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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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DECEMBER, 1943.

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CHANGES IN THE STAFF

TO 6TH DECEMBER, 1943.

TRANSFER.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

McCullagh, W. G., Glasgow to Belfast.

OFFICER LEAVING THE SERVICE.

DEATH.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Beech, T. H. R., North Shields, Newcastle.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Fleet, H. J., Chief Preventive Officer.

Heath, W. H., Preventive Officer.

OBITUARY

FLYING OFFICER E. T. WILLIAMS.

It was with deep anxiety that we learned Flying Officer E. T. Williams, late A.P.O., Port Talbot, was missing from operations on May 3rd, 1943.

On the 18th June, the Authorities reported he was presumed killed and we mourn the passing of a courageous colleague and loyal friend.

Trevor entered our service on the 23rd October, 1939, and, from the very commencement, he displayed a keen desire to take an active part in the fighting services. It was not until June, 1941, however, that he was released for service with the R.A.F. After approximately twelve months training in this country and South Africa he was posted for operations and took part in several low-flying attacks on Holland and Northern France.

A most likeable fellow, Trevor soon earned the respect and affection of the whole staff by his forthright manner, jovial spirit, sportive instincts and reliable character.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Williams in the grievous loss she has sustained.

H.E.P.B.

MR. S. J. GAWN, A.P.O., SHOREHAM.

The many friends in the Service will learn with deep regret of the sudden death of Stan Gawn on Sunday, 5th December. He was on duty the previous day and appeared to be his usual self, but on the Sunday, after a short spell in the garden, he went indoors not feeling too well, laid down to rest and passed peacefully away.

Age 56, he had seen service at Newport, Mon., and for the last 19 years was stationed at Shoreham, Sussex. He leaves a widow and three sons, the latter now serving in the Navy and Army.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to them in their great loss. The interment took place on Thursday, 9th December, with members of the Waterguard, Landing and Clerical Staffs, Security Police and Harbour officials in attendance. S.B.

MR. T. H. R. BEECH, A.P.O., TYNE.

A colleague has again been lost at a comparatively early age. Thomas Hylton Beech, a senior A.P.O., who met his death in the River Tyne on the morning of Saturday, the 20th November, was only 53.

"Sandy" Beech will be remembered by many of the Waterguard personnel all over the country. He was, in his field, without rival. Did you ask him on a wintry morn, the sun like a golden guinea just out of the east, "What's that crossing the bar, Tom?" it would be child's play to him. He would see no more than you, apparently; a bare silhouette—a stick and a hull—a trio of coloured lights with maybe an extra glint of red—a rolling vessel, head on. "That's Sankowsky" he would say, "in the 'Erica'—timber for the dock," or maybe "Pelton boat, looks like the 'Spero'; no, she'll be the 'Largo'—Watson's the skipper. His Chief was married three weeks ago."

Ships and shipping men were Sandy's hobby. His memory, on those matters, was prodigious. And now the river that he knew so well has taken him to her cold bosom. He was a character. He will be missed. REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife and two sons—the younger is a junior officer in a tanker—in their sudden and disastrous loss.

L.N.C.

MR. H. J. FLEET, C.P.O. (RETIRED).

It was with a deep and profound feeling of regret that we learnt of the passing of Mr. H. J. Fleet at the age of 73 years at Margate, where he had made his home since his retirement in 1931.

"Bertie," as he was affectionately known, entered the Civil Service as a boy clerk in 1885, transferred to the Waterguard in 1890, and served as a Boatman and later Preventive Man at Gravesend and Dover. Promoted in 1906 to the rank of Preventive Officer, he served in this capacity in London, Hull and Rosyth, where he spent the latter years of the last war. After the war he was promoted to the rank of Chief Preventive Officer, and was appointed to London, King George, Royal Albert and Victoria Docks, being his station on his retirement.

A popular figure among the shipping fraternity, respected and loved by the staff who served under him, he will be remembered by all who took part in social and sports activities, being Chairman of the North Side Sports and Social Club. With Mrs. Fleet he invariably graced the dances and other events in London Waterguard circles, where they were ever popular and favourite figures.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Fleet and her four sons. They mourn the loss of a husband and father, we the loss of a colleague and friend.

The funeral service at St. John's Cemetery was conducted by the Rev. J. V. Markham. In addition to the four sons, the mourners included Alderman W. J. Perkins, Chief Inspector H. G. Butcher, Ramsgate Div. K.C.C., Inspector Futter and Sergt. Steele, of the Margate Div. The Department was represented by Mr. E. P. Whettingstall, Waterguard Superintendent, Dover (who represented Mr. C. R. Purser, Waterguard Superintendent, London); Mr. A. Songhurst, P.O., London; Mr. A. A. Walter, P.O., Gravesend; Mr. E. A. C. Hall, P.O.; and Mr. C. Burton, A.P.O., Ramsgate; Mr. Lacey, A.P.O., Dover; and Mr. Betts, C.P.M., Margate.

