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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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JUNE, 1942

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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 NURSING AID ASSOCIATION

The Committee of Management give notice that, with the consent of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, acting under the powers conferred on him by the Societies (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1940, an Annual General Meeting of the Association will not be held this year.

Recruitment of new members, which was temporarily suspended in 1940, has now been reopened to established Civil Servants, and certain restrictions then imposed on the admission of wives and children of members have been removed.

Members desiring a copy of the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1941, which includes an amendment to the Rules to give effect to the decision to reopen recruitment, are invited to apply to—

The Secretary,

Civil Service Nursing Aid Association,
3-4, Clement's Inn, London, W.C.2.

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from whom also applications for particulars of the Association and proposal forms for membership can be obtained.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

DUTTON ONE-WEEK SHORTHAND is learnt in twelve 2-hour postal lessons. Send 3d. in stamps for first lesson to C. J., 92, Gt. Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF TO 15th JUNE, 1942.

TRANSFERS.

WATERGUARD SURVEYOR (UNATTACHED):—
Richardson, A., Gravesend, London.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER (ACTING):—

Watson, E. W., Glasgow to Liverpool.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Bayliss, C., Southampton to Holyhead, Chester.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

DEATHS—ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Cook, G. W. S., Penzance, Plymouth.

Stuart, T. A., Folkestone, Dover.

OBITUARY

MR. GEORGE W. S. COOK, A.P.O., PENZANCE.

Many London Waterguard Officers will join with those of the Plymouth Collection in mourning the tragic death of George Cook, A.P.O., at the early age of 29 years. He died at the West Cornwall Hospital on Tuesday, 12th May, following two operations for appendicitis and peritonitis.

He entered the Waterguard at the end of 1933, and spent his first fifteen months of service in London. He was a familiar figure at most Waterguard social and sporting events during that period, his fine baritone voice being in constant demand.

Transferring to Penzance in March, 1935, he soon settled down to West Country life, and was an ever-popular entertainer on many concert platforms. Before war broke out he was also a regular competitor at the Cornish Music Festivals, winning many high awards and establishing himself as one of the leading baritones of the county. Since 1939 entertainment of the Forces took up much of his spare time.

As a colleague he left nothing to be desired, and will be sorely missed by the staff at Penzance. The Service has lost a most promising and capable officer and many of the Waterguard staff a good friend.

Among those present at the funeral were Mr. S. G. P. Hynam, Waterguard Surveyor, Falmouth; Mr. J. C. Laity, P.O., Mr. J. E. Glover, A.P.O., and Mr. D. Pearce, A.P.O., his colleagues at Penzance; Messrs. Millard and Raiph, C.P.M.; Mr. Boyden, representing the staff at the Custom House, Penzance; Mr. F. Crimmins, P.O., representing the Waterguard Superintendent and Staff, Plymouth; and Mr. F. Ash, A.P.O., Hayle. The many beautiful floral tributes included wreaths from his colleagues at Penzance, the Waterguard Superintendent and Staff, Plymouth; the Waterguard Surveyor and Staff, Falmouth; and the Staff, H.M. Customs and Excise, at Hayle.

Mr. Cook leaves a wife and young daughter, to whom the widespread sympathy of the Waterguard is extended. D.P.

MR. ALEXANDER McD. CROWE, P.O., LEITH.

His numerous friends in the Department will be sorry to hear of the death of Alex Crowe, P.O. After an illness of over five months he died in hospital at Edinburgh on 5th June, 1942, and the presence of many members of all ranks of the Service at the funeral bore witness to the universal respect for Mr. Crowe as a friend and as a colleague.

Mr. Crowe leaves behind him his wife and two grown-up daughters, and to them in their sad bereavement our deepest sympathy is extended.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mrs. T. A. Stuart wishes to thank the many officers of Liverpool and London who so kindly sent floral tributes and messages of sympathy during her recent sad bereavement.

CURRENT COMMENTS

King's Birthday Honours

THE following members of the Department appeared in the list of Birthday Honours conferred by His Majesty:—

ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

C.B.E.—E. S. Bertenshaw, Assistant Secretary.
O.B.E.—W. T. Cangle Lett, Higher Collector, Belfast.
M.B.E.—W. H. A. Groom, Surveyor.

IMPERIAL SERVICE ORDER.

Companion.—W. A. Girvin, Waterguard Superintendent, Leith.

War Bonus

Very little news is filtering out from the National Staff Side on this all-important issue, and members could be forgiven for assuming that little or nothing was being done. Although we are not able to enlighten members on details we can assure them that this matter is being discussed very frequently, very fully and very effectively. Two meetings with the Official Side were held in May and, up to the time of writing, two meetings (2nd and 16th) had been held during this month. We should not be surprised to learn later that a third meeting was held before the close of the month and that a conclusive stage was reached.

P.S.A. Conference

Under the provisional arrangements the Annual Conference, 1942, will open on the 18th August, and the meeting will be held in London in the Conference Room at Walter House, Strand.

The final decision and all necessary arrangements will be made at the June meeting of the W.E. Committee.

The elections in the areas are proceeding and, if completed, the results will be published in this issue.

We have been asked to remind District Secretaries that resolutions intended for Conference discussion and inclusion in the Agenda should be forwarded without delay.

War Emergency Committee

The June meeting of the War Emergency Committee (P.S.A.) will be held on the 30th of the month at the Offices of the C. & E. Federation, Walter House, Strand, London.

Small Port Allowances

During the discussions on the claim for the exclusion of Small Port Allowances for the purpose of calculating War Bonus, the Association indicated that at the first opportunity after the cessation of hostilities the question of the basis and adequacy of the amounts of these allowances would be raised.

The incidence of war work has, however, necessitated adjustments in several cases by the addition of temporary non-pensionable allowances under para. 77, Est. Inst., Vol. 1.

A review of all Allowanced Small Ports is being conducted by the Association and, on completion, the report will be considered by the War Emergency Committee.

Man Power

In paragraph (c) under this heading in the report of the Departmental Council published in the last issue, the Staff Side enquired whether a shortage in the Officer Grade was anticipated and, having received a reply in the affirmative, then asked to be consulted in the formulation of plans to meet the situation.

Official Side proposals have now been received and are being considered by the Staff Side. The potential shortage of Officers is given as 144, and to meet it the methods to be adopted are, firstly, recall of retired Officers up to 64 years; secondly, promotion on an acting basis for duration of war, and thirdly, recruitment of Temporary Assistants.

The shortage in the Assistant Preventive Officer Grade suggests that we may not be too interested in the second method as far as this Grade is concerned, but the fact that there are about 290 Preventive Officers between the ages of 35 and 45 must not be overlooked—especially in view of the statement of the Official Side (when discussing "Waterguard vacancies") that they had a surplus in this Grade.

"O" Circulars

It is not usual in this column to refer to letters sent to the Editor, but the one from "J.C.M." in the last issue calls, we think, for comment.

