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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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JULY, 1942.

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W. E. STANDRING.

Organising Secretary:

A. E. FARMER.

General Secretary:

W. H. POWELL.

Assistant Secretary:

H. L. BOALCH.

CORRESPONDENCE, LITERARY MATTER, ETC.—*Letters to the Editor, and articles and correspondence intended for publication should be addressed to the Editor, "The Customs Journal," H.M. Customs and Excise, 5, Odessa Street, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.16. It is essential that all matter for insertion in the monthly issue should reach the Editor on or before the 10th of the month of publication. Articles submitted need not be typewritten, but the use of one side of the paper renders a great assistance.*

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BACK NUMBERS.—*May be obtained by applying to the Association Offices, 2d. per copy (post free).*

CIVIL SERVICE WAR DISTRESS FUND

The renewal of air raids on this country has brought distress to a number of civil servants. Bomb damage grants have been made in 179 cases at Bath, 50 at Exeter, and a number at York, Norwich and Canterbury. The total of the grants made in respect of these recent raids is approximately £1,500. This compares with £1,721 during the whole of last year and is another indication of the complete uncertainty about the future obligations of the Fund, particularly when it is remembered that, apart from Bath, the raids were not considered heavy when compared with earlier raids.

If the enemy are ever able to make raids on the Cologne scale, we shall be fortunate indeed if the resources of the Fund are not taxed to the utmost.

You may need help from the Fund some day. Help now to build up its resources.

A.P.O. COUNCILLOR, NOR'-WEST AREA

While thanking those who voted for me in the recent election for the above, I trust all members of the area realise that a Councillor cannot function in a vacuum. Will anyone, especially in the too-often neglected outports, who wishes anything brought forward at the forthcoming Conference please let me know in good time? I shall report personally to each port after the Conference as to what has been done, before the official Interim Report. It should be a good Conference with so many important matters to be thrashed out and so many old problems, such as stagnation in the A.P.O. Grade, still unsolved. We may even be on the threshold of a greater development in the Whitley system, paralleling the closer control over management obtained by the trades unions, by which the Staff side will become an equal party with the Official side. We'll only get that if we deserve it and we won't deserve it if we merely grouse unconstructively in some corner. Only YOU can make the Association function. Your councillor is a conductor of your ideas and should neither be a gauleiter nor a scapegoat. Let's hear from you. Meanwhile, thank you again.

C. FRANK SHAW.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF

TO 20th JULY, 1942.

TRANSFERS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Foley, H. A., Southampton to Leith.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Wilson, A., London to Barry Dock, Cardiff.

PROMOTIONS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Dory, S. J., Officer (Acting) Special Inquiry Staff.

Tindale, R. B., Officer (Acting) Special Inquiry Staff.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

RETIREMENT—ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Thompson, W. E., Hull.

DEATHS—PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Crowe, A. McD., Leith.

Wood, W. H., Silloth, Preston.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Forbes, A., Preventive Officer.

Hargreaves, T. E., Waterguard Surveyor.

Rees, S. C., Preventive Officer.

Distinguished Flying Cross

We are pleased to hear that one of our staff, Flight-Lieutenant Desmond Booker, has recently been awarded the D.F.C. for fine and consistent work in raiding enemy cities. He has made numerous night trips to Germany and Brest, navigating his aircraft with great skill, and to quote the newspaper announcement, "often finding his target when others have failed." Desmond entered the Waterguard at Barry, but before he had seen many months' service was called to the R.A.F., where he passed out of training as a Sergeant-Observer. But he quickly showed his worth by taking a Commission a little later, and in a comparatively short space of time became a Flight-Lieutenant. We wish him further success and are proud to be the colleagues of so worthy an airman.

Mr. Woodford, our Inspector-General, wrote to him on behalf of all his colleagues and said that he was sure we would be pleased and proud to hear of his decoration. In reply Mr. Booker wrote:—

Dear Sir,

I was very pleased and greatly honoured to receive your letter of congratulation. If I am, as you believe, the first member of the Waterguard to win the D.F.C., then I consider myself fortunate, as I am sure there are many who, given the opportunity, will do far better than I.

I should like to take this opportunity to express to those who cannot be spared from their normal duties our appreciation of the tremendous but unspectacular job of work they are doing. Without them we in the Forces could do nothing.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

DESMOND BOOKER.

Mr. Booker's modesty is apparently equal to his gallantry.

CURRENT COMMENTS

The Conference.

THE wave of revived interest throughout the membership resulting from the decision to hold a Council meeting this year (opening 18th August) is proof conclusive that some sort of annual meeting to which the members have free access to the agenda *must* be arranged each year in future. There may, of course, be difficulties, but these will have to be overcome.

We are pleased to be able to announce that C. M. Woodford, Esq., C.B.E., has kindly accepted the Association's invitation to attend and perform the opening ceremony.

The Agenda and Report are now with the districts, and meetings are being arranged. It remains now for members to take full advantage of the opportunity offered and give their Councillors complete instructions. We would add our usual reminder that it is not too late to send further resolutions for Council consideration.

The Council.

President: W. E. Stranding.

General Secretary: W. H. Powell.

Organising Secretary: A. E. Farmer.

Assistant Secretary: H. L. Boatch.

Editor: D. T. Sutherland.

C.P.O. Councillors: R. M. Murray (Scotland), F. H. Stevens (Tyne), C. P. Titherley (Liverpool), P. W. Howard (Hull), J. T. Sutton (London), E. L. Sharrock (S.E. Area).

P.O. Councillors: K. Sutherland (Scotland), W. B. Clayson (Liverpool), L. N. Cumberlidge (Tyne), H. E. P. Bevan (S. Wales), B. R. Clarke (S.W. Area), B. C. Reilly (S.E. Area), F. Nightingale (Hull), A. S. Roper (London).

A.P.O. Councillors: J. C. Grant (Scotland), C. F. Shaw (Liverpool), J. N. S. Moore (Tyne), J. Grice (S. Wales), G. T. Clarke (S.W. Area), N. A. Ramsay (S.E. Area), W. H. Taylor (Hull), E. G. Richards (London).

Waterguard Sectional Committee.

A meeting of the above Committee was held on July 20th. On the proposal to limit periods of *detached duty* the Official Side maintained the view that the question of detachment is not peculiar to the Waterguard, indeed had become fairly general. They were, however, prepared to continue to give sympathetic consideration to particular cases of hardship brought to their notice. The item was adjourned to enable consideration at the P.S.A. Conference.

Several questions arose from the item of "Seizure Rewards," which was disagreed at the previous meetings. The Official Side could not accept the proposal that no rewards should be paid on seizures of less than 8 oz., but after some discussion they agreed to look at the question again, in particular, in reference to petty seizures by Dock Police.

In connection with the changed *lower limit for option* in tobacco seizures (from 5s. duty to 8oz.), the Staff Side referred to several anomalies arising from its application. For example, seizures of less than 8oz. involving responsible officers under either "proved" or "constructive" neglect, seizures from Pilots, mixed seizures. The Official Side gave an assurance that consequential amendments to the regulations were under active consideration.

The Staff Side proposal that the *limit for automatic rewards* £10 per crew and £5 individual be raised was re-adjourned.

In reply to an enquiry the Official Side announced the Board's decision to raise the *limit for option* by the P.O. Grade to £2 10s. No corresponding adjustment of the limit for C.P.O.s was intended.

Travelling Time for Evacuated Staffs.

Remembering the difficulties met during the Departmental discussions on the question of travelling time for detached officers proceeding on long journeys to spend leave with their families, we are glad (maybe a little intrigued) to learn that the Treasury "offer no objection to the general principle of an allowance for travelling time for evacuated staffs."

