement of the dock operations, Hull possessed no local quays for merchandise. The population then was not more than 13,000 souls.

At that period the trading enterprise of England was becoming more and more developed; her shipping was found traversing every sea, and her banner floated in the breeze in every known port throughout the world. It was then felt that the east coast of England required better and more ample accommodation for her mercantile navy, to enable her merchants and manufacturers to import and export their wares destined for and coming from the great manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire; and no place was found so suitable, or so well adapted for the purpose, as the port of Hull. Dock works at this time were little known or understood and it is thought that but one dock then existed in the kingdom.

In the year 1772 it was intimated to the Hull Custom House authorities that unless the town of Hull would immediately co-operate with the Board of Customs in the establishment of a legal quay, that accommodation would be supplied elsewhere on the river Humber; and, thus threatened, the merchants of Hull, in conjunction with the Corporations of the town and the Trinity House, formed, in 1773, the "Dock Company at Kingston-upon-Hull" for the purpose of making "a wet dock" on the north side of the town. In April, 1774, the new Company obtained their first Act of Parliament, by which the shareholders were incorporated, and empowered to make "a basin or dock to extend from the river Hull to a certain place in the town of Kingston-upon-Hull, called Beverley Gates, or as near thereto as conveniently might be, and to make the same in all parts equal in depth to the bed of the river, or at least within fifteen inches of the same, for the admission of loaded ships, and of such width at the least as the ground granted by the Act would admit."

The Company received from the Crown for dock purposes "the gates, walls, buildings, inner and outer ditches, ramparts, bastions, bridges and bridgeways of the town, extending from the North Gate to the Hessle Gate, and from thence eastward, as far as Harry Ogle's Tower, "subject to the yearly rental of five shillings, and no more, to be paid by the Dock Company to His Majesty, and his successors, in lieu

of rents, services, and all duties whatsoever." And Parliament voted the sum of £15,000 towards defraying the expenses of the undertaking.

The first stone of the lock-pit of the dock was laid with much ceremony, on the 19th of October, 1775, by Joseph Outram, Esq., Mayor of the town, and the dock was completed in 1778. On the 22nd of September in that year it was opened with great rejoicing.

Whilst Hull contained but one dock, that one was known as *The Dock*, but when a second dock was formed, the original one was called the *Old Dock*, which title was subsequently changed to that of *Queen's Dock*, in honour of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who, on her visit to Hull in October, 1854, steamed through the whole line of existing docks. For the same reason, and to honour His Royal Highness the Prince Consort, the name of the *Junction Dock* (the third dock, which connected the Queen's to the Humber Dock) was altered to the *Prince's Dock*.

The second dock was completed in the year 1809. It is called the Humber Dock and communicates with the river, whence it takes its name. The Junction Dock was completed in 1829. Till its construction the Queen's Dock opened only into the river Hull, by which alone it eventually communicated with the Humber; but by the completion of the Junction Dock the connecting link was added to a series of works of marine accommodation not to be equalled throughout the kingdom. The construction of the three docks transformed the old town into an island, and, as a part of the ceremony observed on the day of opening the Junction Dock, the Trinity House Yacht, gaily decorated with the colours of all nations, performed the complete circuit.

The foregoing particulars are copied from Sheahan's "History of Hull," a work published in 1864. Our historian goes on to state that Her Majesty Queen Victoria, on her visit to Hull in October, 1854, passed round the town by the same route. He continues as follows:—"These three docks occupy the exact site of the ancient fortifications of the town, and the peaceful labours of the mercantile marine are now carried on where the yells and execrations of an infuriated soldiery once scared the industrious citizens from his avocations and the murderous culverin insulted the majesty of heaven with mimic thunders."

With the passing of the years, the old Town docks have gradually dwindled in importance. More and vastly larger docks have been constructed, until the acreage of the first three comprises only a very small proportion of the total area.

The Queen's Dock became quite out of date in later years, and was mainly used as a convenient place for the laying up of old and unseaworthy craft—"Rotten Row" it was called by the natives. A few years ago it was decided to fill in the dock and utilise the site for making a public park. Now, instead of a mournful array of grimy and rotting hulks, visitors will find green grass and beds of flowers. Truly, a pleasing transformation!

In the early part of the last century, however, the old dock presented a very different scene. Then its

waters were covered with all kinds of laden merchantmen, and its quays were piled high with merchandise. Then could be witnessed the scenes of excitement caused by the arrival of the whalers from the Arctic seas; for Hull was then the principal port for the Whale Fisheries.

A writer of a hundred years ago, while noticing the arrival of one of these vessels, says: "The interest evinced by all descriptions of persons is very remarkable, for it may be said that the moral and physical affections of half the inhabitants are more or less excited—some in the hope or reality of profit, direct or indirect, and others by a host of domestic joys and anxieties. A custom prevails among the seamen of these vessels, when traversing the Polar seas, to fix, on the first day of May, a garland aloft, suspended midway on a rope leading from the maintop gallant masthead to the foretop masthead; a garland not, indeed, bedecked with flowers, but ornamented with knots of ribbon, love-tokens of the lads for their lasses, each containing, as it were, a little tender history, sanctified in the heart's treasury, and with the details of which they were alone acquainted.