Most members will probably have forgotten that the Board's first proposed distribution of these Circulars ended at the C.P.O. Grade. The Association, through the Staff Side, refused to accept this utterly unworkable arrangement, and claimed the issue on a General Order basis, i.e., to include P.O.s, and A.P.O.s. Eventually it was agreed to include P.O.s and at the January, 1940, Departmental Council meeting (reported in the "Customs Journal," February 10th) disagreement was recorded, as far as we were concerned, on the issue to A.P.O.s.

It would be wrong to assume that, following this decision, the matter died a natural death. On the contrary, we have reason to believe it to be as live a question with the Official Side as it is with us. Hope dies hard in the Waterguard, and our correspondent may soon have the pleasure of receiving and amending his own "O" Circulars.

On the point of waste of paper it will probably suffice to say that the saving of paper in still further sectionalizing amendments would be out of proportion to the increased cost and work involved. In any case the paper is not actually wasted, for it should find its way back through the salvage collection.

Uniforms and Coupons

Under this heading in the May issue we published the Board of Trade reply to our enquiry. Unfortunately, owing to a printer's error, the letter lost its point and its sense. This is how it should have appeared:—

"It is not proposed to make any alteration in the annual surrender rates for essential civilian uniforms. These rates were calculated to represent the saving in wear and tear on other clothes effected by uniform wearing, and consequently their relation is to the coupon-value of the clothes they replace rather than to the amount of the basic ration. As the former is not being altered, no corresponding adjustment in the uniform rates is expected."

Special Inquiry Staff

The Board have announced the appointment of two A.P.O.s (Messrs. Dorey and Tindale) as Officers on the Special Enquiry Staff (acting and supernumerary).

This may appear to be a contradiction of the statement in the previous paragraph regarding the shortage in the A.P.O. Grade, but the fact is that these A.P.O.s were interviewed for the posts advertised in O.W.O. 2/1942 in January last, and were earmarked for vacancies expected to fall due about this time.

C. & E. Orphans' and Widows' Fund

Sir Wilfrid Eady took the Chair at the Annual General Meeting of the Fund held on the 15th June, and it was clearly apparent that he had a real interest in the activities of the Fund. Indeed, Sir Wilfrid's closing remarks, calling for every effort towards increasing membership, would have dispelled any doubts. We are looking for a marked improvement in this respect as a result.

It was decided to increase the grants to orphans by 20%, and to remit to the Executive a suggestion that members be asked to "covenant subscriptions over a period of seven years." We understand that where this is done the subscriptions are, in effect, doubled, the Inland Revenue Department making a refund from Income Tax revenue. We shall be watching developments in this matter with interest.

The vacancy of Vice-President caused by the resignation of the Inspector-General was filled by the election of James Merron, Esq., Assistant Inspector.

Customs & Excise Departmental Whitley Council

The two hundred and fifty-first meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 27th May, 1942, the Chair being taken by Sir Wilfrid Eady, Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

MAN-POWER.

(a) G.O. 32/41.

The Official Side reported that nineteen Departmental Clerical Officers had recently left London Port or other Collections on transfer to other Departments, and that since the last meeting they had offered to the Treasury four additional Chief Clerks, eight Departmental Higher Clerical Officers and twenty-five Departmental Clerical Officers. The Air Ministry had asked for five Departmental Higher Clerical Officers, and the Treasury had requested particulars regarding one Chief Clerk, but no request for transfer had yet been made.

The Staff Side expressed their thanks for this statement.

The Staff Side inquired whether general requests had been made from the Head Office for station schemes (S.R.6), and the Official Side said that no general request had been made, but a few inquiries had been made with a view to the co-ordination of local agreements on adjustments under G.O. 32/41. There was no question of revoking their earlier agreement as to local settlement of these adjustments, and no action would be necessary from Headquarters unless there were cases seriously out of alignment. The Staff Side said they had all through left the procedure to local Staff Sides, but if the Official Side were about to reopen the question of unified control of G.O. 32/41 adjustments, the Council Staff Side would feel bound to do so as well. The Official Side agreed that the Central Staff Side could not be debarred from their own examination of local schemes, but they emphasised that they did not contemplate a general instruction to all Collectors, but in any particular instance where a local adjustment appeared to be out of alignment that Collector would be instructed specially. The Official Side could not abrogate their responsibility in the matter. Steps would be taken to record this assurance of Official Side policy in the Minutes, and this would serve as an instruction to all concerned.

The Staff Side they would consider this statement.

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

The Official Side referred to the two meetings of the Elimination of Less Essential Work Committee and the progress made therein. Agreement as to adoption had been reached regarding a fair number of the suggestions. There had been few disagreements, and a small number were left for further consideration. In addition, a number of the suggestions had not been pressed by the Staff Side for the time being, but it was understood that they might be reopened at a later date.

The Staff Side, in concurring in the statement made by the Official Side, said they were ready to complete the task laid to the Committee prior to the next Council meeting, and they had agreed to the immediate implementation of agreed items.

The Official Side, in expressing their appreciation of the progress made by the Committee, said that they hoped the efforts made by both sides would clear away any remaining impression that in a Department which had always prided itself on the businesslike conduct of its affairs, there was any wastage of staff due to the retention of unessential work. Any items not satisfactorily settled in the Committee could be discussed on the Council.

(c) Kennet Committee Report.

The Official Side reported that practically all the men selected for interview for technical commissions, etc., had been chosen by the Ministry of Labour, and particulars as to their new spheres were being awaited.

The Staff Side inquired whether a shortage in the Officer Grade was anticipated, and the Official Side said that they had to visualise a possible shortage even for current work. The Staff Side expressed their desire that they should have the opportunity of assisting in the formulation of plans for meeting the situation, and the Official Side said

that their proposals would be put before the Staff Side as soon as possible with this object in view.

(d) Release of Women.

In reply to inquiry by the Staff Side, the Official Side said that a new development had taken place by the issue of E.O.C. No. 584, of 16th May, 1942, regarding women born in 1918-19. The number of personnel affected, i.e., Clerical and Sub-Clerical, was 79, and there were 110 not yet called up from the previous groups. The Official Side would furnish detailed information as to the make-up of the figure 79.

PROMOTION AND TRANSFER QUESTIONS.

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

The Staff Side reaffirmed their policy for the release of staff, after promotion, to other Departments if redundancy existed in the grades to which the men were promoted, and their objection to the Official Side proposal, which might deprive officials of the opportunity of continued service to the country. They inquired what steps had already been taken towards disposal of senior officials. The Official Side said that notice of retirement had been given to six members of the Controlling Grade, and that their proposals would apply to the Department as a whole, not to one branch only. Efforts were being made to find the men other posts in the Public Service, although it might not be possible to secure the same standing. In reply to the Staff Side, the Official Side said that the prospect of applying their proposals to the basic grades was remote.

(b) Vacancies in the Waterguard.

The Official Side said that following an informal discussion regarding the redundancy of Chief Preventive Officers, correspondence with the Treasury had taken place, and they were now awaiting communications from two or three Departments who might be able to offer suitable employment to the redundant personnel. The result would be communicated to the Staff Side, and further opportunity for consideration afforded.