The coffin was borne to the graveside covered by a Customs ensign, the uniformed Waterguard Staff acting as pall bearers.

Among the beautiful floral tributes were a number from his old colleagues in the various ports.

THE CUSTOMS FUND

At a Special Meeting of Subscribers, held in the Refreshment Club, City Gate House, on Thursday, 25th November, at 5 p.m., the President, W. Henderson, Esq., O.B.E., declared Mr. Arthur Calvert duly elected Auditor to the Fund. The President paid tribute to the excellent work performed for so many years by the late Mr. Loveless as Auditor. His loss was felt very deeply in Fund circles and he extended very deep sympathy to his family.

CURRENT COMMENTS

War Bonus.

THE latest bonus settlement, with effect as from 1st November, 1943, resulted from negotiations commenced in September last. The new bonus of 19s. 0d. per week (annual equivalent £49 11s. 0d.) payable to those whose remuneration does not exceed £850, falls short of what the Staff Side claimed, but in several respects it is an achievement.

The Official Side have agreed to this review on the understanding, which the Staff Side accepted, that unless something quite exceptional happens to rates of pay outside, the Staff Side will not seek to re-open bonus negotiations within a year. Thus, provided there is no marked change in outside wage levels or in the cost of living, Civil Servants can consider the bonus element of remuneration stabilised for the next twelve months, at least.

The significance of the ceiling of £850 is that this is the salary limit of the field of negotiation covered by Whitley.

The consequential increase in Overtime rates is one penny an hour on the week-day rate for both the A.P.O. and P.O. grades and, we understand, this will operate as from the first overtime week beginning after the 28th November.

It was unfortunate, indeed perhaps confusing, that the alterations to overtime rates resulting from the June, 1943 Bonus settlement should have been issued with the December Amendment Slips—six months after the event.

The following list gives details (as far as our members are concerned) of settlements to date:—

1st February, 1940.	50/- to 95/- p.w.	5/-
1st March, 1941.	Up to £250 p.a.	10/-
	Over £250 and up to £350	5/-
1st September, 1941.	Up to £250	10/-
	Over £250 and up to £500	5/-
1st December, 1942.	Up to £250	13/6
	Over £250 and up to £500	7/6
1st June, 1943.	Up to £250	17/-
	Over £250 and up to £500	14/-
	Over £500 and up to £850	£25 p.a.
1st November, 1943.	All salaries up to £850	19/- p.w. or £49 11s. 0d. p.a.

In each case the "escalator" clause operates. This ensures that no officer shall receive less in pay and bonus together than he would have received if his pay alone had been smaller.

Waterguard Sectional Committee.

Arrangements have been made for a joint meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee to take place on Wednesday, the 5th January, 1944.

Executive Committee (P.S.A.).

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on the 6th and 7th January next, at Walter House, Strand, London—commencing at 10 a.m.

"The Customs Journal."

If the negotiations now proceeding are successful this will be the last issue of "The Customs Journal" in the present form. Following the instructions of the Executive Committee (as Committee of Management) the aim of the present negotiations is to produce a pocket-sized periodical as from the first issue in the New Year.

There is, of course, nothing original in this. Indeed our Journal is one of the few Service periodicals out of step with this war-created fashion. We think it will prove to be a distinct improvement but we would like to hear the views of the members later.

Alarm Clocks.

The Association's claim, lodged with the Board of Trade in September last, is still proceeding, albeit slowly. We are not yet in a position to say that it has produced any clocks, but at least something has been achieved. We understand that Board of Trade have passed the enquiry to the Board of Customs for details (or estimates) of requirements within the Department and an O.W.O. is about to be issued.

We are pleased to note firstly, that the Joint Committee (C. and E. Assns.) have agreed that Waterguard Officers on tidal duties must have priority and, secondly, that the allocation of buying permits will be made in consultation with the Association.

Towels.

In reply to several correspondents and to anticipate similar questions of the future, the position in the question is that the Board have now issued instructions that Waterguard officers on rumage duties and members of the Launch Service should be issued with clean towels on a weekly basis, notwithstanding the continuation of the fortnightly issue for other grades.

"Let it be So."

The action in the High Courts in which Messrs. Stanton and Willis, Secretary and Chairman, respectively, of the C. and E. Watchers' Association, sued Mr. G. E. McDoual, Chairman of the G.M. and M.G.A., for damages for libel was settled before Mr. Justice Hilbery on 23rd November. The Defendant, while denying liability, had paid into Court a sum by way of substantial damages in satisfaction of each of the Plaintiffs' claims and "in view of the statements in the Defence, particularly that the words were not written or published of the Plaintiffs in relation to any of their financial duties or responsibilities either as Branch Secretary or Chairman or otherwise, the Plaintiffs decided to accept the money paid into Court in satisfaction of their claim and to put an end to the proceedings."