This does not appear to be new policy on behalf of the Treasury, on the contrary, since the Treasury intimate that they are not disposed to interfere with departmental discretion in leave matters, it would appear to be a reiteration

of old policy. In the light of this information it would seem that this Department have not been unduly generous in this matter.

C. & E. Social Service Association.

At a Special General Meeting held at City Gate House, London, E.C.2, on the 14th October, 1941, the Association was wound-up as at 30th September, 1941. The outstanding assets, which amounted to £1,559 4s. 8d., have been disposed of as under:—

	£	s.	d.
Society of Friends Allotments Committee	50	0	0
Scottish Council for Community Service	50	0	0
"All Hallows" Unemployed Club	25	0	0
Deptford Social Service	50	0	0
St. Margaret's Centre, Bethnal Green	50	0	0
Lancashire & Cheshire Social Service	50	0	0
Valuation Branch, Service Parcels Fund	10	0	0
C. & E. (H.Q.) Service Parcels Fund	30	0	0
Cumberland Education Committee (Scholarships)	30	0	0
C. & E. Orphanage Widows' & War Memorial Fund	800	0	0
Civil Service War Distress Fund	414	4	8

"O" Circulars.

We are not yet in a position to report officially on this matter, but we have reason to believe that "O.36" (Baggage and Personal Effects), which is being reprinted, will be issued also to A.P.O.s. As to the other "O" Circulars now issued to the Waterguard, we understand that the numbers of each circular in stock are insufficient to supply every A.P.O., and for this reason any question of extended issue could only be met on reprint. We have not modified our views on the efficacy of "station" copies.

War Emergency Committee.

The July (pre-Conference) meeting of the War Emergency Committee (P.S.A.) will take place at Walter House, Strand, at 3 p.m. on the 31st of the month.

Waterguard Redundancies.

Members will read in the report of the Departmental Council under "Vacancies in the Waterguard" that there was a possibility of employment for the five surplus C.P.O.s in the Ministry of Food.

Subsequently, members of the grade were invited to apply to attend a Ministry of Food Selection Board for posts £500/£600 arising at Tunbridge Wells, Cambridge, Southampton, Cardiff, Leeds and Nottingham. Beyond the fact that six C.P.O.s applied and attended the interviews at Colwyn Bay, we have no information of developments.

War Bonus.

Just too late for inclusion in our last issue came the news of the recent Bonus settlement. The details are, of course, known to all members, but for record purposes the settlement must be published.

The new rates, operating from the first pay day in June, are:—

	Present Bonus.	New Bonus.
Officers on salaries £250 a year or less	10s. 0d.	13s. 6d.
Officers on salaries over £250 and up to £500	5s. 0d.	7s. 6d.

The Association has asked that any necessary adjustments of flat rate overtime contingent upon these bonus increases shall be made.

August Bank Holiday.

E.O.C. 598 just to hand states that, subject to any unforeseen circumstances, August Bank Holiday will be observed this year in the normal way.

Attendances by Waterguard Staff on this day will be governed by the ordinary standing arrangements affecting our grades.

Mr. G. T. Bussey.

It is with profound regret we learn, at the time of going to press, of the death of the wife of Mr. G. T. Bussey, the popular Staff Side Secretary of the Departmental Council.

We extend to George Bussey and his daughter our most sincere sympathy in the terrific loss sustained in this sad bereavement.

Customs and Excise Departmental Whitely Council

The two hundred and fifty-second meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 24th June, 1942, the Chair being taken by Sir John Sutton, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

MAN POWER.

(a) G.O. 32/41.

The Official Side gave details of the up-to-date position as regards Departmental Clerical Class Staff rendered surplus by the application of G.O. 32/41, which revealed that the bulk of the surplus had been transferred or nominated for transfer to other Departments.

(b) T.C. 10/1941, paragraphs 2 (i) and (ii).

It was reported that the Elimination of Less Essential Work Committee had met three times and concluded their deliberations. It was not possible to present the signed report at that meeting of the Council, but this would be forthcoming at the July Council. In the meantime the Council confirmed their decision at the last meeting that the agreed items should be implemented.

(c) Kennet Committee Report.

The Official Side intimated that of the fifty-six men selected for interview arising from the Industrial Registration scheme, twenty-eight had been recommended for commissions, twenty-five had been selected for technical posts in other Government Departments, and three had been rejected primarily on medical grounds. The assurance given at a previous Council meeting that no one would suffer financial disadvantage by reason of his transfer to one of these commissions or posts was reiterated.

(d) Release of Women.

The Staff Side expressed thanks for the details received regarding the number of women in the 1918-1919 groups, and referred to the general announcement in Omnibus Weekly Order 24/42, Part 2. The Official Side said that no further information on the subject was at present available.

(e) Officer Grade Complement.

The Staff Side said that they had been advised on the 8th June of the Official Side proposals for meeting anticipated shortage in the Officer Grade and also with figures of the position at 31st March last. They asked if these figures might be brought up to date by those applicable at 30th June, and that on this occasion Collectors might be specially requested to expedite the despatch of their returns under G.O. 32/1941, so that the figures might be available at the end of the first week in July. The Official Side said that every effort would be made to insure early availability of the figures.

In reply to a Staff Side inquiry how the estimated figure for "wastage" in the Grade was assessed, the Official Side said that it was based on the best information available and on past experience. Depletion of the numbers on the Grade normally comprised deaths, retirements, promotions and loans to other Departments. It would be impracticable and undesirable to estimate how many would be included in each category.

Regarding the number included in the "reserve," the Staff Side inquired if these were all volunteers. The Official Side said that the "reserve" comprised men who had been invited to become part of the reserve and had expressed their willingness. Invitation had not been extended to everybody, but had included suitable officers who had retired during the past two years.

PROMOTION AND TRANSFER QUESTIONS.

(a) Retirement: Effect on Promotion of Re-employment or Deferment.

The Staff Side reiterated their policy to meet this position and their objections to the Official Side method.

The Official Side said in reply that as a result of their general policy, which was designed to maintain the general efficiency of the Department on a fairly long view, there would be certain retirements. Regarding approximately thirty members of the Surveyor Grade at present retained, these would be considered in accordance with the Official

Side's policy, and no estimate of the actual number of retirements could yet be given. The same policy would operate in connection with Administrative Grades.

The Staff Side made specific reference to the case of a Principal Warehouseman at the Stores Branch, and the Official Side said they would inquire into this case.

(b) Common Seniority List for Higher Clerical Officers in Headquarters Offices.

The Staff Side expressed their readiness to accept the offer made by the Official Side at the January and March, 1942, Council meetings, which was, in brief, that requests for transfer from one Office to another would be considered, and that once a transfer were made the individual would normally be required to remain in the new Office and his future prospects would lie there; but that exceptionally a second transfer in special circumstances, e.g., domestic hardship, might be allowed. In other circumstances, the applicant could not be allowed to carry seniority with him on a second transfer, and might have to enter—or re-enter—at the foot of the seniority list.

(c) Vacancies in the Waterguard.

The Official Side stated with reference to the finding of posts for five Chief Preventive Officers who were surplus to requirements, that they had been advised by the Ministry of Food that there was a possibility of employment in the Salvage and Realisation complements of the Ministry, and that the posts would be available in the Ports where the Chief Preventive Officers were at present located. On the Ministry obtaining authority for the institution of the posts further information would be available. In reply to a question by the Staff Side, the Official Side said that a Chief Preventive Officer who was lent from time to time to the Security Control establishment was not included in the five surplus Chief Preventive Officers.

(d) Upgrading of Temporary Clerks, Grade III.

The Council re-adjourned this item pending the holding of informal discussions.

(e) Position of Watchers surplus to requirements.

The Staff Side inquired as to the position of Watchers who were surplus to requirements in their present Stations and the possible retirement of those who had passed the age of 65. They hoped that the matter would receive sympathetic consideration, and that if a man was no longer needed in his present post some effort would be made to find him employment of a suitable character in this or another Department in the same locality.