(c) Common Seniority List for Higher Clerical Officers in Headquarters Offices, and

(d) Upgrading of Temporary Clerks, Grade III.

These two items were re-adjourned at Staff Side request.

USE OF CARS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS ON AND AFTER 1st JULY, 1942.

The Staff Side said that following the issue of E.O.C. 583, of 15th May, 1942, they had agreed the issue of an Omnibus Weekly Order, which met the requirements of the E.O.C. for a review of the position of car users, and they hoped the Official Side would bear in mind the particular Departmental needs and conditions, e.g., irregular hours, visits, surveys, etc., and the fact that car usage had always been rigorously controlled.

The Official Side said that in reviewing the situation the special conditions of the Departmental use of motor-cars would be borne in mind. They had always maintained a tight control over the consumption of petrol, and they could defend that control against any criticism. They would make the best arrangements possible to secure the efficiency of the work performed by authorised car users throughout the Department.

The item was re-adjourned.

PURCHASE TAX.

(a) G.O. 40/41.

In reply to the Staff Side inquiry as to the sharing of the work under G.O. 40/41 in the London Central Purchase Tax Centre consequent on the instructions issued after the March Departmental Whitley Council Meeting, the Official Side stated that all the staff had had the opportunity of participation, but only three Officers had expressed a desire to share. Two of these were now employed thereon, and the third had been transferred to another Department. The Staff Side observed that such action by a small group of the staff was a frustration of their policy, and the Official Side said that it was their intention to give experience of this work to more members, and they would accordingly make further investigation in the matter.

(b) Centres and G.O. 51/41.

The Staff Side referred to the fact that the establishment of the Purchase Tax Centres and the arrangements under G.O. 51/41 were experimental and subject to review.

During the last four weeks proposals for the addition of various firms to those comprised in the Appendix to G.O. 51/41 had been put forward, and proposals for the extension of one Centre beyond the circumscribed area originally agreed had been made. They still held their previously expressed objections to the system prescribed by the General Order, and considered that the time had come for its abandonment and the return of the listed traders to their appropriate stations.

The Official Side said that their view was not in agreement with the Staff Side's, and suggested that discussion of this had better be referred back to the committee which had dealt with the matter previously. A revised General Order on verification was under consideration, but discussion on the continuation or otherwise of G.O. 51/1941 need not await this revision.

The Official Side said that they were anxious to proceed with the alterations indicated in their letter of the 11th May, but this could be without prejudice to the suggested discussions. The Staff Side, in agreeing to the proposed discussions, said that they could not accept the alterations.

The item was re-adjourned.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Only two local staffing agreements had to be considered, and of these one was adjourned and the other was referred back for local re-examination in the light of changed circumstances.

The Council decided to hold its next meeting on Wednesday, 24th June, 1942.

Bristol District Meeting

A well-attended meeting took place at 58, Queen Square, Bristol, on the 28th May, with Mr. A. G. Colburn, P.O., in the Chair. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed, and one or two matters arising therefrom were quickly dealt with. Among these was the question of the laundering of the A.R.P. bed clothes. The blankets now in use were laundered once in every six months. It was proposed that they be laundered monthly.

With reference to the staffing at Whitchurch Airport, it was stated that when the matter had been mentioned, the request for the allocation of an A.P.O. to the Airport had been refused, the reason being given as "shortage of staff." After a lively discussion, the view was taken that the work with the traffic being increasing, the need for an A.P.O. was now greater. The resolution that an A.P.O. be stationed at Whitchurch Airport to assist the P.O. was passed.

All the retiring officers were re-elected to office. Mr. B. J. Burge, P.O., being Chairman; Mr. G. Glass, A.P.O., being District Secretary; and Mr. A. St. J. Rump, District Organiser.

The question of Area Representation at the forthcoming Conference was then opened. The minute of March 25th, 1938, was re-read, and the sentiments expressed therein were re-affirmed. The view that Bristol should have representation at the Conference was expressed by everyone. It was felt that Bristol had been too long without this advantage. Accordingly a P.O. and an A.P.O. candidate for the South-Western Area were elected. Mr. A. de Collis was elected for the P.O. grade, and Mr. F. Simpson for the A.P.O. grade. The Secretary was instructed to inform South Wales of these events.

After a vote of thanks to the Chairman had been passed unanimously, the meeting was brought to a close at 9.15 p.m., only just in time by all accounts.

A. R.

Manchester Meeting

A meeting of the Manchester Branch of the Association was held in the depot on May 15th, when business arising out of the last meeting was discussed, and matters of local interest were raised.

An interesting point arose when the District Secretary said that the representative Councillors wished to know the attitude of the Manchester Staff towards seizure rewards.

A motion proposing complete abolition was passed unanimously. The meeting felt that the question of another system, in substitution, was too important to go into, in the time then available; the result of the vote, however, shows the frame of mind of the Manchester Staff.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks of the Chairman, Mr. S. Crompton, A.P.O.

Plymouth District Meeting

The first meeting for two years in this district was held in the Watch House on June 9th, 1942.

After the minutes of the previous meeting had been read and adopted, Mr. G. T. Clarke gave his report on current Whitley matters which, for the most part, concerned war-time staffing of Plymouth and the outports. The outcome of the discussion which followed was that the meeting resolved that the proposed war staff for Plymouth was insufficient to meet any emergency which might arise when a heavy call is made up on the staff. With regard to the staffing of outports and the employment of C.P.M.'s in the place of A.P.O.'s, concern was expressed at the vagueness of their duties as prescribed and their relationship to the resident Waterguard Officers, and it was suggested that the forthcoming Conference might go into the matter with a view to seeking some clarification of these points. It was also suggested that in any post-war reconstruction of the Service which might be discussed, the question of retirement at the age of fifty-five could be re-opened.

For the information of outport members who were unable to be present at the meeting, the following were elected as officers:—

Secretary: H. L. V. Phillips, P.O.

District Organiser: J. McAlpine, A.P.O.

Whitley Representatives: P.O.'s, W. A. Stone, L. W.

Pender: A.P.O.'s, G. T. Clarke, L.C.Hockey. C. J. L.

Swansea District Meeting

A meeting was held at the Elysium Buildings on the 3rd June. Mr. W. J. Bottel was in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting were read and unanimously adopted.

With regard to the election of Area representatives at a forthcoming Conference, the Secretary informed us he had received notice of two nominations from the Bristol District. After discussion, it was proposed "That Mr. H. E. Bevan be nominated from this District as representative for the South Wales Area." Mr. Bevan is the existing P.O. Grade Councillor. Mr. Bottel, P.O., made the proposal, and was seconded by Mr. Spinks, P.O. The meeting decided that Mr. F. Lewis, A.P.O. (of Newport) should once again be nominated from this District as the A.P.O. Grade representative. He, too, is the existing representative. A similar proposition was made in his case by Mr. Tasker, A.P.O., seconded by Mr. Gully, A.P.O.

A rather lengthy argument was pursued on the question of Detached Duty. Cases of hardship were quoted, in which officers had been two or three times moved within a comparatively short period. It was eventually decided to allow the elected Councillors a free hand at the Conference.