And Mr. Justice Hilbery said "Let it be so."

G.M. and M.G.A.

Following our announcement in the November issue regarding the sudden resignation of Mr. Dick Gifford from the post of General Secretary of the Government Minor and Manipulative Grades Association, we are now in a position to say that his successor is Mr. G. V. Garvell. Mr. Garvell has a difficult job, but with the backing of his members he should succeed where others have failed.

Seasonal Greetings.

A Merry Christmas (if we are in time) and a Happy Peace-achieving New Year to all our readers.

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Greenock News

Apology.

We are glad that Mr. Grant, in his letter in the November Journal, has been able to remove the slur on the P.O. grade in Glasgow unfortunately cast by the October "Greenock News." To my own regrets that this false impression was given I can only add that my report was—and still is—a faithful account of the proceedings of the meeting: happily the message exhibited to the staff on the day of the meeting now appears to have been incorrect.

Prime Interest on Principle.

An Association Meeting was held at Cardwell Bay on November 16th to consider, firstly, a new local order requiring "classification by groups of the articles contained in the Import and Export List" when making out prime entries and, secondly, the safe custody of cash.

Since the agenda mainly concerned P.O.'s the small number of other grades present was not surprising, but a 100% P.O. attendance having been asked for, it was disappointing to see such a small proportion of that grade represented; indeed they comprised but half the meeting.

The business proceeded on very informal lines, the items on the agenda being discussed alternately and often concurrently, so that it was sometimes difficult to follow the various lines of argument. The attendance being so small, however, this informality did not materially detract from much useful and constructive discussion.

As to whether it was proper to the Waterguard to distinguish primes according to group letters as well as to class number the meeting, while opposing the new order on principle, decided to seek the advice of the General Secretary before taking action on such a far-reaching question.

Safe Guards.

The second item on the agenda brought to light some interesting facts. It was said that of the three offices only that at Cardwell Bay had a safe, and even that was only a safe in name since of the two keys one was in the custody of a C.P.O., while the other, ostentatiously labelled, hung prominently in the general office. The building, which could be entered by the simple process of kicking in the plasterboard walls, was not invariably occupied throughout the day, while at night it was unoccupied save for the fire-watcher who, firstly, was not responsible for the safe custody of the safe and, secondly, might be only a temporary hand gleaned from the local labour market—here to-day and gone to-morrow. P.O.'s complained that they had only the alternative of taking Crown money home or putting an amount which might run into four figures into this "safe" without even being able to get a receipt. It was agreed that it was desirable to have a safe at Princes Pier and that there should be continuous watch of responsible officers at Cardwell Bay to take charge of cash. A motion was carried that the Official Side be informed that it was considered that the present method of handling cash was very unsatisfactory, and that there should be a continuous watch.

Obbligato.

Interwoven with the simultaneous discussion of these two items there appeared to be yet a third topic being debated: the suggestion from the Official Side that two P.O.'s should be employed solely on making out prime entries. It was uncertain whether these would be taken from the present staff or be additional. It was argued that, owing to the already acute shortage of P.O.'s the former was impossible and that, even if there were two additional P.O.'s, it was firstly to be doubted whether they could perform in eight hours a day the same work which frequently took ten or so P.O.'s to do in eight hours additional work each. Secondly it was thought that, at the very time they would be most needed—when there was a rush of ships and duty—it was unlikely, with the port woefully short of P.O.'s as it is, that these two P.O.'s would be allowed to remain ashore making out primes. The result was therefore likely to be only a case of more primes than ever with still no special staff to make them out; for taking duty here is like picking pebbles off the beach—every man can take his fill.

Vigilante.

Further discussion included several small but not unimportant complaints such as the absence of first-aid equipment, the emptiness of certain fire extinguishers, and that now very hardy annual, the farce of "going through the motions" that

passes as office cleaning; the which, unlike Preventive Work, gives visible and tangible proof of its being performed either inefficiently or not at all—as we know to our discomfort these four years.

Arising from these tales of woe, a sub-committee of four, comprising the Whitley Representatives and another P.O. and A.P.O., was elected to watch over the staff's local interests.

Happy Easter?

The November Journal gives me my first reminder that Christmas will be upon us in only a few weeks and that by the time this appears in print I shall be too late even to wish you all a Happy New Year! However, I hope you did have a jolly time and that next year (I'll be in time for Christmas 1944 anyway!) we may all spend a real Christmas in our own homes. Do not miss the first edition of the "Dover Despatch." Boy! what a day it'll be!