The Official Side said they would examine the matter with a view to effecting the most generous treatment possible.

(f) Surveyorship Examination, 1943.

The Staff Side inquired in what circumstances and on what data it had been concluded that an examination for the Surveyor Grade had been deemed necessary in 1943. The Official Side said that they anticipated the occurrence in 1944 of vacancies that would require to be filled from the normal field of Officers, the number being in excess of the personnel already successful at written examinations.

(g) Promotion to the Officer Grade, and (h) Filling of Vacancies and Employment of Temporary Staff.

These two items were re-adjourned for the Staff Side.

PETROL: POSITION OF AUTHORISED CAR USERS ON AND AFTER 1st JULY, 1942.

In reply to a Staff Side inquiry as to the reconsideration of eleven cases of proposed discontinuance by individuals of cars where mileage was less than 2,000, the Official Side said that in one instance the individual had confirmed his intention to discontinue his car. Replies had not yet been received in the other cases. It was agreed that the cases of refusal of authority to continue the use of cars might be examined informally. The Staff Side drew attention also to the revised edition of G.O. 19/1940, paragraph 2 (b), and said that the rule therein as to home to office journeys (for Officers who get petrol for private purposes) was capable of varied interpretation, and was not in accordance with what they had understood was the interpretation given to the National Staff Side, namely, that the Department should continue to bear its responsibility for the issue of petrol coupons and for the payment at the appropriate rate for

home to office journeys on those days when a car was required for official purposes.

The Official Side said this would be investigated.

REMUNERATION FOR EXTRA WORK PERFORMED BY CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTAL GRADES.

This item was re-adjourned for the Staff Side.

RE-SCHEMING AND METHODS OF WORK.

(a) Old Age Pensions.

The Council ratified an agreement from the Outdoor Service Sectional Committee on an Official Side offer of 100 units per 100 pensioners, subject to review when normal conditions again obtain. As the assessments of work under G.O. 32/41 were made on a quarterly basis, the Council agreed as an exceptional measure that the date of implementation should be 1st April, 1942, and in reply to a Staff Side question the Official Side said that the equivalent for a Women Pension Officer Station would now be 1,100.

A further agreement from the same Committee was ratified covering a time allowance to cover O.A.P. work involved by war-time disturbance, and on flat rates of four hours per 100 pensioners in General Stations and six hours in Women Pension Officer Stations to cover the preparation of the duplicate register.

(b) Purchase Tax—G.O. 40/41.

On the question of the employment in turn on special verification work under G.O. 40/41 of all the staff engaged in London Central Purchase Tax Centre the Official Side stated that over one-third of the personnel had so far been employed thereon, and the process was continuing. The Official Side policy of giving experience of this work to more members of this staff would be pursued as opportunity offered. In reply to a Staff Side inquiry as to the proportion of supervisory staff to the basic grade on the work, the Official Side said no definite proportion was either maintained or intended. The number of Surveyors on the work was variable according to the amount of work accruing. The Officers were not being over-supervised, and the Staff Side would understand that there were periods in the year when staff otherwise to spare must be employed to the best advantage. The Official Side would continue to examine the position in the London Central Centre.

(c) Purchase Tax Centres—G.O. 51/41, etc.

The Staff Side referred to the decision at last month's Council meeting that consideration of the continuation of the Purchase Tax Centres procedure (G.O. 51/1941) should be referred to the Committee which had dealt with it previously. They had, however, received for consideration a copy of the revised instructions on Purchase Tax Verification in which G.O. 51/1941 was referred to, and they regarded part of the new draft as involving an extension of G.O. 51/1941 conditions. They said that the general tone thereof tended to limit the discretion of outdoor officials. They were of opinion that experience had shown that the discretion allowed by the existing General Order (No. 75/1940) had proved successful.

The Official Side stated that the new draft instruction was not appropriate for discussion at this Departmental Council, and they must insist that as a first step the normal procedure of consultation should be followed. In view of the necessity that the revised instruction should be published and put into operation without delay that consultation should take place at the earliest possible moment, and it should be understood that the issue of the new instruction forthwith would be without prejudice to other considerations, e.g., the principles inherent in G.O. 51/1941.

The Staff Side referred to the considerable time spent by the Official Side in preparation of the Instruction, and could not understand that the urgency of issue should be such as to give the Staff Side so short a time for their examination of the draft, as they understood that the effective date for operation would be 1st August. Certain Whitley points, e.g., the proposed excursion of certain Officers into other Stations, might need Council discussion, but since the Official Side were now aware of these points they could agree to an informal discussion on the terms of the draft on Thursday, 25th June. It was also agreed that a meeting of the informal Committee on the subject of G.O. 51/1941 should be arranged as early as possible.

(d) Local Staffing Decisions.

One local agreement involving the splitting of a General Station was referred back for treatment as a temporary war-time adjustment, and another involving the appointment of a Woman Cleaner in lieu of a Housekeeper-Watcher was ratified as operating for the duration of the war only.

(e) Hydrocarbon Oil Installations.

An interim agreement, subject to review, if necessary, in six months, from the O.S.S.C., was ratified, and it concerned the issue of a new paragraph to the Instructions covering safety measures for officials.

SUGGESTIONS COMMITTEE.

A schedule of suggestions dealt with by the Suggestions Committee was taken as read.

MR. A. J. COWHERD, VICE-CHAIRMAN.

At the close of the meeting the Chairman, Sir John Sutton, then referred to the resignation of Mr. A. J. Cowherd from the Chairmanship of the Staff Side of the Departmental Council. This was the last occasion on which Mr. Cowherd would act as Vice-Chairman at the meetings, and on behalf of the Official Side, as well as his own, Sir John expressed regret at the severance of an association which had existed for many years. Their relations had always been cordial, friendly and sportsmanlike, and the happiest memories would be retained of Mr. Cowherd's conduct of all Whitley business in a true Whitley spirit. The Council owed him a debt of gratitude, and in his representation of the Staff Side he had reflected the Staff Side's loyalty to himself.

Mr. Cowherd thanked Sir John Sutton for the kind manner in which he had marked this occasion. He went on to say that he had already received from Sir Wilfrid Eady, Chairman of the Board, a letter which he very much appreciated, and he was glad to take the opportunity of the presence in the Chair to-day of Sir John Sutton, with whom he had so long been associated in Whitley matters, to record how he himself had always enjoyed Whitley work, notwithstanding its strenuous demands. The Staff Side had often been required to show great restraint, but they had also to thank the Official Side for great patience on many occasions, as the Staff Side naturally considered all their cases were unanswerable. It was with great regret that he now relinquished his Chairmanship, but he was sure his successor would be accorded the same treatment by the Council which it was his privilege to acknowledge with pleasure.

The Council decided to hold its next meeting on Wednesday, 29th July, 1942.

MANCHESTER PROSECUTIONS

Meat has been the subject of many "Black Market" prosecutions recently, but in this case the Chief Steward of a British vessel from Mombasa put it to a different use. He used 500 lbs. of the stuff to hide 2.10 gallons (2.02 proof) U.U. spirits, in the ship's refrigerator, but Messrs. Stacey & Morris, A.P.O.s, of Mr. Peck's Rummage Crew, decided that if they could not shift the beef in the gastronomic sense, they might do it physically.

Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., brought the case before Salford City magistrates on 11th July, securing a penalty of single value and duty, £16 1s. 8d.

On 14th July, at the same Court, the Mess Room Steward of the above British ship, was fined £20 for concealing 10 lbs. cigarettes (3950 No.) and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Cavendish tobacco, in the forepeak ballast tank, and a fireman of a British ex-Danish vessel from Montreal was fined £15 for concealing 4 lbs. (1800 No.) cigarettes and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. snuff. He used the engine room fire extinguisher for this purpose.