Seizure rewards, likewise, were discussed at considerable length. Members were of the opinion that the Association should adhere to its policy of pressing for the abolition of rewards, and it was proposed "That seizure rewards be abolished, and that the average amount paid out as such during the past three years be allocated as salary to the Grades concerned."

No other business arising, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

The Lads o' London

These notes, which are being written at home whilst on leave, mark the completion of twelve months of journalistic efforts on your behalf, and looking back over the past year I am indeed thankful to those who have helped me in this venture. If they have been the means of you contacting old colleagues alone, then the efforts have not been in vain, but I sincerely hope that long before this column reaches its second anniversary that the war will be over and that each one of you will be in his appointed place in the department.

'Tis rather pleasing, nay, even flattering, to be described as a lummary, especially of the world's premier port and city, in last month's "Customs Journal."

In Liverpool elections for grade councillors to the Conference is occupying the attention of the staff at the moment, and there are two nominees for the position of A.P.O. representative. The half-yearly change of stations is about to take place, but one wonders if the reasons for the six-monthly changes are still good ones.

Of the Lads o' London there is good news. Joe Thompson is safe. He has arrived in Bombay, and I am sure that we are all glad to learn of his safety. Dick Jones has been promoted to L/Bdr., with prospects of further promotion (if he behaves), and John McKenzie is now a sergeant. Congratulations, chaps. Jim Sutton, F.A.A., has travelled north, and is now receiving flying instruction, and likes it; and Jim Sherlock met Freddie Smallwood whilst engaged upon preliminary Fleet Air Arm courses. Vic Jefford met with a car accident recently and injured his right arm, it being broken in two places, and he also dislocated his wrist and shoulder. He was, in company with some other chaps from his regiment, on his way to a cinema show, and the next he knew was that he was lying in hospital in Weymouth. Fortunately he is progressing satisfactorily, but it will be a long job. Doug. Sommerville was in the York blitz, and he related some of his adventures during that time, but apart from having to find fresh digs., he is O.K. John McKenzie, too, was in the Norwich blitz, and he had rather a trying time.

A welcome letter that came from George McFetrich, together with a copy of his battery magazine, showed him in a new role as a journalist. George is responsible for writing the column each month entitled "Battery Personalities," and they make interesting reading.

Bob Douglas is keenly appreciative of the Association's efforts to improve conditions of service within the department, and wrote: "Although I am in the forces, the improvements and changes made will affect me sooner or later." Would that all the staff were so appreciative and performed their bounded duty, i.e., paid their subs. and attended the meetings. Great things would come of their endeavours.

Alan Bee visited Whitehall last month, and the result of his mission there is awaited with interest. Roger Withey is now near Londonderry, after having completed his disciplinary training at Blackpool. Call and see Bill Farmer while you are there, Roger. He requires news of the Runcorn staff and of Jimmy Dunn.

Mr. J. Weeks, the father of our friend Bill Weeks, wishes it to be known that if any of the lads care to call and see him at his home, they can be sure of a warm welcome and a night's rest. His address is 27, Knighton Drive, Woodford, Essex. I hope that all you chaps are noting these addresses, 'tis for your benefit. Later on, perhaps, it will be possible to publish a complete list of such open houses.

Our thanks are tendered to Mr. Weeks for his kind offer. Two more of our colleagues have become fathers, in each case, of daughters—John Trevanion, who is on D.D. at Methil, and Bill Menzies, who is in the R.A.F. Bill is now receiving flying instruction, and shortly is to be sent abroad. Congratulations, daddies. Bert Finch has transferred to the Intelligence Corps from the Black Watch. Billie Williamson informed me that Llew Barnes is now off the danger list, but is still in hospital in Alexandria recovering from intestinal perforation. Llew is a survivor of a vessel sunk by enemy bombing in the Mediterranean. He was also one of the besieged in Tobruk, and it is hard

luck to get through all that and then fall a victim to sickness. Some months ago I wrote of the tragic bereavement that befell Bob Elton when he lost his wife after first presenting him with a baby daughter. He has again been bereaved by the death of that dear little baby, and each of us will have, I know, a special place for him in our thoughts at this time. Jim Percival is off sick again, and has had two blood transfusions, and he is stated to be a little better. Jim is in hospital at Godalming.

Two weddings of especial interest to members of the London staff took place at the end of June between Miss Kathleen Diaper, eldest daughter of Mr. Arthur Diaper, P.O., and Mr. James Merron, son of Mr. James Merron, sen., A.I.; and yet another of equal interest, in which our worthy friend and colleague, Micky Myers, has again taken unto himself a wife. The best wishes of the London staff and other interested friends are extended to the happy couples.

During my short spell of leave I visited most of the London offices and found everybody keen to learn of the welfare of you chaps in the forces.

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

R.J.L.

IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL

MR. K. R. KNELL, P.O.

On Wednesday, 10th June, 1942, before members of all grades, Mr. Kenneth R. Knell, recently retired Preventive Officer, appeared at the Custom House, Gravesend, to be honoured by the award of the Imperial Service Medal bestowed upon him by order of His Majesty the King. Those present included the Waterguard Superintendent, Mr. C. R. Purser, who presented the medal on behalf of His Majesty, the Gravesend Surveyor, Mr. A. Richardson, recently appointed to take charge of the Gravesend District, and Messrs. Jones, Foster, Creese and Westcott, Chief Preventive Officers. Other visitors included Mr. E. E. Webber, I.S.M., retired Preventive Officer, and Sergeant-Observer Henry Hall, on leave after operations of a vigorous nature.

The Waterguard Superintendent opened the occasion by stating that the presentation had been delayed for a reason. Mr. Hughes, late Waterguard Surveyor, had a high opinion of Mr. Knell, and had said that he would be sorry when Mr. Knell retired. When Mr. Hughes went on the sick list the presentation was delayed in order that "Tom Hughes" could be present at the event, but this was not to be. He informed Mr. Richardson that Mr. Hughes had considered his staff second to none, and went on to say that Mr. Knell, after forty years of loyal service, rightly deserved this honour bestowed upon him by His Majesty. He read His Majesty's accompanying message.

Mr. Foster, C.P.O., stated that he had always found Mr. Knell to be a conscientious and sound fellow, and wished him a long and happy retirement. Messrs. Creese and Westcott associated themselves with Mr. Foster's remarks, and Mr. Belger, P.O., said that "Ken" had always shown sound judgment and had always been ready to give advice to his colleagues; he wished him a happy retirement. Mr. Arthur Carter, of Plymouth, sent his regards, and Mr. E. E. Webber, I.S.M., spoke of Mr. Knell as an officer of great zeal, and said that he was glad that his services were being recognised in this manner.

Mr. Richardson, Waterguard Surveyor, thanked the Superintendent for his opening remarks, and gave praise to Mr. Knell, whom he had known since 1925, both on and off duty. He said that the function was of the highest importance, and he felt certain that not only Mr. Knell, but his family also would feel the honour of the occasion.

The medal was then pinned on the recipient, and an envelope containing a gift from the staff was also handed to him.