B. A. BENNING.

Southampton Notes

The close of 1943 has brought not only a grand bag of mail, but, better still, the welcome home-coming of several of the boys, and we have enjoyed some reunions on and off duty. We greet Sergt. Les Twentyman, back from Middle East operations; Pilot Officer Dudley Heal, home on leave after another North African visit; 2nd-Lieut. John Sykes, safely back from Sicily, and Lieut. Arthur Cheney (Central Medi.), to whom we send our congratulations following his November marriage. Likewise Cliff Pearson, for whom the wedding bells rang on 25th November.

From the Central Mediterranean we have seasonable greetings from L/Tel. Jimmy James, our cheery Joe (Eastern Medi.), and from Petty Officer Tom Carnell, in far-off Nairobi. Jack Welsh weighs in again from Canada, and Petty Officer Ted Midlane sends his wishes to you all from somewhere in Hampshire (we had the pleasure of a yarn with Ted just a few hours before going to press). Bob Jenkinson, staff sergeant in the North-West, sends good news, and we tender our congrats and best wishes to him and Mrs. Jenkinson upon the arrival of their baby daughter. Johnny Walker, still Ack-Acking in Lincs., keeps in regular touch with us, and the Manchester boys say that he looked very fit when he gave them a call in early December. Sergt. Phil Pettit was also in good form when he paid us a visit recently, prior to his departure overseas. The very best of luck to you, Phil!

Sergt.-Navigator George Haywood is still going strong, and following the conclusion of his first tour of operations he has had a spell as Intelligence Officer at a Bomber Command station.

Lieut. Jack Abbott (Runcorn) paid us a "cheerio!" visit in early December, prior to attending an O.C.'s course in Scotland, and we have the good wishes also of our old friend Bill Foot (Liverpool), recently on leave prior to joining another vessel. It has been fine to see some of these boys again; they are all in capital form, and their return to our ranks will be mutually appreciated, believe us. Hasten that glad day! The boys show a keen interest in P.S.A. policy, and their questions, verbal and written, take a lot of consideration and some answering. Their confidence remains in us and our Association leaders, and it is fitting that their A.P.O. Councillor is Mr. G. T. Clarke (Plymouth); therefore they may be assured of an all-time interest in their future conditions, whilst we at home place on record our appreciation of another year's satisfactory representation by one whom we know so well. Thank you, George!

Of the exiles we have little news this month, but, like them, we are hoping that 1944 will see their home return to Soton, from where we have only one comment, i.e., upon "PSAmphlet No. 1," "Blood Money." This was not well received in the port, being regarded as superfluous to a decision already taken locally, and nationally, according to the 1943 Conference Report.

This closes our 1943 Notes, for the compilation and continuity of which we offer our thanks to all who have written so regularly since 1942. Keep them going! and a Happy New Year to you all—from Ceylon to Canada, from Clyde to Solent.

Our final thoughts are of Davy Youdell, in distant Malaya, and our hopes are high that 1944 will see the end of his captivity. Cheerio, Forces!

L. B.

A BUDGET OF CHRISTMAS GAMES

By WALTER HOUSEMAN

WHISPERING. As many players as like can play this game. Its rules are similar to the old game of Backbiting. If it is played no other game worth while can be played.

MISSIN' THE RING. For this game an A.P.O. is necessary. All he need do is walk amongst a number of Ships Officers, Security Controllers, Port Officials and Servicemen saying he represents His Majesty's Customs. All the other players laugh and if he does not turn a hair he deserves a medal. The most laughable result is achieved if the leading player's uniform is badly-made and well-worn.

HUNT THE SLIPPER. Four players are best for this, but it can be done with three. One of the players should be a P.O. The idea is to go on a ship and search the Captain's room. Full marks are given if he is caught. But the game goes on if anyone on the ship is caught. Players finding anything (see Hunt the Plug) will get a reward. The best players, however, may receive nothing and no player should expect anything.

HUNT THE PLUG. See Hunt the Slipper. This game was described at length some years ago in a special handbook. If on a Swede or other ship carrying stewardesses be careful not to misread the instructions, e.g., "look under the winch" should not be misread "look under the wench."

DODGING THE COLUMN. Many players can play this, but few do. When anyone plays others have to hold the baby. Too much of the latter will drive players Christmas Crackers and may become too hot. If that happens the Column Dodger should be told to remove his shoes. Then tacks should be sprinkled round the floor. The Column Dodger should then be told to come in. If he has holes in his socks the game is even better. This causes roars of laughter—especially from the Depot Watcher next morning.

THERE ARE FAIRIES AT THE BOTTOM OF MY GARDEN. A C.P.O. dresses himself as Father Christmas, comes into the office, and gives everyone half a day. This causes gasps of astonishment. Next morning the C.P.O. shoots his tiger, who has been learning ventriloquism.

MAKING OUT A SUBSISTENCE CLAIM. All that is needed for this game is a pot of ink, three pens, forty-seven sheets of paper and a lot of patience. The game should be completed by Easter.

REVENUE CONTROL. This, like other forms of control, cannot be played if too many are playing Shoulder Arms. Each player must do his best. Uncle Board should appreciate their difficulties.