Messrs. Stacey & Morris, A.P.O.s, were the officers concerned in the first case, and Mr. E. Morris, A.P.O., in the second, both officers being attached to Mr. Peck, P.O., in charge of the Rummage crew.

Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., prosecuted for the Crown in both cases.

J. L. M.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE ORPHANS', WIDOWS' AND WAR MEMORIAL FUND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Meeting was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C., on Monday, 15th June, at 4 p.m. Members were honoured by the presence of the Chairman of the Board, Sir Wilfrid Eady, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., the President of the "Orphanage," who took the Chair.

Before proceeding with the business of the Meeting, Sir Wilfrid made suitable reference to the loss to the Fund of Mr. J. H. Newman, Vice-President.

BUSINESS.

Election of Officers:—

President:—Sir Wilfrid Eady, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G.

Vice-Presidents:—Messrs. D. J. G. Moffatt, A. E. Howell, H. Kimber and J. Merron (the two newcomers, Mr. H. Kimber and J. Merron, fill the vacancies created by the resignation of Mr. Woodford and the death of Mr. Newman).

Members of the Committee:—

Mr. A. G. Bullar, Surveyor; Messrs. C. Brown, F. Gloak, A. H. Ross, S. J. Thorne, B. T. G. Wheeler, W. H. Chubb (Mr. Chubb fills a vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Bunday, as an Officers' representative); Mr. W. R. Standing, C.P.O.; Messrs. G. Dover, F. Mew, A.P.O.s; Messrs. G. Lewis, R. J. Bugg, V. J. Bush, Departmental Clerical Class; Mr. G. F. Eperon (A. and C.G.'s); W. T. Lewis (Valuation Branch); W. J. Bunday (Secretaries' Office). Mr. Lewis fills the place of Mr. C. B. Ottaway, absent with the Forces; and Mr. W. J. Bunday now represents the Secretaries' Office in place of Mr. Howell, who now holds place on the Committee as one of the Vice-Presidents.

Report of Relations between the Civil Service War Distress Fund and the Orphanage.

This report had been circulated to members with the Annual Report. The Meeting adopted the Report; and the principles laid down therein will govern the action of the Orphanage Executive Committee in dealing with applications for assistance which are the joint concern of both Funds.

Amendment of Rule 23.—An amendment of Rule 23 was adopted by the Meeting. Henceforward, grants in aid of the children will be as follows:—

- (a) Widow or widower of a member, or guardian with only one child, may receive £24 annually (instead of £20).
- (b) Widow or widower of a member, or guardian with more than one child, may receive at the rate of £24 (instead of £20) per annum for the first child, with an increase of £12 (instead of £10) annually for each other child; but the total payment under this Rule in any one year shall not exceed £60 to any one family.

Under "Other Business," a member raised the question of "Covenanted Gifts for Charities," and the Meeting directed: "The question be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration, and to take such action as may be desired."

Also, grateful recognition was made by the members of the generous gift of £800 donated to the Orphanage by the late Customs and Excise Social Service Association.

Sir Wilfrid Eady, in closing the Meeting, took the opportunity to emphasise the desirability of all established members of the Department to continue and increase support of the Orphanage. Incidentally, he pointed out that the existence of the Civil Service War Distress Fund did not lessen this need—as the Orphanage had to go on, while the War Distress Fund would come to an end.

A warm vote of thanks was accorded to Sir Wilfrid, and the Meeting terminated at 5 p.m.

Southampton Notes

We have just said "Cheerio!" to Peter Ryan, who has commenced his R.A.F. Flight Training this month. His absence will be noticed in his detached port of Manchester not only from a rummage viewpoint, but also on an outlying farm, at which he rendered useful voluntary service. Good luck, Peter. We also send our wishes for a congenial spell in the Royal Navy to Jack Abbott, recently at Runcorn, and well known to several of the Soton exiles.

This month we have good news from Les Twentyman, who has now completed successfully his "Wings" examination in South Africa. His final was delayed during the Spring, due to a spell of sick leave, but he is now fit and well again, and at the time of writing to us he was anticipating being posted for operations, home or overseas. We are all hoping he may be coming home in the near future, but future mail will confirm that in due course.

Airgraphs from Bill Sykes and Cliff Pearson convey greetings and good wishes to you all. Bill takes us to task for reporting in a previous issue that he liked the Middle East, but he gives us an alibi by saying he may have written that sentiment when on leave in the M.E. Headquarters. Yes! We can understand that, Bill. Anyway, all the best to you, especially so at this critical time out there.

Joe keeps level with Cliff month by month, and he was hoping to step ashore in April for the first time in five months. Looking forward to some mail as usual. Mention of Sub-Lieut. F. J. Kippin (London) recalls memories from Joe, who says they were members of the same Scout Group years ago in London.

Letters from Jimmy James, now Leading Telegraphist, and Ted Midlane, now Leading Air Fitter, contain good news of both, although Jimmy had a brief spell of sick leave early in July. Ted is now serving in one of our aircraft carriers, and he likes the vessel and his job very much.

Jock Strachan is now in Scotland, taking his gunnery course, which is a big change from his previous billet at Silloth. The R.A.F. sent the change of orders to Jock whilst he was honeymooning. Too bad! We are still awaiting news of Davy Youdell, but we were heartened greatly by the recent arrival of some snapshots taken of him by a resident South African some months ago, when Davy was en route for the Far East. He looks exceptionally fit in the snapshots. Jack Langford left Holyhead in June for the R.A.S.C., and he commenced his training in the Midlands. Following the "breaking-in" period, Jack was posted to a course of transport driving. Good luck, and no speeding, Jack!

Holyhead also concerns two more Sotonians, as Bill Parsons arrived there in June, accompanied by three Swansea colleagues, and Doug, Parker travelled up early in July. We are pleased to know they have found their detached port congenial enough at the outset. Doug, Parker, who possessed a Home Guard Commission in Soton, will no doubt be able to employ his talent for weapon instructing in his new locality.

Other exiles' news from Greenock, Maryport, Runcorn and Liverpool is as good as ever, and it coincides with the second anniversary of the mass transfers from Soton in 1940. It also coincides with the passing of the P.O.'s examination by four Soton A.P.O.s, who are still on the staff in spite of existing P.O. grade vacancies. Not very encouraging to reflect upon really!

Our sympathy is extended to the Silloth staff and to the relatives of Mr. W. H. Wood, P.O., in their recent tragic and personal loss of such a well respected colleague, and also the relatives of Mr. L. Tenyer, E.M., Soton, who lost his life when the "Prince of Wales" was sunk off Malaya.

From Greenock we learn of the well-being of our pals up there, and of the arrival of our proud "Vigilant." Two of our Forces boys have seen her there, and they were regretful at not being able to take a watch aboard.

Here are two pertinent queries from over the Border which could do with our official answer: (1) "Are A.P.O.s so small in number to-day that a man within six years of retiring age has to be sent on D.D.?" (2) Landing

officers are performing baggage duties up here. How does that conform to P.S.A. policy and to the officially acknowledged shortage in the officer grade?"

From Liverpool we hear of an emergency meeting of D.D. officers, and we hope their submissions to P.S.A. headquarters will be well investigated.

Bert Fry sends more news of the wireless operator, previously mentioned here as one of the crew which trailed the "Bismarck" to her doom. The W.O. was awarded the D.F.M. in June for exceptionally hazardous work. Since then he has received his commission. Well done, indeed.

Manchester provided a welcome for Alan Hollingsworth, transferred on D.D. from Liverpool at the end of July. Home news is rather meagre. We had hoped to have a District Meeting Report for this issue, but up to date all I am asked to report is that our Councillors for the P.S.A. August Conference will be Messrs. B. R. Clarke, P.O. Grade; and G. T. Clarke, A.P.O. Grade.