Mr. Knell, replying, said that he was proud that his humble services had been recognised in this manner. He thanked the staff for their gift and said "Good-bye" to each member personally.

Mr. Knell, born in London, entered the Customs Service in 1901, being stationed at Gravesend for the whole of his service with the exception of 2½ years, 1919-1921, when he was promoted to Preventive Officer and transferred to Liverpool.

Tyne Topics

There has been some local activity (these war phrases must be "catching") in Association matters in the Tyne Area recently.

At a meeting held at North Shields on May 22nd, quite reasonably attended under the circumstances, various questions concerning local staffing and attendance were discussed. The views of the staff will be placed before the Whitley Committee, in due course, by our representatives. These matters, then, being *sub judice*, together with other business which was earmarked for discussion at the forthcoming Conference, we will leave for the moment.

Nothing fresh has come in (what, again!) regarding the lads in the Forces, except that Ronnie Stephenson has really "gone foreign," to sunny clime and coral strand, I'm told. Good hunting, Ronnie.

Closer home, where punkah-wallahs are not, we have no news of Fred Combridge at Liverpool. What about it, Fred? A fellow exile there, Bob Maxwell, is still on fairly cushy relief duty, I hear, at Workington. Good luck, Bob. We extend best wishes to W. F. Grosart, and hope that his wife, a victim of the unspeakable Hun, is steadily recovering. At Stronsay, G. R. Elliott is bearing up and is active in widely different spheres. Joe Failes, at Greenock, has made no signal. Shine your lamp, Joe! "Hutch" is well and happy at Larne. Each to his own. J. F. Jordan would, I know, be happier here than at Leith. Tom McDermott is in the Granite City and could be much worse off. Getting accustomed to walking, Tom? Jock Mackie, home at Kirkcaldy, beams delight. I was pleased to see you in this district, Jock. At Greenock, Jimmie Reay is busy (and affluent, Jimmie?) Another Jimmie at the same port, James Day, is content. Scottish air will do the bairn good, Jimmie! Norman Leckenby and Tommy Meade have had a lengthy stay at West Hartlepool, and can be counted as settlers—or is it "nesters"? There are storks around Hartlepool. From Alloa, Fred Watson has moved to Grangemouth. Hope the move suits you, Fred.

Well, that's all. Let me have a line, you fellows. You have good friends here who remember you all, and they are pleased to have news through our common medium, the "C.J." All the best.
L. N. C.

Merseyside News

From time to time certain happenings in our lives cause us to stop suddenly, and we have visions of things in a different, unusual light. We feel stunned, and our thoughts seem weighed down with the immensity and importance of the subject so prominent in our minds. That is how we felt about the tragic and unforeseen death of the late Mr. Tom Stuart, A.P.O. Reference to him could not portray any signs of weakness, and the sad occurrence connected with so strong a character is appalling. His widow, family and relatives have our deep sympathy and regret, and we trust that as time proceeds a most grievous wound will be healed.

The station minute for the next six months has been published, and as usual officers who have been on night duty for the last period have a chance to enjoy the amenities of day duty. Of course there are a few objections, but they are bound to be present, and a fair hearing and judgment can be prophesied in the majority of cases. The rummage crews are still very sound in construction, and officers who use as their "metiers" logic and instinct find close associations. I have not as yet received any detailed accounts of the past six months' individual stations seizure records, but they will be issued in due course. That brings to mind a seizure made by Mr. Wardell, A.P.O., recently, 509 mechanical lighters being found by that astute and painstaking officer. For this fraudulent attempt to evade the duty, Henry McCleary, aged 19, a ship's greaser, was fined £100, with the alternative of one month's imprisonment. His excuse was that he intended to make money out of the sale of the lighters in order to take up a course of chiropody. I cannot imagine the latter as being so vitally necessary, as he did not exactly fall on his feet.

Mr. Rigby, A.P.O., Ellesmere Port, has forwarded the following particulars, and for a small port it appears that the three A.P.O.s, who by the way are all on boarding duties, have done very well, so well in fact as to constitute a small port seizure record. Look you! Since June, 1941:—

No. of seizures, 81; prosecutions, 14; cigarettes, 37,700 (No.); cigars, 523 (No.); tobacco, 16 lbs.; spirits, 30/100 galls.; silk stockings, 43 pairs; mechanical lighters, 28; opium, 1lb.

These results show much keenness and skill on the part of the officers concerned, especially in face of keen competition from the Woodside Rummage crew. Yes, the Waterguard to-day is a very live department. Adieu.

E. G. H.

Sunny Leith

It is with deep regret that we have to record elsewhere in these columns the passing of Mr. Alex. Crowe, P.O. Mr. Crowe was well liked by us all, and his death has removed one of Leith Docks' best-known characters. His popularity extended far beyond the limits of our own port, and far beyond Service circles.

A few days ago more bad news came to hand from Twyford, Fife, where Tom Welch, A.P.O., a former member of the Leith staff, was stationed till he joined the R.A.F. as a fighter pilot early in 1941. His wife has received word that he is missing, and apparently when last seen he was being attacked by three German planes over the North Sea. Nice work, Jerry, three to one. There is fortunately still a chance that he may have succeeded in reaching land before he came down. We can only hope that that chance came off.

This call-up business has depleted our ranks still further, our Mr. Reid having departed to join the Royal Navy, where we expect him to attain great heights as a wireless mechanic—up the mast fixing the aerial, probably. Of one thing we are sure, and that is that Bill will soon be as much at home on the Lower Deck as he was in the Watch House. We wish him the best of luck.

Of ordinary service news we have not much to give, save that certain recent alterations in the regulations have brought a sort of puzzled look to the eyes of our keen rummage A.P.O.'s. The same sort of look you have when somebody tells you you have won the Irish Sweep—only different.

J. H.

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Southampton Notes

To use the R.A.F. jargon, it is a "piece of cake" this month as regards news of the boys, and I think it fitting to give pride of place to the "wee Jock" and Mrs. Strachan, to whom we send congrats., upon their June wedding. Jock is still going strong with the R.A.F., which Service claims our latest addition to the Forces, namely, Jack Welsh, who left us in mid-May. Jack lost no time making himself at home, and by early June he was a member of his Training Squadron's swimming team at a Service Gala. A curious coincidence occurred at the Gala, where, amongst quite a crowd of chaps, Jack met an old Sotonian, A. H. Harrison, who is also under training as an Observer; his Plymouth and Soton friends will be glad to know that A.H.H. is keeping very fit, and that he sends his good wishes to the lads. Jack is now somewhere in the South-West.

Ron Greenhalgh, on leave in June, managed to contact a couple of the exiles, and a pleasant reunion was enjoyed by all three. Ron is in good form, and is still enjoying his Coastal Command duties. Dudley Heal, also on leave recently, following his cross-Atlantic flight, is looking well after his long spell overseas. He sends you greetings and hopes to be seeing some of you soon.

