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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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JUNE, 1943

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Temporary Office:

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Telephone: BEXLEY HEATH 3613.

President: W. E. STANDRING.	General Secretary: W. H. POWELL.
Organising Secretary: A. E. FARMER.	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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CHANGES IN THE STAFF

to 7th June, 1943.

TRANSFERS.

WATERGUARD SURVEYOR:—

Parish, G. R., Unattached, to Belfast.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Gordon, R. A. W., Glasgow to Leith, Edinburgh.

OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

DEATHS.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Boyd, J. H., North Shields.

Farthing, F. A., Southampton.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Adam, W. J., Preventive Officer.

OBITUARY

MR. E. N. COADY, P.O.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the passing on Monday, May 24th, 1943, of Mr. E. N. (Ernie) Coady, P.O., after a long illness.

He was a talented musician, and an artist of rare ability, possessing a unique sense of humour and caricature. Many readers of this Journal will recall a series of articles and sketches which he contributed some years ago.

He had many likeable traits by which we will long remember him, whilst his classic "Bo-Peep" cartoon is still an evergreen memory and tribute to his skill.

He was laid to rest at Yew Tree Cemetery at 10.0 a.m. on Thursday, May 27th, following a service at St. Cecilia's, Green Lane. There was a good muster of colleagues present to pay their last respects, and many beautiful floral tributes were received.

Sincere sympathy is extended to his brother, Mr. G. T. Coady, C.P.O., and to the other members of his family.

W.C.H.

MR. J. H. BOYD, A.P.O.

We regret to have to report the death of Mr. J. H. Boyd, A.P.O. He sustained severe injuries when he fell from a ladder while on duty on the 16th May and died the same evening in hospital.

Mr. Boyd will be greatly missed, both by his colleagues and by the many friends which he had made during his twenty-three years' service on Tyneside.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his widow and family in their great loss.

J.S.S.

MR. F. A. FARTHING, A.P.O.

Southampton Port was sad and shocked by the sudden death, on the 15th May, 1943, of one of its most long-standing, likeable and well-respected colleagues.

Fred Farthing served this Department and this Port for almost thirty-four years, conscientiously and ably, and many are the

men who pay affectionate tribute to the memory of his generous nature and unembittered attitude to life.

A proud son of Devon, Fred was a keen rowing enthusiast, and for many years had been the Captain of St. George's Rowing Club. His absence will be felt by the Church of St. Michael's, where he was a chorister for so long. And last—but not least—we shall miss his faithful support of the Departmental Soccer XI when peace returns.

The funeral at Hollybrook Cemetery on the 20th May, 1943, was attended by the available staff in the Port, including Mr. W. J. Lympany, Waterguard Superintendent, and Mr. S. T. G. Spencer, Waterguard Surveyor, and our old friend was laid to rest by bearers drawn from the P.O., A.P.O., Launch Crew and Watcher grades.

To Mrs. Farthing and her nineteen-year-old son we extend our sincere sympathy.

SERGT. E. H. R. SOANE (Grenadier Guards).

The news of Ernie Soane having been killed in action in Tunisia on the 23rd April, 1943, was received with dismay by all who knew this grand and big-hearted boy who volunteered for the Grenadier Guards because he wanted to "get on with it."

His natural ability, recognised by those he had worked with, was soon in evidence by his promotion in the Guards.

Following intensive training, Ernie went overseas early in 1943, and was only in North Africa for eight weeks before losing his life.

We pay homage to the memory of one of the best of boys we have been privileged to know, and to the memory of a good pal, who will be greatly missed in Southampton—officially and in the sporting spheres of the Department. Truly a grand all-rounder.

Our sympathy has been conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Soane in their grief.

L.B.

Current Comments—continued from page 47.

Officers in Remote Stations.

We reported in the last issue that agreement had been reached on the payment of the £50 "hard-lying" allowance to staff in the Orkneys and Shetlands as from 1st March, 1943.