MANPOWER. See Revenue Control and P.O. Shortage.
SHOOTING A LINE. An old watchhouse game. See SOLO.

SWINGING THE LEAD. A launch is not necessary. The game can be played anywhere and is similar to Dodging the Column.

D.O.'s KNOCK. A disappearing trick. All that is needed for this game is a Subs. book and a lot of cheek. One man is chosen to be District Organiser. He goes out of the room. When District Organiser returns with his Subs. book all the other players walk out. The first one out is called the Lowest, but all are Low. The District Organiser follows them out and the same old game starts again. Causes hours of misery.

DECENT FELLOWS or FARMER'S GLORY. A variety of the above. The District Organiser walks in with his Subs. book. All the players gather round him and give him money. The last to pay is turned upon by the other players but, if he has a good excuse, he is let off. Each player should be District Organiser in turn.

LOT'S WIFE or PAYING ARREARS. This game is seldom played. There is some doubt as to its rules.

HAPPY FAMILIES or A BETTER SERVICE. This game is one in which everyone can join, but it is usually played by five or six players, known as the Executive, or maybe only by one or two, known as the Secs. However many players join in, one player, the General Sec. or Can Lad, is always it. The idea is to get a Better Service and the more that join in the search the more they are likely to find it. Sometimes the thing looked for has a different name: Equality, Better Conditions, Remuneration—but the rules remain the same. Energy

and Goodwill are needed to play it properly. One player apart from the rest should be called the Pub. Sec., and he should tell players if they are hot or not so hot. Causes years of interest. Cannot be played unless all players also play Decent Fellows.

BOALCH'S BOUNTY. An Assistant Sec. is given plenty of paper and is then able to send circulars and information to all parts of the country. This is called Giving Information and other games are difficult without it. The Assistant Sec. should not be expected to do this on his own. District Organisers should send copies of the circulars he sends in longhand or roneo to units in their districts. Causes a deal of interest. Other variants of this game are Filling the Notice Board and Frequent Meetings.

FREQUENT MEETINGS or UNITY. All the players in Decent Fellows come together in a Huddle and Exchange Ideas. When they have decided what to do they should do it. The chief player or Chairman should know all the rules of the game. This game is a big improvement on Watchhouse Chinwag or Beggar the Whitley Councillor.

SNUBBING THE CUCKOO. A variant of D.O.'s Knock. A non-payer enters the room. All the players leave, holding their noses.

MONOPOLY. No officer of the Association, local or otherwise, should play this game.

KEEPING UP INTEREST. A player in a small port is given a plum. Although he cannot attend meetings, as a rule, this rouses his interest. He pays his subs, and keeps up his interest. Then he is given more plums. This can be played in bigger ports by players who cannot get to meetings. But the plums are not on hand all the time. Without interest no plums. This game is most important. Interest can be kept up in many ways: by writing to Headquarters, by reading the JOURNAL regularly, by keeping in touch with District officers. One plum might be Abolition of Skip Tides; but the game is well worth playing without the plums.

BEARDING THE LION. A Watch-house prophet goes up to see the Old Man. The Old Man roars. The Watch-house prophet sends for his Whitley Councillor. The Whitley Councillor asks the District Organiser how the W.P. stands. If he is not in good standing it's his turn.

SOLO or THE CRITIC ON THE HEARTH. One player can play this, the fewer the better. All that is required is a flow of talk and a continual moan. If the moan refers to something that happened forty years ago the best results will be obtained. But almost any moan will do. Nor need the player have any brains. If no one listens to him the game is up.

ORANGES AND LEMONS or HOW MUCH IS TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS? This game is played by one or more P.O.s taking duty. A number of seamen declare foodstuffs. The game is, with six other ships to board, and half the seamen dashing ashore before they close, to judge the weight of the foodstuffs and to collect the duties. The quickest players make the most slips, funnily enough, but the result is prime.

RING A ROSY. A Civil Servant sends to his superior a perfectly simple request. The game is for as many persons as possible to comment on it and to keep it as long as possible. The result is a file. Any player getting too many files receives the peddler. A good file can be made to last a long time. The more Red Tape that is used the better results obtained.

Now for a few riddles:—

Q. Why is a non-payer?

Q. What has four legs and poor prospects?

A. Two A.P.O.s.

And, to finish with, a GRAND CHARADE.

First word: One of the party stands behind a counter full of glasses. Others come up to the counter, ask the player behind it for various things. He shakes his head. Then he shouts TIME. GENTS.

Second word: The player stands behind the counter again, holds up a bottle of wine and says, "This isn't sweet sherry."

Whole word: A man at a typewriter typing like fury. Pauses from time to time, wondering Is It Worth It?

So the word, good readers (and a Merry Christmas to you all) is PUB SEC. Help him in 1944.