Now for the Navy, and again news of the best from Joe Cliff and Bill Foot (a bearded Bill, incidentally!) Joe is miles from anywhere, the only white men being his ship-mates, and the rest of his "acquaintances" being very black. The only pastime is work, and he says something about working like hell in terrific heat all day long. I need hardly stress upon the pleasure with which mail from home is received under those conditions. Cliff is also around the same part of the globe, but I fancy his lot is much more varied than that of Joe. His letter conveys news of an almost Ripley-like coincidence. His vessel put in for water one day in February, and a smaller vessel came alongside; you can picture Cliff's surprise when, as he writes, "the one and only Joe appeared on deck." What a reunion! And it happened by a small isle, thousands of miles from home, and populated entirely by natives. A memorable two hours for two lads who commenced their probation together, on the same date, at Soton. Bill Foot sends greetings in a letter in which he refers with familiarity to an isle which was until recently under Vichy control.

Jimmy James, now aboard a destroyer, sends good news of himself and Ted Midlane. In reply, I have had the pleasure of conveying your congrats. to Jimmy and Mrs. James upon the arrival of a bonny son.

Other news from the R.N. is of the well-being of Arthur Cheney, recently seen in the home port; of an old Sotonian, now of the London staff, F. W. (Chippy) Smallwood, who is very fit and has just made a move to the Fleet Air Arm, and of an officer well known to the Manchester staff, A. Eckersley, Sub-Lieut., R.N., contacted some weeks ago by one of the Soton staff.

A letter from E. D. Cortis corrects a little error made in these Notes a few months ago. You will all be glad to know that E.D.C. is keeping well at present, in his home town, and is busy as a draughtsman for the Admiralty, yet at the same time he remains officially an Army Reservist. We are glad to know of his recovery following a six months' spell in hospital. Doug. Joy sends good news from his training course in the West of England; he likes the work and is hoping to continue his course not far from 29 Berth in the near future.

Steve was looking very fit when contacted in London during May; he should be through his course by this time, so maybe we shall see him in the provinces very soon.

It may be the weather, or it may be the knowledge of our growing National strength, but most of the boys are now referring to the days we are all looking to, and that is their return, and many include a reference to celebrations of a high order. Rest assured, my lads, you will not have any complaints on that score when the great days (and nights) return.

By the way, the extension of the airgraph service should bring quicker news of Bill Nicolson, in India. Keep him well posted. A suggestion from our inimitable colleague

at Swansea, W.P., regarding some of our boys who suffer from pen starvation, is to be put into operation very soon, in the hope of giving you news of "all the lads all the time." Here's hoping hard, but meanwhile, if this catches the eye of those who have rested on their pens a long while, a few lines will be welcomed at this end. Many thanks to those who are so interested in making contact with the lads; we are pleased to have good news from Swansea this month, and also from Plymouth, which port provides our A.P.O. Councillor for the forthcoming Conference. Good luck, G.T.C., we know our grade interests are in capable hands.

Exiles' news comes from Maryport, where Bill Martin has found the place to be as good as Jack Welch said it was, and from Holyhead, where recent arrivals include Mr. G. H. Rugg, C.P.O. and Cliff Bayliss (from Sillioth). The selection committee will be there soon!

A few words with a recent visitor to Cardiff gave news of the well-being of "Barney" Olson, and we were glad to know it. Our evergreen friend in Liverpool sends greetings, and also good news of our old colleague, Boris.

Home data is quite good, and the boys remain well. Leave yarns proved D.D. to be the chief topic, but at the time of writing no movements have taken place. Home Guard invitations have caused some speculation and not a little back-chat in the old Watch House. Ben is well occupied with A.R.P. welfare activities, which are just in his handwriting, plus regular spells of relief duty. Many were the enquiries about you lads who are away, and from topsides downwards are sent the best of wishes to all Sotonians away, Forces and exiles. You will be sorry to know that Mr. J. Burrows, P.O., is again on sick leave, with a recurrence of his previous injury; we wish him a sure recovery from his painful indisposition.

The Soton officers who know Bill Turnbull wish to be included with the sentiments expressed in the last issue by R. J. Lowe; we greatly regret his retirement and its cause.

Finally, the 1942 Conference. It promises to be a good one, and maybe a vital one; many points will be raised which have arisen through wartime conditions, and perhaps some will have a bearing, not only now, but well into the future, therefore the interests of our Forces men are affected. We wish the men who will represent us a successful Conference, plenty of action, and some far-sighted vision.

P.S.—The occasional past references to P.S.A. subs. and those stalwarts who forget to pay them, are solely intended for the exiles, and not for Forces boys. I am sorry that the correction has been necessary, and I thank the chaps who have responded. As previously stated in Current Comments and elsewhere, men in the Forces retain full membership and all facilities, but are not compelled to maintain subscriptions. Cheerio, Forces!

L. B.

"Sunderland Calling"

Hello, Forces!

Another member of the silent Navy has reported this month. Griffo reports all well. We are still lacking news of Dick Dixon and Harold Coulson to complete the circle.

The Big Boy dropped in unexpectedly last month on another seven days' leave. He has been relieved of his cushy billet, and was expecting to be drafted overseas. He is at present at Grimsby, and reports fit and well; to the exiles he sends his chin chins.

I hear indirectly that Charlie Scarfe has left for the East, so it will be some time before we hear from him. Brian Horn also is silent these days.

Pilot Officer Jack Gaston has reported by letter. He is now with an O.T.U. somewhere in Oxfordshire. We are looking for that promised visit, Jack. Meanwhile, keep smiling.

Our exiles have increased since last month, Alf Phipps having departed to Greenock as E.M.I. We were sorry to see him go, yet pleased on his promotion, for which we extend our congratulations. Good luck, Alf!

Another departure, for Methil this time, was Jack Crosby; he has been on D.D. at Seaham for the past eighteen months or more. He reports liking the place, the work being congenial and varied. I won't forget the fruit you mentioned, Jack.

The Bos'un reports all well with him at Troon, and is enjoying the change from Sunderland. Well, don't like it too well, Tom. We want you back.

George Simmons has not reported this month, maybe he is busy house-hunting.

Bill Sutton is another who has not reported. If they haven't written by the time they see this, my address is unchanged.

The old place woke up last week with a vengeance, an arrival from foreign and—whisper it—three seizures. George Miller doing his stuff. He kicked off before tea with 180 cigarettes and 8 mechanical lighters, all nicely packed up ready for London, the owner pleading forgetfulness and that he wanted them for his pals as presents as he was getting married this trip. Well, he was relieved of the T.V.D., a nice kick-off to married life for him. After tea, while doing the boat deck, he discovered 800 cigarettes in the lifebelt locker, nicely packed round with lifebelts and ammunition, and to make the treble he found 400 cigarettes in coils of ropes on the after-poop deck. A hectic time followed, and the owner of the 800 was run to earth, he also paid; but unfortunately there was not sufficient time to run the owner of the 400 to earth. So you see, Sunderland has not forgotten how to do the job.

Cheerio, Forces! Over to you; over.

O. H. L.

Glasgow Notes

Notes from Glasgow has not been a recent Journal feature, but the first P.S.A. meeting of 1942, held at Mavisbank on May 15th, deserves mention, if only for the large attendance and the lengthy nature of the agenda.