Discussions on this matter are still proceeding with the Treasury and these are the particular points of the claim:—

- i. that the allowance should be regarded as subsistence and free of income tax;
- ii. that the allowance should not be limited to those between £420 and £470;
- iii. that the allowances should be back-dated to the original date of operation;
- iv. that all officers serving in these remote stations should be granted 14 days leave every six months;
- v. that "plane accommodation should be available for officers proceeding on leave;
- vi. that the allowance should be given to officers serving in all Scottish Western Isles.

Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal.

Mrs. Margaret Cole and Mrs. Barbara Wootton have accepted the invitation of the National Staff Side to serve on the Staff Side panel of the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal. The appointments are for a period of three years.

A "Shaw" Story.

The result of the Short Story Competition, organised by the Society of Civil Service Authors, shows that the first three prizes went to Messrs. C. Foster, Minister of Pensions; D. Tufft, Inland Revenue; and E. Cooper, Post Office Stores. Thirty-seven merit prizes were also awarded and one of these went to C. F. Shaw (A.P.O., Liverpool). According to the judges, competition was so keen that all who managed to get their names in the final lists can congratulate themselves on having subscribed very worthy efforts.

The C. and E. "Orphanage."

As announced in the last issue, Mr. Thorne, the Secretary of the Fund, is about to retire and the election of his successor will therefore take place at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

It is expected that Mr. F. Gloak, the present Assistant Secretary, will stand for election for the vacancy. Should he be successful (we will do our best to assist) the Committee will then proceed to fill the consequential vacancy of Assistant Secretary. A Waterguard nominee is ready in the person of Mr. G. B. Dover (A.P.O., London).



CURRENT COMMENTS

Annual Conference.

THE Executive Committee has provisionally fixed the 11th and 12th of August as the date of the Annual (P.S.A.) Conference.

District meetings will now concentrate on building the Conference Agenda and all relative resolutions should be forwarded to the General Secretary without delay.

Later, these meetings will be considering the completed Agenda and the Annual Report, and Councillors will be given "instructions" from their constituents. It is the duty of every member to attend these meetings and thus ensure that Councillors bring into the discussions the true opinions and desires of the membership. It is useless for members to run around at the eleventh hour of negotiations asking "on whose authority" —it is far better to be on the spot when the decisions are made.

Trades Disputes Act.

The unprecedented action of the Union of Post Office Workers in applying for affiliation to the Trades Union Congress looks like putting an end to the sixteen years of passive resistance on the part of the Civil Service.

The C.S.C.A. Annual Conference noted "with deep interest and appreciation the firm stand taken by the U.P.W.", and the National Staff side have decided "to appeal to the T.U.C. for their urgent and unstinted support in the campaign to remove the present restrictions from Service Trades Unions."

For our part the decision of the 1942 Conference "Promised full support for any action, whether taken by the National Staff Side or by Members of Parliament, which had for its object the restitution of Civil rights for Civil Servants and in particular the repeal of Clause V of the Trades Disputes Act."

It should be clearly understood that if the offending Clause is repealed then members will have an opportunity of deciding what affiliations (if any) should be sought by this Association.

War Bonus.

By now every member will be aware of the terms of the recent Bonus settlement, but for record purposes we must state the details, as far as they affect our members, in these columns.

	Old.	New.
Officers with salaries up to £250 ...	13/6d.	17/-
" " " £250 to £500	7/6d.	14/-
" " " £500 to £850	nil	£25 p.a.

The Salary adjustments operate as from 1st June, but the consequential adjustments of overtime rates commence at a later convenient date. At the time of writing, discussions are proceeding Departmentally on a claim that the new O.T. rates should operate for the current period when no question of retrospective adjustment is involved.

It can now be stated that during the negotiations with the Treasury a previous offer for settlement was made, but the terms were considered totally unacceptable and the N.S.S. decided to proceed to arbitration. Before this could be

arranged, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer sent for the Staff Side Chairman. A new offer was then placed before the N.S.S. and in all circumstances it was decided to accept.

Preference Regulations.

One of the few outstanding items on the Agenda of the Waterguard Sectional Committee is the Staff Side proposal to increase the duty limit for Preference on goods, ex-Crew's effects or, alternatively, to bring the treatment of Crews into line with that of passengers.