Glasgow News

At a special local P.S.A. meeting held at Mavisbank on Monday, 29th November, Official Side proposals regarding office accommodation in Glasgow were considered. The meeting, which maintained the high level of attendance characteristic of recent P.S.A. gatherings, accepted the proposals as a war-time measure, without a dissentient voice. This was scarcely remarkable, as the proposals met the Staff Side claim in full.

Under the new scheme, the Waterguard Superintendent and Waterguard Surveyor move to accommodation at 266, Clyde Street, leaving three rooms available for additional messing and retiring rooms and locker accommodation.

Another feature of the meeting which, although not unusual in Glasgow, deserves mention, was the harmony which characterised the share-out by the three grades concerned of the "occupied territory." "After you, Claude; No, after you, Cecil!" was the attitude of all concerned, a spirit which we hope prevails in P.S.A. circles everywhere.

The final act of unanimity to a successful meeting was the placing on record of the Staff Side's appreciation of the Waterguard Superintendent's conduct of the negotiations, which adhered throughout to the spirit as well as the letter of Whitley.

Pilot Officer J. Sweeney, late A.P.O., Bo'ness, was encountered here recently, looking A.I. and full of enthusiasm for his job in the Air-Sea Rescue Service.

From South Africa comes news of one of our Glasgow exiles, Naval Cadet J. A. Gairdner, who is completing his course ashore before blossoming out as Lieutenant, R.N. His only grouse about life in Durban is the high cost of living and the malodorous qualities of C. to C. cigarettes. However, the revived Comforts Fund will cure that one. Pat. But your propensity for writing half your airgraphs in Afrikaans is something you must cure yourself.

These notes don't usually end on plaintive lines, but members feel aggrieved that no information has been forthcoming from headquarters on the recent bonus settlement, which was surely news worthy of circulation. However, even P.S.A. Secretaries are not immune from 'flu, which may be the explanation of an otherwise unaccountable omission.

Hull News

P/O. F. H. Bromley, R.A.F., who recently returned from Canada, where he has spent some months instructing, is now home on leave. He is fit and well.

Also returned from Canada is A.C./2 C. P. Rawcliffe, R.A.F.—and thereby hangs a tale. Mr. Rawcliffe, despite setbacks which did not damp his enthusiasm, entered the R.A.F. to train for flying duties. He progressed satisfactorily through his preliminary training, and went to Canada to complete his instruction. Unfortunately, later training revealed that he was allergic to air conditions: in fact, when in the air he was so violently sick that he was grounded and returned to England. We sympathise with him at this last trick of fate and extend the hope that every possible good may come from it. Meanwhile he has taken the reverse in a grand spirit, and is, at the time of writing, enjoying a well-deserved leave.

We welcome the return from detached duty of Mr. R. Lewis, A.P.O., and hope that his return is a permanent one.

Finally, the compliments of the season to one and all, and may 1944 be for us all a "peak" year in endeavour and achievement.

N. S. M.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN ORGANISER

(Continued from page 84.)

Decentralisation is another principle which everyone hastens to approve, but there are two sides to every blue-print, and though I believe it would be more efficient to have much more regional or "zonal" control, there are other arguments. Consider them.

When we discuss promotion, conditions of service, structure and such, we must be equally thorough. My idea is close and detailed thought at the outset. Then, when we have made our decision, irresistible persistence. We must say "no surrender" to the citadels of obstruction and ignorance—once we have found out what they are.

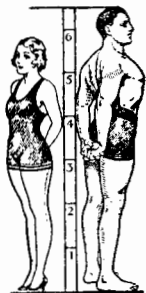
I will close by indicating a few lesser points which just can't be left in the air.

One is cargo examination. Many will say that this is a major one. But already we see signs that cargo examination is losing its importance, and if Government bulk purchase continues after the war, it won't regain it. Yet "control," in every meaning of that over-worked word, will continue important even if the private enterprise, anti-bureaucrat army continues its fight. Merging the Waterguard with the other part of the Customs might not be to our advantage—or the Service's. Do not let us prove true Young's dismal "night thought": "Our birth is nothing but our death begun." I happen to think that cargo examination should be proper to the Waterguard; but let us have no inferiority complex about our own job, even if the Board appears not to value its full importance. Let us, in fact, have no inferiority complex to any other Civil Service body. Mentally we must ride over our inadequate uniforms, our paltry subsistence rates, the unfairnesses of detached duty and such, the work-and-wait rule, the tiny increments, the unfortunate habit of referring to the Waterguard as a sort of afterthought in General Orders, and so on. The man of action—in the army, in the hospital, in the law court, in the market—was never, until recently, less than the scrivener. And nowadays, despite queries from "the Board" which are just the bilious attacks of under-worked clerks, though we answer them with many a "yours respectfully," we are quite as literate, I fancy. For heaven's sake let us remove our cap only to the King and God.