Among the many items, all of local interest, general staffing, disposal of duty money, fixed stations, and out-port relief duties by officers on detached duty produced most discussion.

A sub-committee was formed to tackle staffing problems in the port, with instructions to report back at the earliest possible date. Delay occasioned, with resulting absence from stations, by the present method of checking duty money slips and prices resulted in a proposal that duty be paid in on a schedule, and that each P.O. be issued with two duty slip books.

Mr. Wood, P.O., drew attention to the question of hardship from P.O.s posted to Glasgow being required to officiate at out-ports, and suggested that, if possible, these officers' names be removed from the roster. It was pointed out, however, that the number of out-ports relieved from Glasgow had increased by six since war broke out, and that equal hardship would be experienced by Glasgow P.O.s if the additional staff were freed from liability to out-port relief. The item was adjourned, as was that concerning fixed stations.

A reminder of the possibility of an early Conference was given to members by Mr. Grant, A.P.O. In this connection, Mr. Murray voiced a complaint from the C.P.O. grade, that although the C.P.O. Councillor for the Scottish Area was stationed in Glasgow, he had not received information or circulars from P.S.A. headquarters which other grade representatives were getting. He moved that the attention of P.S.A. headquarters be drawn to the matter, and was seconded by Mr. Grant, C.P.O. The District Secretary was instructed to proceed in accordance with the terms of the motion.

Laurie Fozzard (late London), Jimmy Day (ex-Hartlepool), Don Cameron, Wally Hislop and "Pat" Gardner are Glasgow's contribution to the Forces to date. "Pat," whose social and soccer exploits are still remembered, called here last week while on "christening" leave, complete in jumper and bell-bottoms. He may not wear these for long, however, as he is being recommended for a commission. Wally Hislop is now in boom defence, having passed out successfully in seamanship and gunnery. Laurie Fozzard, also afloat, dropped in recently, when his ship visited Northern waters. Jimmy Day and Don Cameron, in the Army, have not so far reported home. Let's hear from you, boys!

J. C. G.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM —1942 VERSION

It has been given to some to achieve reforms by the power of their pen, usually after long and untiring efforts, but few writers can have had the unique experience of seeing the materialisation of their dreams—or at least the partial realisation—before their work was even published! Under the circumstances I can hardly take any kudos for the recent outbreak of magic in Greenock. We have, in fact, for a week or more been under the benign patronage of a fairy godmother in the person of no less than the Deputy I.G.W., complete with a faery retinue of Mr. Merron and various members of the Office of Works.

Whether Mr. Kerr carried the conventional magic wand or was armed with the sword Excalibur I know not, but judging by the amount of severed red tape which filled the air like so much chaff, it must have been something pretty powerful. Small wonder that by the end of the week we were all but ready to address people as "Peas-blossom," "Mustard-seed," or—"Bottom"!

It was indeed a pleasure and a privilege to meet a gentleman who showed so clearly that he was not only ready to listen but genuinely anxious to hear the views of everyone, and especially those of the lowest rank. That all were able to discuss problems ranging from little details of routine to those affecting the broad structure and policy of the port, freely, without formality, and without the accompaniment of raised voices, cursings and strange oaths, to which we have become accustomed if not inured, contributed in no small measure to the good work which was performed.

With a celerity of which any mediæval wizard would have been proud, lorry-loads of lockers, stationery presses, file cupboards and other office furniture appeared in the twinkling of an eye, the new annexe was completed (by "the little people"?) overnight, gangs of men (or were they goblins?) tore down unwanted partitions, Post Office genii fitted telephones, the A.P.O.s stripped W.S.s' and C.P.O.s' rooms of their impedimenta, and transferred it to the annexe with gleeful zest if not with loving care.

In addition to the general office, now greatly improved by the absorption of the P.O.s' retiring cubicle and removal of the intervening partition, there is now a second office and a P.O.s' retiring room of reasonable dimensions. An enclosed cycle shed should be in use by the time of publication.

Meanwhile, we had the opportunity of discussing with H.M.O.W. surveyors, plans for an entirely new office in the neighbourhood of Gourcock, the hub of local work and officialdom—a thing we had been fighting for for two years. These gentlemen were at first reluctant to admit that the staff had any say in the matter, and submitted, or rather exhibited, a plan with an air of utter finality matched only by that with which it was rejected. Several home truths were expounded with some vigour by one of our very able Whitley Representatives (he lends me his typewriter!), with the result that cordial agreement and satisfaction was finally reached by both sides, and we are now promised an office which in plan is about all we could wish, though the specification, we fear, will be definitely and unavoidably sub-standard.

This much we have seen, but we hear that similar exploits were performed behind the scenes. Naval authorities, fuel overseers, and various other bureaucrats heard the trumpet of our Galahad at their gates and entered the lists against Excalibur in full swing. If there were any among them who had previously looked upon the Water-guard as a degrading excrescence or omnibus doormat, I have no doubt they are now in the happy position of being wiser but not sadder, for Excalibur, though wielded firmly, is grasped in a velvet glove. B. A. BENNING.

CIVIL SERVICE WAR DISTRESS FUND

In most government offices throughout the country there is now to be seen a blue-and-brown poster setting out the six heads under which the Fund is relieving distress attributable to the war amongst civil servants outside the Post Office.

The recently published Annual Report of the first year's work of the Fund amplifies the information in the poster and shows the financial position.

Continuing allowances have been made to 258 dependants—83 widows, 109 children and 66 others—of 144 civil servants. The 144 fatalities consisted of 66 service and 78 civilian, and were almost evenly divided between permanent and temporary. In a large number of cases it has not been necessary to make allowances to dependants, because under war-time conditions they have been able to find employment. After the war, in all probability, many of these will need assistance from the Fund.

While the amount paid out in allowances during the year was approximately £2,000, the Report points out that the material figure is the probable total eventual cost of the allowances. The Government Actuary has estimated that at the present rates the total cost of the existing allowances alone will be in the region of £45,000.

In ten cases, continuing allowances have been made to permanently disabled civil servants, and in a large proportion of the 80 cases in which special grants were made, the grants were to cover periods of temporary disablement. £569 was paid in special grants, and a further £316 was distributed in Christmas gifts to dependants on the basis of £2 to each adult and £1 to each child.

Halfway through the year, the Committee of Management decided to help where necessary with the education of dependent children, and grants were made in respect of 15 children. Arrangements were made with the Civil Service Benevolent Fund to place six children in the excellent orphanages in which that Fund is interested.

Although the Fund started in April, 1941, when the worst of the blitz was over, during the year to March, 1942, 296 bomb damage grants, totalling £1,721, were made, more than half during April and May, 1941.

On the organisation side, local committees have been set up on a geographical basis to cover the whole of the United Kingdom. Through these committees the Fund is able to get into touch with the dependants of all civil servants killed, and to maintain contact with all those it is helping. The local committees also make immediate grants following air raid damage out of cash provided locally for the purpose, so as to avoid the delay involved in communicating with the headquarters of the Fund in London.