The question was adjourned to enable the Staff side to consider draft amendments to the Customs Codes. In brief, the Official Side proposal to meet the situation is that Preference may be allowed without production of documentary evidence in all cases where the standing instructions allow Waterguard Officers to admit goods on payment of the appropriate duty.

We need hardly add that we are ready at once to register agreement on the principle of the proposal.

Executive Committee.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee (P.S.A.) has been arranged to take place on the 30th June and the 1st July, at the Offices of the C. and E. Federation, Water House, Strand, London. This will be the quarterly meeting, at which all members should attend.

J. T. Sutton.

Writing the last few words of the previous paragraph reminds us that one member, at least, will not be able to attend.

Our old friend, Mr. J. T. Sutton, has passed, on promotion, into a grade covered by another Association, and for a time (a short time, we hope) he steps back into the ranks of the members.

At the risk of anticipating the remarks which will be made at another place and time, we assure Jack Sutton that the members are fully appreciative of the high value of his unstinted activity from the very beginning of the P.S.A. The conditions in each grade in which he has served are better "for his having been there," and we hope his new colleagues will remember this.

Billeting.

In the Departmental discussions on the operating of billeting at Liverpool, the Association pointed out that officers recently sent there on detached duty had been told to find their own accommodation. Evidently this is not an isolated case for the matter has been brought to the notice of the National Staff Side Emergency Committee "A."

The Committee took a very poor view of the alleged practice which, if substantiated, was clearly contrary to the whole basis on which the billeting system rested. They agreed that if officers were asked to fend for themselves in the matter of accommodation they should be given ordinary subsistence terms. The matter was raised with the Treasury and they agreed that the position, as indicated by the N.S.S., was indefensible. Treasury policy was that where billeting applied it must guarantee an individual accommodation. They undertook to see that the regulations were properly observed.

(Continued in col. 2, page 46.)

Waterguard Spotlight

"Since 8 a.m., 28th May, 1943, letters, messages and address requests have showered in from all corners of the U.K. to honour and acclaim the award of the Distinguished Flying Medal to our Sergeant-Observer Dudley Heal for his part in the great R.A.F. attack upon the Ruhr dams."

--Southampton Notes, p. 50.

Customs and Excise Departmental Whitley Council

The two hundred and sixty-second meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 26th May, 1943, the Chair being taken by O. Mundy, Esq., C.B., Deputy Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS WORK.

The Official Side stated that three further retirements in the Woman Pension Officer Grade were anticipated by the end of September, and this would reduce the previous surplus of four to one, as against the liability of eleven under selections for the Pool.

The Staff Side noted this modification in the numbers, and the item was re-adjourned.

STAFF SIDE PROPOSAL FOR REVISION OF THE ALLOWANCES PAYABLE TO MEMBERS OF CLERICAL GRADES HOLDING DEPUTATIONS TO ACT AS DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENTS OF MERCANTILE MARINE.

The Staff Side, in submitting this proposal, referred to the present position of the Mercantile Marine personnel in the Ministry of War Transport who held these deputations. These individuals now received an allowance of £48 per annum, after four years, plus an additional £30, which addition had been granted in recognition of the greater volume and complexity of the work and the greater responsibility borne by the staff in war-time conditions. The claim which the Staff Side now put forward was not strictly related to the allowances payable to the Ministry's staff, who were occupied full-time on the Mercantile Marine work; the proposal was accordingly for a scale of allowances for Departmental Clerical Officers holding deputations, as follows:—

Where the work occupied not more than 30% of the Officer's time	£12 allowance
30% to 50% of the Officer's time	£25 "
50% to 75% "	£30 "
75% to 100% "	£40 "

and after 4 years in the last category, an additional £30.

The Staff Side claimed that these officers were in comparatively isolated places, without readily available facilities for consultation with higher officials. A document detailing particulars of the various items of work, and their increased war-time complexity, was furnished to the Official Side, who promised consideration of the proposal. The item was adjourned.

STAFF SIDE PROPOSAL THAT BILLETING ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD NOT BE APPLIED TO THE OUTDOOR GRADES OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT AT LIVERPOOL.