This garland remains suspended, "Blow high, blow low," in spite of sleet and hail, until the ship reaches once more her port. No sooner does she arrive at the docks than, according to long-established custom, it becomes an object of supreme emulation among the boys of the town, seamen's sons, to compete for the aforesaid symbol, to which end, animated by the gaze of their friends on shore and a spirit of rivalry among themselves, they vie with each other in a perilous race up the rigging. The contest was at this moment about to take place, the garland being suspended aloft in the position described, and containing within its centre the model of a ship, cut from the heart of an English oak, the type of honest affection."

Even so early as the year 1598 the merchants of Hull fitted out ships for the whale fishery, but owing to the competition of other nations the industry experienced many checks. When, in the seventeenth century, a bounty was given by the Government the trade began to increase. As long as the trade was of any importance the port of Hull had about two-fifths of the whole. In the years 1818 and 1819, 64 vessels were each year equipped for the fisheries—the largest number ever sent from Hull.

From this period the number of ships gradually declined. Some of the vessels made many voyages, among which may be noticed the ship "Truelove," which sailed to the Greenland fisheries 58 times—first in 1784 and last in 1852. The staunch old ship is mentioned in the following extract from the "Eastern Counties Herald," dated December 11th, 1869:

"The arrival during the present week of the 'Truelove,' with a cargo of ice, affords a striking and not very cheering illustration of the change which has taken place in connection with the trade of the port. It recalls to memory more exciting perhaps, and more agreeable times, when the whale fishery was in a flourishing state, when the arrival of a whaler was no curiosity, but which nevertheless excited pleasur-

able anticipations amongst all classes, and especially the fortunate owners, to whose olfactory nerves the smell of blubber yielded an agreeable sensation, and the then 'rising generation' of the town, who literally took possession of the vessels, swarmed the decks and riggings, entering into envious rivalry for the 'garland' and a share of the remains of the rough but tempting fare—"Junk" and biscuits. Forty years ago the 'Truelove' was in active service, and, if we remember correctly, she was only withdrawn from the trade about three years ago. Since then the last of the fishing fleet of the port, the 'Diana,' has disappeared, having been wrecked a few weeks ago, and we fear there is at present little probability of renewed efforts being made to revive the trade."

Then follows a statement of the results of the whale fishery in the year 1819. The names of 58 ships are given with a total catch of 332½ "Fish," 10,646 Seals, and 4,714 tons of Oil. We are not informed whether, in the case of the half fish, it was the head or the tail end that was caught, nor as to what happened to the other half. Possibly a half-grown whale is meant.

Regarding the smell of blubber which is said to have yielded such an agreeable sensation to the owners' "olfactory nerves," I will only say that, if it was anything like the smell of the modern whaling factory vessels that sometimes visit our ports, anyone would have been welcome to my share.

EXPORTS, 1941

She's moving down to meet the sea,
In deep'ning gloom; yet carefully
She's guided, roped, as though she might
Incur some evil of the night
And move too hastily.
The gates are moving slowly out,
And dim grey figures stand about.
Then with the last, long farewell shout
She sails unhurriedly.

With gaining speed, deep churning blades
Leave no wake nor dancing shades.
• No glimpse of her, no sound at last;
Then from far out her siren blast
Sounds farewell as she fades.
God grant she makes some future tide
Where friendly gates will open wide
To claim the goods she takes with pride.
Through fury's cannonades.

J.K.

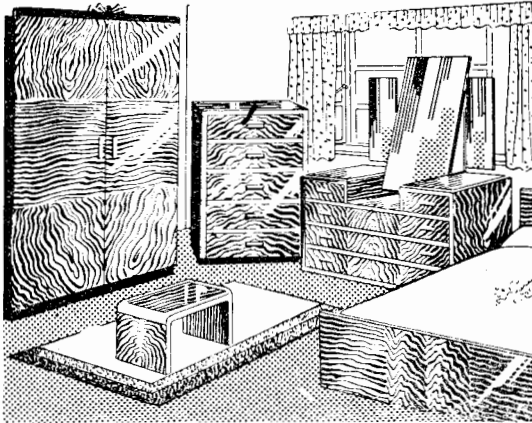
THE WATERGUARD AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT-

(Continued from page 136, col. 1.)

that the neglect of elementary precautions against hostile activity exposed those unfortunate and unsuspecting countries to a most brutal fate. Let us resolve that by no slackness or inefficiency on our part shall the enemy pierce the defences of this island, so magnificently maintained by the blood and toil of the armed forces and the courage and steadfast purpose of the masses.

BRAVONIAN.

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