Approximately half (180,000) of the eligible civil servants are contributing to the Fund, and the income is now about £10,000 a month. Approximately £5,700 was paid out during the year but, as has already been indicated, the probable total liabilities incurred during the first year's working are not likely to be much less than the first year's income (£93,000).

The war is spreading, and the number of fatalities, both civilian and service, is on the increase. There is little doubt that we shall not be fortunate enough to achieve victory without much heavier casualties than have been suffered up to the present, and it is earnestly hoped that during the forthcoming year the remaining half of the service will join with their colleagues in ensuring that the resources of the Fund will be ample to relieve all distress attributable to the war amongst civil servants and their dependants.

Correspondence

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

May I, through "The Customs Journal," acquaint members in other districts of the proposal to be submitted at the forthcoming conference from the South Wales district. It is on the vexed question of detached duty, and is put forward with a view to causing the least hardship in the various cases. Here is the proposal: "That, in the event of one or more officers on detached duty at a port becoming redundant, the order in which they shall be transferred away for further D.D. at another port shall be:—

"1. The junior unmarried D.D. officer or the junior married officer who has removed neither wife, family nor furniture to his present D.D. port.

"2. The junior married D.D. officer who has removed wife and/or family, but not furniture, to his present D.D. port.

"3. The junior married D.D. officer who has removed wife, family and furniture to his present D.D. port."

This proposition, if adopted, would, of course, replace the present straight juniority rule which now operates very harshly in some cases. Officers who remove their families, and those who remove furniture as well, usually pay out much more than is allowed under the war-time orders. In my own case, it cost me £30 from my own pocket above the amount I could officially claim. This suggestion appears to me a great improvement on the present rule, and I hope members from the different districts will give their representatives instructions to support it at the forthcoming conference.

E.G.B.

Gravesend News

At a District meeting held in the Custom House, Gravesend, on 9th instant, for the election of Councillors, Mr. B. C. Reilly was unanimously supported to represent the Preventive Officer Grade. Owing to the small representation of A.P.O.'s, the District Secretary was instructed to hold a ballot, the result to be not later than June 12th.

Mr. N. A. Ramsay was elected to Local Whitley office, so taking the place of Mr. T. Hill, serving with the Forces.

After discussion of motions for the next meeting, the assembly closed at 8.30 p.m.

To our great pleasure, Sergeant-ObsERVER Henry Hall walked into the Custom House on Thursday, having a short leave after very active duties which have stirred everyone in the country. We also learn that Trooper Eric Little is still in the Middle East, not so very distant from Trevor Spark on flying operations. After the Middle East flare-up we hope to have some news of our very busy colleagues.

Bert Woodroffe is apparently still in the United States, and we are waiting to hear from Jack Foers, who when we last saw him was expecting orders for overseas.

Greetings also to our colleagues on D.D.

E. A. C.

PRESENTATION IN IRELAND

The headline "Customs Officer's Gallant Act" in the *Newry Telegraph* of 30th May precedes an account of a presentation made to Mr. S. J. Dorey, A.P.O., Hull (D.D., Warrenpoint, Co. Down), of the Royal Humane Society's Certificate for saving life. The presentation was made at the Warrenpoint Petty Sessions by Major McCullum, D.S.O., Resident Magistrate.

Mr. Dorey earned this distinction one cold, dark night last December when he saved a sailor who had fallen in the dock in the black-out, from drowning. He dived into the dock fully clothed, and supported the man for some time until members of the ship's crew came to their assistance. But for his timely act there is no doubt the man would have been drowned.

In addition to Major McCullum, others who congratulated Mr. Dorey included Mr. H. E. W. Firman, Surveyor of Customs and Excise, District Inspector Nelson, Royal Ulster Constabulary, and Mr. J. Paterson, Clerk of the Court.

Official duties prevented a member of the Waterguard being present at this ceremony, but occasion was taken to "celebrate" the honour conferred on my colleague in the traditional Waterguard manner.

A. R. L.



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MANCHESTER PROSECUTIONS

On the 16th April, an A.B., an O.S., and the Bos'n of a Norwegian ship from Bombay were jointly concerned in attempting to smuggle 4,400 (No.) 9-10/16 lb. cigarettes by means of the old tarpaulin trick, but Mr. Ryan, A.P.O., of Mr. A. V. Peck's rummage crew, managed to get to the centre of said tarpaulin, with the result that Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., was able to extract, at Salford Police Court, a penalty of £10 each in the case of the two sailors, and £5 in the case of the Bos'n.

At Salford Police Court on the 5th May, H. C. Hjorth, fireman of a British ex-Danish vessel was fined S.V.D. £8 8s. 9d. He hid 2,000 (No.) 4½lb. cigarettes under the coal in the bunkers, but didn't put them deep enough, for Mr. W. N. Dodd, A.P.O., of Mr. A. V. Peck's rummage crew, applied his bunker technique, with the above result. Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., prosecuted.

At 7.45 p.m. on the 5th May, B. Nielsen, A.B., came towards the main dock gates with a large sea-bag and a faltering step, for he had spotted Mr. Ryan, A.P.O., on patrol duty, attached to Mr. E. S. Hick's rummage crew. He then grew scared of Mr. Ryan's intentions, for he turned and ran.

Chased and caught by our officer, he turned out to be trying to beat the blockade with 3,500 (No.) cigarettes and 44/100 proof gallons of spirits. He was convoyed back to his ship, with no further results for him, but imagine the feelings of O. Larsen, the donkeyman who, after lumping his 1,360 cigarettes up the tunnel escape, found he had put them into the eager arms of Mr. Ryan, A.P.O., who had just finished his rummage of the runner, Nielsen.

At Salford Police Court the following day, Nielsen was fined £16 16s. 0d., and Larsen £5 15s. 0d. S.V.D. Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., prosecuted for the Crown.

THE WATERGUARD CARRIES ON

A sailor's life is the life for me,
Sing the jolly old salts
Who never go to sea;
But they lend a willing hand
To "do" the C. & E.;
And the Waterguard carries on.

It's a gradely branch, we all agree,
If you can stand the blackout
And the tumbling sea,
Or ten hours from home and office
Without thought of tea;
And the Waterguard carries on.

Having dealt with piles of documents
And a host of different duties
Needing tact immense,
You must be prepared for queries
About six months hence;
And the Waterguard carries on.

Of your war-time jobs you do not shout;
But you'll get it, like the chicken,
If you leave one out;
Other services you cover
When they're not about;
And the Waterguard carries on.

You'll get no medal when the war is won;
The Powers-that-Be may quite forget
They owe you one;
But you'll keep the flag a-flyin',
As you've always done;
And the Waterguard carries on.

--G. W.

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- Measles, Mumps, Cafarrh
- Nerve and Brain Diseases
- Corns and Warts
- Physical Culture
- What to Do in Emergencies
- Treatment for all Skin Diseases
- The Lungs, Pleurisy
- Diseases of Women
- Hygiene, Anatomy, Pharmacy
- The Principles of Nursing
- The Eye, the Ear
- The Throat, the Nose
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