Home Guard conscription is going along swiftly in Soton, and some of the boys are now revising many things which they studied in 1940 with the old L.D.V.

In view of the lack of interest shown in P.S.A. matters in Soton and several other ports with which we are familiar, we can only echo one correspondent's hope "that something will happen at the P.S.A. Conference to make our 'sleeping partners' sit up and think."

Finally—a personal note this—I wish to thank the lads up North who supported me in the recent ballot for A.P.O. Grade Councillor, North-West Area. Sorry we did not make it, especially as there will be a minority (if any, in the P.O. and A.P.O. Grades) of D.D. men at the Conference, where so much can be done in a minimum of time. Anyhow, thanks a lot for your support, and now "Good luck" to the officer who will represent us from the North-West, Mr. C. F. Shaw, A.P.O. Cheerio, Forces! L.B.

Glasgow Notes

Readers (if any) of Glasgow Notes are due for an apology for the delay in reporting the local meeting held in mid-May. The fact that the meeting was held on May 15th, five days after the "deal-line" for receipt of Journal matter intended for the May issue, explains the six weeks' gap in publication. In re the aforesaid meeting, the sub-committee reported back to members at a lively and well-attended meeting held on May 29th, when a staffing scheme, designed to relieve pressure on certain stations, was prepared for presentation to the Official side.

In view of the splendid turn-out for both these meetings, the utter absence of almost all the staff, if we except two local officials and one other A.P.O., from the meeting called for June 3rd is inexplicable. This meeting was a District Meeting, specially convened, with ample notice given, to discuss agenda for the forthcoming Conference. The Organising Secretary, in view of past experiences, might be pardoned for thinking, on reading this, that Glasgow had started a separatist movement. Another meeting has been called for July 17th and will, I hope, atone for what is in effect an unwarranted insult to the District Secretary, whose untiring efforts have kept Glasgow's P.S.A. alive throughout the war.

So far, nine resolutions for the Conference are to hand; only two of these, however, are from the out-ports, and both these are forwarded by one member from a sick bed. If Glasgow District had half a dozen invalids like him these reports would again be a regular Journal feature.

Well, chaps, our dreadful secret is out at last. Parliamentary discussion and release to the Press of information, more or less accurate, regarding the outbreak of small-pox in Glasgow, leaves us free to state that the unfortunate occurrence reflects in no way on the Waterguard Staff, whose duties under Vol. 4, Part 4 expose them at all times

to risks the ordinary civilian is never asked to undertake. The current phrases in the office are "mind my arm," "I wish I could scratch," combined with learned discussions on the effects of vaccination and the symptoms and incubation periods of various types of small-pox.

Among the Conference proposals to hand here is one demanding the substitution of a flat-rate seizure reward for equal distribution to members of rummage crews for all seizures made, with the Board having the right to increase the reward to the seizing officer if circumstances so merit.

There is also a demand for A.P.O. representation on the Secretariat of the P.S.A., a request for the resumption of the twice-monthly issue of the Journal, and a practical suggestion from the out-ports that, in view of the reductions in issue of uniform, Waterguard Officers should have one suit per annum dry-cleaned at the Crown's expense.

The staff have heard with regret that Mr. G. O. Warne, Assistant Inspector, is ill and about to enter hospital for treatment. May he have a speedy recovery is the general wish.

Hull News

In the recent ballot for P.S.A. Councillors, Mr. Nightingale, P.O., and Mr. Taylor, A.P.O., were returned unopposed.

Since my last notes nothing of interest has occurred in the social or sporting spheres of the port and therefore the news this month is of personalities rather than of events.

We continue to lose members of the staff either to the Services or to other ports.

On 3rd June Messrs. G. W. Richardson, P.O., and S. Walton, A.P.O., were transferred to Ayr for the duration, and recent news suggests that they are settling down very well there.

Mr. W. S. Outram was next to leave and on 23rd June he was sent on Detached Duty to Glasgow. To all three we wish happiness and congeniality in their new spheres.

The R.A.F. gained a keen recruit when, on 29th June, Mr. C. Rawcliffe, A.P.O., left Hull to commence training for flying duties. To him we extend our best wishes for a happy time, safe landings and a speedy return.

Mr. S. J. Dorey, former Hull A.P.O., was recently appointed to the Special Inquiry Staff. At the time of his appointment he was on Detached Duty in Northern Ireland. We in Hull extend to him our very hearty, if somewhat belated, congratulations and wish him every success in his new sphere. His appointment was well merited and all friends here are confident that he will more than justify his appointment.

As a change from the constant depletion of the Hull staff our number was recently increased and we extend a warm welcome to Mr. J. Eunson, A.P.O., on his return from Detached Duty in Grimsby.

Mr. F. Bromley, R.A.F. (ex A.P.O.), called to see us during his recent leave, and despite the "cramming" his training demands, was looking very fit and well.

Two other items of news are in sombre mood. By the time this column is published the retirement, on grounds of ill-health, of Mr. W. E. "Jacob" Thompson, A.P.O., will have come into effect. "Jacob" has spent 22 years in the service and his retirement comes after a period of 12 months' illness. For the past two years he has been on Detached Duty at Ayr which, together with a few months at Goole, is the only period he has spent away from this port. All members here express their deepest sympathy and couple with it the hope that the quiet seclusion of retirement may add many years to his life. He was a familiar figure at all sports activities and his presence will be missed and deplored on many future occasions. His retirement leaves a gap in the service, social and sporting activities of the port which no one but "Jacob" could fill.

It came as a shock to the many associates of Mr. "Bill" Wood, P.O., to learn of his death. He was in Hull for many years and his decease brought forth many expressions of deep regret and of sincere sympathy for his family.

N.S.M.

The Lads o' London

As each issue of the Journal appears, I look to see if ports not in the habit of so doing have added their quotas of news concerning their activities in Official and Association affairs, not forgetting tidings from their lads in the Forces. Since this time last year there has been a renewed interest on the part of some districts in giving us news of themselves and it shows a healthy spirit. Our friends in the Forces do look forward to their particular port news columns—of that I have no doubt; but I do know that there are some who never read in the "C.J." of any news whatever of the places where they were formerly stationed. What about it, Journal correspondents? It would be good if all districts regularly contributed their items of news for all of us to read, and so obviate the danger of extreme parochialism. Surely there is no difficulty in subject matter! Conditions of service, seizures, D.D. questions, retirements and presentations, etc.—all these things can be commented upon, and in addition, the Forces news. Keen correspondents are needed, those who will be prepared to spend time and money. Addresses of the Forces members can be obtained through their next-of-kin. The whereabouts of the next-of-kin will be supplied upon application to the Salaries Accountant, A. & C.G., City Gate House, London, E.C.2, quoting, of course, the names of the chaps whom you wish to contact. Let us, then, hear more from other ports.

The Conference will be held during August, and although there are manifold problems to be tackled, it is hoped that some good will come as a result of the delegates' deliberations. We do not ask for the impossible; nay, our one concern is to see the war successfully fought to a finish; but we do desire that those things that can be given should be granted. Good luck, then, to all of you who are to represent your districts as grade representatives, and may you be THEIR mouthpieces.

The O.W.O. announcing the award of increased bonus rates by the Treasury has been received with interest, and for the Forces' benefit, whose wives and parents may be wondering why there is a slight increase in the balance of civil pay, the new yearly sum of bonus is calculated by multiplying 13s. 6d. by 52-1/7 weeks, rounded up to the nearest shilling, which equals £35 4s. 0d. That figure, plus your annual salary, gives you the gross amount which you should receive altogether from public funds. You should, of course, know your own deductions, such as service pay, income tax, etc., and the nett amount per month can then be easily computed. As the new rates are operative from the 1st June last, there should be a small sum due to each of you.