A change in the title of our section should help to cure the inferiority complex of some of our officers and the snootiness of other civil servants at the same time as it would end such errors by the public as thinking it is our job to prevent small boys spitting in reservoirs or addressing us as "preventatives" (which, a certain supervisor once said, causes much mirth-control). I don't care what the change is. I suppose we can't simply be known as "the Customs" unless we take over cargo; and "Water-and-Airguard," which I've heard seriously suggested, though emphasising our rights to deal with all aircraft, is too windy-and-watery.

Employment of women is a subject which causes immediate roars of disapproval, and one would think that the "monstrous regiment" was going to pour in any minute into our luxurious watch-houses. I have heard that one officer has paid up all his Association arrears because his wife was so impressed with the arguments of Battshaw. Many wives are better customs officers than their husbands, and could give an option as easily as cook an omelette. (Personally, I keep my Journals and General Orders under lock and key!) But if these Mrs. Waterguards really think the night watches will be enlivened with languorous damsels, and that C.P.O.'s uniforms will have a stenographer to each knee; they don't know the Civil Service! Waterguard wenches will be no Betty Grables, believe me. The other objections to employing women, in a very small number, and with no pension or promotion rights, are equally pointless. I am convinced that the revenue has lost heavily by our failure to set a dame to catch a dame. Yet if the staff are afraid of the irruption of a few women for baggage work and dealing with women members of crews, O.K. But give it some thought—not just prejudice.

Should we do immigration work? Many of us, especially in small ports, finding nothing alien to us, may not realise that we do not improve our existing job by hankering after others. If we did the work now laid to us, and had the staff (in quality as well as quantity) to do it, we would be doing quite enough.



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Yet it is galling to contemplate the high status of the immigration officer performing his minor task (in peace-time, I mean, of course), and then to think of ours. Our final scheme of reorganisation should be such that it has the potentiality of expansion outside preventive circles, but have its basis in prevention. But "prevention" should be an all-inclusive word. We should not, for instance, even contemplate a Special Inquiry Staff outside the Waterguard.

Two other questions I shan't answer. They are: Should we be completely under the control of an Inspector-General? Should clerical work be performed by the appropriate body?

So I counsel thought and no haste when we study reorganisation. I hope we can evolve a practical scheme which will be approved by all—one which can be permanent Association policy, whatever the Board does. I am sure that none of the present framers of schemes regard their plans as sacrosanct. This is something for each member of the staff to get down to. The law may not care for little things, but it is the little things—some notion, perhaps, which has been at the back of a small port officer's head for thirty years—which will mean success to our present endeavours. I hope, too, that the reorganisation plan will not be a rag-bag for dumping immediately desirable reforms, and that the Executive, on the crest of the wave from the C.P.O.'s salary success, etc., will stay there. But, members, give them your support. As for non-members—

SLIPPERY SAM.

LONDON PRESENTATIONS

A. T. DODD, ESQ., C.B.E.

The presentation to A. T. Dodd, Esq., C.B.E., Collector, London Port, on the occasion of his retirement from the Department, will take place in Room 6, Fourth Floor, Adelaide House, E.C.4, on Friday, 31st December, 1943, at 4 p.m.

MR. P. KEVIN-KIELLY, A.P.O.

The C.P.O., P.O. and A.P.O. grades were all represented at a farewell gathering to wish P. Kevin-Kielly every success the day before he sailed to take up his new appointment in Trinidad. Before presenting him with a notecase from his colleagues, Mr. R. J. Fleet, C.P.O., said, using an "Irishism," how sorry yet how pleased he was that "Pat" Kielly had been selected for the post. Everybody who knew him will agree how well he is suited for the post, and that his tact and initiative will stand him in good stead for a successful career. E.G.A.

CIVIL SERVICE LIFE-BOAT FUND.

The following subscription is gratefully acknowledged:—
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A. V. WEST,
Principal,

Surveyors' Branch.

10th December, 1943.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Sir,

Max Dunstone missed the point of my letter published in the October issue. I have spent at least as much time on the naval lower deck as Max, and have very happy memories of it. It's a grand place to be.

Have you ever been one of a crowd of matelots watching an A.P.O. work beside a Naval Officer, Max? I have, and felt sorry for our colleague. His suit retards him all the time, and you know it.

We both know the A.P.O. is a skilful and intelligent man performing a difficult task efficiently. The rest of that crowd of seamen does not. They are used to recognising commissioned officers of the Crown by what they wear. Your digs at pip-squeaks like myself, resplendent in transitory glory, can't alter that fact.

I have not changed since the Surrey Dock days, Max. A.P.O.'s I have met in many ports since joining the Navy can vouch for that. You think I am having a good time. That's not what we joined for. There are advantages in staying on the lower deck, you know. Freedom from responsibility and balance of civil pay are not the least of them. Our present pay is about the same, but my pocket has no musical jingle.