If you have any queries as touching your civil position in the Customs and Excise Department, such as insurance contributions, income tax, Customs Fund, etc., do not hesitate to drop me a line, and if I can't help you I know somebody who can.

London has lent yet another of its P.O.'s to a Northern Division—Mr. George Marshall has gone to Thurso on detached duty, and met, on Inverness Station, Roger Withey, and they were able to "talk shop" for some time. Charlie Howard has left Liverpool for Belfast, and Bill Love has been told to stand by for Gorragehwood. We wish the gentlemen concerned all the best in their new spheres of service, and would remind them that we are still interested in their activities and would occasionally like to hear of their progress.

John Scott, who is in Bo'ness, has volunteered for flying duties in the R.A.F., and hopes to get back home for a brief period before enlistment. Best wishes, John, and many happy landings. George Barker, the sole London representative in Glasgow, has had to be compulsorily re-vaccinated recently owing to the outbreak of small-pox there, and said that he may be moving on to Stranraer. Write to Max Dunstone; he will give you the "low-down" on that port, George, as he was there prior to his joining the Royal Navy. So much for the detached officers.

Jimmy Sutton is now in Arbroath and has found his "air-legs." He still has with him there a colleague from West Hartlepool — P. Blackburn, A.P.O. Am sure that O.H.L. will be interested. Lt. John Lambie has left this country

and is on his way overseas. A letter from him gave some interesting details of life on board a troop-ship from an officer's point of view. John, after he had embarked, saw me leave the office on the stage one day but could not attract my attention. Apparently he stayed in the one place for some considerable time waiting to contact a member of the staff to let me know where he was, and later, when he had done so, the P.O. so approached forgot all about the matter. Ted Crowther, who is in Lyness in the Orkneys, has met quite a crowd of the Waterguard staff there, and for such an out-of-the-way place he is more fortunate in that respect than many of the lads who are on the mainland. Harry Farren has been promoted to L/Cpl. and transferred to the engineer services. He is still in the same place and hopes to meet Bob Catnach soon. Harry wishes to place on record his gratitude to the Association for privileges granted to Service men, such as receiving the "C.J." regularly. Cheering news is again to hand from Lt. Jimmy Ayton, R.N.V.R., who has been enjoying life at their Lordships' expense, but is more or less earning his living now. When are you due for a Commander's stripe, Jim?

A grand re-union took place last month when Colin Carthew's ship was boarded by Bill Farmer, and two days later there arrived in the same port another old friend—Arthur Burnham. That they had a lot to say to each other can be well imagined, and Colin (who, incidentally, was able to be married after all in April) sent for his wife, and naturally they stayed with Bill and Mrs. Farmer. Arthur enjoyed a very pleasant leave at home in Norwich after a year's absence. He was able to pause for a while on London Bridge while passing through London, and took the opportunity of looking at the "Harpy" where he made his début into the service under the watchful eye of George Dover.

Roger Withey managed to visit the Custom House in Londonderry, but was unable to see either Bill Farmer or Bob Catnach. He is now in Scotland and we hope to meet in Liverpool in August.

Although Harold Brumell's loss was announced in an O.W.O. in December, 1940, I have only just heard how he met his end. He was mined in H.M.S. Waveflower on the night of 21st/22nd October, 1940, whilst asleep in his bunk. His mother has sent me his photograph and many of you in District III in London will have now seen same, together with the poem which his mother composed and which was broadcast in a "Make and Mend" programme some time ago. Harold's passing was mentioned by Lt. Esmond Knight, R.N., in a similar broadcast.

Mr. Arthur Hartshorn, P.O., has kindly offered both his and his wife's hospitality to any of the Waterguard lads in the Forces. The address of this latest "open house" is 99, Ferguson Avenue, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex. Thanks, Arthur. I hope to publish a new and revised list of these "open houses" shortly.

Some news would be welcomed of our newest recruits to the Forces—Messrs. Colan, Smallwood and Walker.

Let's hear from you then,
Till the Lights o' London shine again.

R.J.L.

Sunny Leith

Trust the Waterguard! Already our Mr. Reid is making his way in the Navy. Many a tale has been told of men put to unsuitable jobs in the Forces, but the Navy has found the job for Bill. By some marvellous system of finance Bill used to run a car—not much of a car, but still a car—and he is now to use his mechanical knowledge on M.T.B.'s. It will be right in his barrow. Keep your eyes (and ears) open, Smallports—Ginger-hair and a grin—that's Bill.

Recently we have had two eminent visitors, one Mr. Albert Jones, P.O., from the 'Pool. We were very pleased to renew acquaintance with this old friend and hear what he had to tell us of things down South. In this connection a cordial invitation is extended to any of the Service who may happen to be up this way to come in and see us. We like to come into contact with the big outside world and find what

is being said and done elsewhere. The Journal helps a bit but it is like the wireless in that you have to take what you are given and cannot ask questions. Thank you, Mr. Jones, for coming in to see us.

Our other visitor was once a humble A.P.O., and Journal readers will find his name familiar as it has been printed in the articles of more than one port. To us he is still Bob Mould, but to the Army he is now Captain Mould, of the Gordons. Congratulations, Bob. You deserve it all. True to tradition, Bob would not talk about his work, but once again a good man has been put to a good job. The most he would confess to was "Combined Ops." Bob said he had met two former Leithers on the Clyde, and to them—Jimmy Agnew and Danny McCurdy—we send our greetings and best wishes.

Readers more knowing than the Editor (we can see this being censored) will have been wondering where TWYFORD, Fife, is. Well, the typewriter slipped. It should have been TAYPORT, Fife. There is still no news of Tom Welch, though we wait in hope. Tayport figures once again in our budget of news for another reason. One of our exiles has returned to the fold—Mr. R. H. Thomson, A.P.O., sent there when Tom was called up, having been recalled to Leith to fill the vacancy caused by Bill Reid's departure. Tayport is grand in the summer and in the winter they have some very exciting times at the whist drives. Bob is glad to be back at Leith—that we know, and we welcome him.

Vigilance on the Waterguard's weariest watch, 4 p.m.—midnight, Saturday—brought Mr. Duncan, A.P.O., an interesting little catch. A naval rating was the client and he had succeeded in packing into a small Gladstone bag $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Cut Service, $\frac{1}{16}$ lb. Perique, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Capstan, 80 Cigarettes, 16 yds. of Art. Silk Tissue and one or two pairs of Silk Stockings. Sounds like an examination question! There are no other jobs unusual for size or circumstance to report.

In their leisure hours several of the staff are now finding time for the old man's game, bowls, and reports come to us of some hectic struggles. Mr. Rolls, P.O., is quite well known locally for his proficiency in the art, and under his tuition some of the lads are coming on fine. Any challenges?

Merseyside News

These notes are incorporated with the details of the District Meeting held at the Common Hall, Hackins Hey, on June 25th. The attendance was quite good and about thirty members were present to hear Mr. Neill (District Secretary) commence the reading of the previous minutes. After the usual discussion on this point, the meeting settled down to the analysis of the data concerned with the coming Annual Conference in mid-August. Of course a lengthy debate ensued upon certain important matters due for the Conference agenda, and it was more or less left in abeyance pending the return of the local delegates. Opinion on local matters took a more severe turn, and in regard to the problem of re-scheming consequent on the reduction of staff, members became most isolated in their views. The possible reduction in the Preventive Officer strength at the Woodside Station caused much alarm and concern, and a strong resolution was passed deprecating such a movement from the official side. A similar resolution was approved in regard to the disbanding of the Alexandra Rummage Crew, and a motion, that one of the rummage crews minutes to the Landing Stage be disbanded in lieu, was unanimously acknowledged. These two items occupied the attention of the members during the major part of the evening's session, and the Chairman, Mr. A. B. Henry, had a most unenviable task in curbing the enthusiastic remarks of a very keen and dogmatic audience. Prominent speakers were Messrs. Shaw, Hyland and Hughes, but Mr. North was really the gem of the evening. His points were most logical, and in giving examples which amplified his statements, he caused an atmosphere of sincerity that affected all his listeners. I think that his speech regarding the predicaments of the detached officers in Liverpool was the finest ever heard at a

local meeting, and it was no surprise that the result of the members' confidence in his motion was unanimous.

We now have the news that the Liverpool delegates to the Annual Conference will be Mr. W. B. Clayson, P.O., and Mr. C. F. Shaw, A.P.O. Such veterans of Association skill and Whitley technique will not fail the local staff, and in wishing them a profitable excursion, we at the same time condole the two candidates who failed to obtain their tickets.

I met Charlie Webster recently, and even though he has lost weight, he still looks well. The old legs have healed up and he is now an M.P. in the North of Scotland. At 23 he is more than a tried veteran, and his stories of the Abyssinian campaign held me enthralled. Our old friend, Bob Colling, is doing well, perfectly satisfied, and wishes to pass the chin-chin to his old pals. Mr. E. T. Williams, late A.P.O., Port Talbot, passed through this port recently from South Africa. Now an Observer, he is doing well in the R.A.F., and his friends in Wales will be glad to know we found him well and happy.

That will be all for now, so—adieu.

E.G.H.

"Sunderland Calling"

Hello, Forces!

I have no direct news from the Forces this month. I hope to hear from some of the boys this month.

Mrs. Scarfe tells me that she had a letter from Charlie recently. He was very fit and well and enjoying the sunshine. I hope to have some news of him in the near future. If the "BIG BOY" sees this, may I remind him that I am still waiting for that address?

Brian Horn's mother tells me that he is still in England and very fit and well. I hope to have news of him later.

Stan Gill's ship was one of the unfortunate ones in the recent convoy scrap. I have no news of him, but we all hope that smiling Stan is safe. Have you any news of him, Alf?

Now for news of our exiles. Tom Lewer has not reported this month, but I hear indirectly that the Bos'un is well and really enjoying the change. In his spare time he is busy house-hunting.

Bill Sutton reports "All Correct" from the Orkneys. He is due on leave on the 22nd, so I shall be seeing him and will have further news of him for you later.

George Simmons reports "All Well." I hear he is also busy house-hunting in his spare time. Incidentally, he has been creating trouble for some Chinks by seizing their opium. Atta boy! Keep it going.

Our "Dispatch Rider" reports all O.K. He is busy touring the country round his port looking for accommodation—so far without success. During his travels he bumped into Jimmy Rough on leave.

Bill McKeith is for Runcorn. Good luck, Bill. Keep the old flag flying, and we hope it won't be long before you all return.

Our respected Chief is amongst those whose names have been submitted for the Food Ministry. We hope he is successful. At the same time we shall be very loath to part with him.

Harry Rogers is on transfer back to the old port. Good luck, Harry.

No news of Alf Phipps. Hurry a letter along, Alf. We are still interested in your movements you know.

Mr. Emery, A.P.O. (Relief Duty), seized a bottle of spirits recently, same being hidden under the bed plates. Our pal, Bill Shortland, then did his stuff. Atta boy! Keep it going. The Rummage Crew from a nearby port also broke their duck whilst visiting this port. We congratulate them.

The old place still stands, and the flag is mast-high still. God luck, God speed and a safe return to you all.

Cheerio, Forces! Over to you—over.

O.H.L.

Tyne Topics

Winchell, it is said, can stand on a street corner for ten minutes, write up his column, and thrill thousands of people who have seen the same thing many times. Weighing up my material for July "Topics," I arrive at the conclusion that an error was made at our local meeting—they should have elected Winchell!

One, at least, of our colleagues has had his thrill. Roy Tindale, A.P.O., of Newcastle Quay, has been appointed to the Special Enquiry, and is now, *ipso facto*, an officer. We are all of one mind, Roy. Good luck to you and fulfilment to your endeavours. From what I have gathered there is plenty of scope for detections. "Evasion of P.T. is not, it seems, a term entirely confined to the P.B.I. who goes sick at 8 a.m. We are genuinely sorry to see you go from the Waterguard, Roy, and anxious for your success because you have done so.

This issue should be just in time to carry our congratulations to Corporal Fred Chinnery, R.A.F., who is to be married on the 8th August. Our best wishes, Fred—and they include the lady who will share your joys and halve your troubles. As they will probably say at your Scottish station, "Lang may y're lum reek"—with and without fuel rationing.

The rummage crews at North Shields have been tickled to death by a recent arrival. Virginia must be an awful size. When the seizures have been made up into what an old P.O. used to call "a fully classified and tabulated statement, left upon the cabin table," I hope to summarise the doings in the "C.J."

It is pleasing to record that Mrs. Grosart, to whom I referred in the June issue, is now on the way to complete recovery.

That's all for now, folks. Roll up a little "pukka gen," you fellows. I would be very pleased to answer "receiving you loud and clear." L.N.C.

"YELLOW FOR CUNNING"

There was a constant warfare on board the "Pharaoh." It was a silent, internal conflict waged between Turner, the chief engineer, and the Chinese engine room and stokehold gangs. The cause was opium. Turner held the opinion that it was up to him to stop the coolies slowly poisoning themselves, thereby rendering themselves less efficient, to the detriment of his engines. The other engineers shrugged their shoulders, but Turner lectured the entire black gang on the occasions when he found an opium pipe in the bilges or two hundred grammes of the drug in the bunkers. At these times the exhibits were publicly burned in the starboard furnace of No. 1 boiler, Turner performing the rites and the black gang squealing with rage and disappointment. It was inevitable, of course. The "Pharaoh" had been trading to the Far East for years, and some of the yellow men had no other home but the fo'c'sle of the four-thousand ton freighter. Now in the second year of the war circumstances had compelled the ship to take her part in the Transatlantic convoys, and she ran as regularly as the exigencies of warfare would allow between American ports and Liverpool. Turner had to admit that the opium situation was easier, but he knew that even New York was not without supplies of the dope. He knew, too, that the coolies had customers at home, laundry or cafe proprietors in Birkenhead and Liverpool, general merchants in Glasgow's dockland.

On this trip he saw unmistakable signs that the old trade was active. There was a marked tendency of the greasers to linger in the tunnel. He was certain they were not doing their allotted task, for he had found the bearings running hot more than once. But he had seen no trace of the opium, and concluded that the caché was more than cunningly contrived. Now they were a couple of days from the Merséy, and the undercurrent of uneasiness was running higher.

Turner swore, and, taking a powerful inspection lamp on

a flex, he set off down the tunnel. As he was coming back the ship lurched heavily, and he stumbled over the loose wooden step between the tunnel and the engine-room floor just below the watertight door. The step tilted up and the Chief sat down hard. But the opium was there. There were four cakes of it, each of one hundred grammes, neatly tacked to the underside of the wooden step.

"Got you, you yellow sinners," snarled Turner. The usual incinerating process was duly carried out, and the Chief was satisfied that no opium would go ashore this trip. The coolies, however, had other views. A consultation was held in the fo'c'sle after the cremation. It was a pity that that part of the consignment had had to be sacrificed, but at least the Chief's suspicions would be now allayed. The immediate problem was how to get the rest of the stuff ashore—always the smuggler's biggest problem. They thought it probable that Turner had warned the authorities; dock police and Customs might be on the look-out for any members of the "Pharaoh's" crew. Eventually a plan was evolved.

As the ship steamed at slow speed up the Mersey, Turner gave himself up to pleased reflection. It had been a good trip; no enemy submarines, no trouble with his beloved engines, and, to crown all, he had been successful with the opium traffic. Now—home for a brief spell.