When the war is won we, and many others, will work together again, I hope, and help the Waterguard towards the place in the sun it so richly deserves.

A uniform worthy of our calling will help immensely to that end.—Sincerely,
J. W. BERRY.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

Taking your correspondents in turn. May I point out to "Logicus" the folly and great unfairness of his suggestion of allocating certain of the P.O.'s responsibilities to the A.P.O., even as a war-time measure. Not only are there about forty A.P.O.s waiting to be "made," but there are some hundreds of others anxiously waiting their turn. Any such delineation of power to A.P.O.s means so many less P.O.s required, and it is much easier to make a precedent than to break it; if an A.P.O. can do the work in war-time, we shall have difficulty in proving he cannot do it in peace-time. The making of more P.O.s can be the only solution to the problem of more P.O.s' work. To quote "Logicus": "Such a step is too obviously sensible" for the Official Side to have overlooked it; but they are not going to do anything about it so long as A.P.O.s, either officially or, as at present, unofficially, perform P.O.s' work.

If "Tartan's" "Plutocratic democracy will," as he avers, "unhesitatingly say yes" to the question "... would such a step be towards or away ...?" I think I would prefer to be governed by a democracy just a little less unhesitating! Would it be an Irish Tartan now?

"D's" suggestion of sixteen-hour watches is splendid and practical. Let's get something done about it.

I am still chuckling over Max Dunstone's letter, but is it not perhaps just a little unfair on the gallant lieutenant, who was no doubt doing his best? Nevertheless, though the beltless Gaberdine is the official style for naval officers, I have observed several of them wearing ratings' Gaberdines with belts with no apparent sign of their being appalled. Lastly, the Customs curl and the Navy curl are identical; they both run for'd aft. The Navy copied it from us, anyway, so I've been told.

B. A. BENNING.

We would be interested to hear further on the subject contained in the last two sentences of our correspondent's letter.—Ed.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Sir,

Without the implied inside knowledge of "Jaco," I would assert that if there is not at present a shortage of man-power in our Service, there certainly will be one in the very near future, with the ever-increasing trade, and subsequently with the establishment of our Armed Forces on the Continent, the inevitable re-opening of ports virtually closed for more than two years.

Perhaps B. A. Benning's excellent description of conditions at Greenock proved enlightening to "G. B." His forebodings as to the primary necessity of area for the military forces hardly seems to have the official sanction he would have us believe, since recruitment into the Army has been in abeyance for some time and a proportion of the young men now being called up are being directed into the mining industry.

Before dismissing the Department's war effort as puny, I would have "G. B." consider that by no means all the boys in khaki and blue actively handle bayonets or man bomb-racks, and as an observer of the remarks of Cabinet Ministers and political parties, I hope he noticed the confusion of ideas regarding the release of men from the Armed Forces, when that happy day comes when we finally smash the Nazi enemy.

I trust, however, that the Board will make early application for the release of our members when we shall face a situation. I submit, our present depleted numbers will be unable to cope with.—Yours truly,
A. D.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

With reference to your slapopathy campaign, my defection from the ranks of the Association dates from some time before the war. Rightly or wrongly I held strong views regarding the Association policy at that time, and simply drifted from the Association. It would have been more honest to have resigned, certainly more regular. However, since then I have been extremely uncomfortable, knowing that my colleagues have gained concessions towards which I have contributed nothing.

A very diffident local secretary approached me and almost apologetically asked if I had thought about the Association. He was obviously relieved and, I think, pleasantly surprised to hear that I had, and that it was time I paid up. This is being done, but meantime I should like to add a word of thanks to the Association for their efforts to improve the lot of the C.P.O. Grade—promotion to which for a long time appeared more imaginary than real.

Yours faithfully,
"EXILE."

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

Why are Waterguard officers being directed into the Home Guard, whilst Immigration officers (some of them much younger) are exempt?

We work all hours of the day—every day of the year—with one day off in three weeks, and that through working time and a half two Sundays out of three. Further, two-thirds of our working hours are night work (i.e., between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m.). In addition, we are called upon to perform extra duties in cases of leave, sickness and other service emergencies.

If the Home Office considers the Immigration officers too precious to be directed into the Home Guard, surely the Board can make similar representations for our officers, or is it just another case of "it's only the Waterguard—they're unimportant"?

This calling-up puts many of our officers in an invidious position. When enlisted they find dock workers and similar personnel, over whom they exercise some degree of authority during official hours—exercising authority over them, with ample opportunity for making things uncomfortable. Obviously, when on official duty an officer is going to be very careful about antagonising his superior in the Home Guard.

Does the Board consider this a proper state of affairs? The police are exempt because of their official duties. We are shipping police—therefore why aren't we?

When we were in danger of invasion nobody minded turning out. I have spent many hours as an L.D.V. It was necessary then—is it now?

H. W. C.

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