It was the Chief's invariable custom to pack his shore things in a suit-case and to leave this with his bowler hat on his bunk in readiness for going ashore. He would then 'phone for a taxi at the nearest box, and pick it up outside the dock gates.

On this occasion he had a bit of a rush. At the last moment something had gone wrong with the sludge pump, which necessitated his presence in the engine-room until the last minute. When at length he had traced the trouble to a valve which was choked with cotton waste, he suspected nothing. Cotton waste found its way into all parts of the "Pharaoh's" engines where its presence was most undesirable. "Those blamed coolies again," he thought, as he wriggled out of his dungarees. Snatching up his suitcase, and jamming his bowler well down, he ran down the gangway. He 'phoned for his taxi and passed through the dock gates, producing his pass for the inspection of the policeman.

Outside, he put down his case to light his pipe. At that instant a shadowy figure came up behind, snatched the case and made off. Although Turner was unaware of this, the policeman saw it and gave chase.

He returned a few moments later with the case. The Chief had by now recognised the fleeing figure as that of his donkeyman.

"Here you are, Sir," said the constable. "I wish I had got him, but I was a bit too slow. Slippery customer, that. I don't think he had time to take out anything except a small paper packet which I saw in his hand. Perhaps you'll check over your things and see if everything else is there. Will you be wanting to report it, sir?"

Turner's face had taken on a sickly hue. "A small packet, did you say?" he asked, ignoring the other's question. "Are you sure?"

A terrible, disquieting thought took possession of him. "Was it a pink paper packet covered with Chinese characters, could you see?"

"Yes, sir, that was it exactly." The policeman nodded brightly. "I hope it was nothing valuable," he added, glancing at the Chief's face.

The latter appeared on the verge of an apoplectic fit.

When he became rational again, the policeman ventured timidly, "You mustn't take it to heart, sir. We'll report it, and I expect you will get it back. Take it easy, sir."

Turner fairly howled. "Do you know what was in that packet? It was opium, you understand—opium! And those devils got me to bring it ashore for them."

GEORGE R. STOCKS.

COBBLED STREETS OF COMMERCE

There are streets in our great British ports which are known all over the world. Not so much the fashionable streets of the West End; not the elite Princes Street of Edinburgh, not the shopping centres of Bristol, Glasgow, Plymouth or Southampton. The streets, rather, that are spoken of in dockside taverns in Buenos Airies, that are known equally well in Tampico and Sydney, in the seamen's hostels of Marseilles and Cape Town.

Bute Street, Cardiff. Centre of the district unofficially known as Tiger Bay, that cosmopolitan region around Loundon Square, where the East and West intermingle and intermarry, where padding Lascars rub shoulders with Arabs, Chinese with Negroes, and where children of many colours and creeds romp and grow up in a miniature League of Nations which their elders have never yet been able to evolve with success. Once notorious, even infamous, Bute Street, named after that Marquis of Bute who put the port of Cardiff on the world map, remains, perhaps, the most cosmopolitan street in Britain.

Ratcliff Highway, that one-time sinister street of Shadwell, perhaps the best-known street in the whole metropolis to the deep-water seamen of half-a-century ago. Now it has lost its name as well as its notoriety. It goes by the name of The Highway, E.I. Shadwell Fish Market has given place to the King Edward VII Memorial Park, and The Highway is now no better known than West India Dock Road, or Poplar High Street, Limehouse Causeway, or the Commercial Road.

Wapping High Street, where the scents from the teeming warehouses mingle beneath the flying bridges to recall those "Sabeian odours from the spicy shores of Araby the blest." The grimy causeway of Lower Thames Street, with its fishy odours of Billingsgate, known to every mercantile skipper who reports to the Long Room at the Custom House.

Such a street is Cross Lane, Salford, centre of Manchester's dockland, grimy with the sootiness of Lancashire coal. Greek names over shop lintels; billiard saloons; teeming taverns; one-time cattle market. Cinemas where one is sandwiched between a West African negro and a Lascar. Seamen's hostels; half-shuttered shops displaying horse-meat and fly-blown tripe. Hydraulic quayside cranes peeping above the housetops, a vast grain silo dominating the scene. Heavy traffic trundling over the broad cobbled roadway, weaving in and out of clattering dock-bound tramcars. The hooting of ships' sirens in the air, the impatient treble of the canal tugs vying with the deeper bass of the cargo liners.

Streets that belong to the world of commerce; that might well be in Liverpool or Glasgow, in London or Cardiff, for all their architectural distinctions. Streets common to all the great seaports, yet streets individual in that they reflect in their traffic and their shops, their merchants and their warehouses, in the very aroma of their atmospheres, much of the trade and life of the port they serve. CYMRO.

WATCH HOUSE YARN

An old friend of mine once told that in his early days he had been an actor in a small travelling show.

He said that one of the productions he appeared in was called "Harbour Lights."

In the first scene he had to address the audience and say: "Ladies and Gentlemen, at my back you see the GREEN starboard light."

And a voice said: "No, governor, it is a RED light."

This went on several times; each time he said GREEN a voice kept saying RED.

At last he looked behind him and made one rush to the wings, yelling out: "My God, you are right, the whole damned show is on fire!"

B. J. B.

NIGHTMARE!

(Being a ballad born of a restless sleep).

The distant drums were dying,
As in a dream I saw
Ten thousand armies marching
From out the mists of war.

I saw ten million faces,
And one great flag unfurled:
The flag of youth demanding
A finer, fairer world.

And youth demanded justice,
And blamed the fumbling old
For war and all the evils
Allied with alien gold.

The old were blamed and rested
From State and local rule.
And he who once was trusted
Was dubbed a dotting fool.

And in the dream I ventured,
And early joined the chase,
For I was young and able
And held a happy place:

I held the reins of finance,
All revenue demands;
All customs dues and taxes
Were born of my commands.

I sat with proud young colleagues,
Close by a busier Thames,
And great ships came to London
From happy ocean realms.

I saw the whole world prosper,
And peace upon the lands,
And sometimes I made speeches
To seas of upraised hands.

And then I saw, oh, horror!
The young were growing old,
And some were caught, in error,
With hidden bags of gold.

And even I was challenged,
By younger, eager men.
For youth again was marching:
And I was frightened then.

And we who once went marching,
In pride, would not be moved.
And called on youth to witness
The nation's progress proved.

But youth was firm in answer:
"The laws by you were made.
Begone, lest in your dotage
Your souls are lowly laid."

I heard the war drums beating
Out o'er the peaceful lands,
And soon the young came marching,
With blood upon their hands.

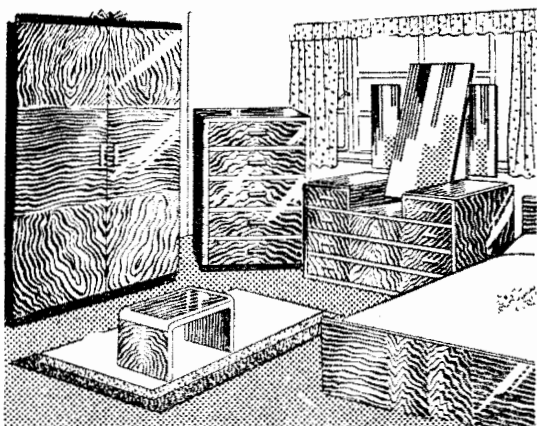
They knew no song nor laughter,
And all their eyes were wild,
And one whose face was aged,
Seemed old, and yet a child.

I saw the dark mists settle
Where beauty once had been.
I saw young armies marching,
And then, oh, horrid scene:

The young swept out the aged.
They told me I was old.
They marched me out to labour
And plundered all my gold.

JOHN KENNEDY.

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