The Staff Side said that this question had been the subject of correspondence for some time, but the result had not been satisfactory. Both the Waterguard and the Officer Grade were conditioned to irregular working hours, and difficulties had arisen with landlords owing to the varying spells of duties. They understood that the Billeting Officer had stated that no more billets were available, and they felt that the time had come for officials of this Department to be contracted out of the billeting arrangements entirely.

The Official Side said that according to their information no officials had been refused official billets; moreover, there were no Customs and Excise staff in billets at Liverpool because the staff had preferred to occupy alternative accommodation; possibly involving extra expense, rather than the billeting accommodation originally reserved for this Department in a good-class residential area. On this latter point the Staff Side stated that their information was that the official billets allocated to this Department were not in a "safe" area.

As regards irregularity of spells of duty, the Official Side said that the Customs officials were regular in their irregularity,

and it was a fact that other staffs, e.g., at Liverpool and Blechley, working irregular hours were also subject to billeting. Nevertheless, every effort had been made, in the interests of uniformity of treatment, to remove detached staff in Liverpool out of billeting conditions into general subsistence conditions, but such differential treatment of some Civil Servants was held to conflict with Government policy. It did not appear they any further steps could usefully be taken, but the matter would be further considered.

The Council accordingly adjourned the item.

STAFF SIDE PROPOSAL THAT AN AUTONOMOUS INCOME TAX BRANCH BE SET UP IN THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT.

The Staff Side submitted this proposal chiefly on account of the delays in the receipt of the assessments furnished by the Departmental Claim Branch, Llandudno. The earliest of these were received in September or October, and some had reached individuals as late as January to March in the Income Tax Year. They considered that this delay was due to the staff at Llandudno not being experts so far as Customs and Excise emoluments were concerned; that unnecessary work was put on the postal service; and that a waste of time and man-power was involved in the recording and transmission of the returns and queries between the Accountant-General's Office and Llandudno. There was also considerable delay in replying to queries, and in cases of pensions and gratuities delays of three or four months had occurred before they could be settled. In addition, errors in assessments were numerous, and excessive deductions had required adjustment.

The Official Side referred to O.W.O. 12/1943, which had been issued in order to lessen any hardship arising from delay in assessments, and asked if a list of salient cases of serious delays or errors in assessment could be provided. The Staff Side said they would endeavour to provide details of such cases. The Official Side said that the case for reversion to the former system appeared worth pursuing, but that they would have to communicate with the Inland Revenue Department on the subject, and also with the Treasury.

The item was adjourned.

RETIREMENT—EFFECT ON PROMOTION OF RE-EMPLOYMENT OR DEFERMENT.

The Official Side said the process of retirements was continuing. The Council re-adjourned the item.

AMALGAMATION OF LEITH AND EDINBURGH COLLECTIONS.

Re-adjourned on the request of the Staff Side.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS.

An agreement from the Waterguard Sectional Committee—(i) that the salary scale for Chief Preventive Officers shall be £450 x £18—£600; (ii) that members of this grade should cease to be paid overtime for attendance on Sundays and Public Holidays; (iii) that assimilation to the new scale shall be in accordance with Appendix "C," Establishment Instructions, Volume 1; and (iv) that, in addition, in consideration of their giving up their existing right to extra payment for attendance on Sundays and Public Holidays, all existing members of the grade shall receive an immediate increment of £18 on the basic scale—was ratified, the operative date to be 1st May, 1943.

WOMEN PENSION OFFICER STATIONS.

Local agreements on the schemes of Women Pension Officer Stations for Aberdeen, Derby, Edinburgh, Leeds and London South Collections were ratified, and an agreement from Plymouth Collection was adjourned.

MISCELLANEOUS.

An agreement from Edinburgh on the staffing of the Long Room, Leith, was referred back to the local Committee.

Disagreements from Belfast regarding the cycling allowance paid to Land Preventive men at Londonderry, and from London West on the proposal that the whole of Kingsbury Station shall be regarded as "in residence," were both re-adjourned for informal discussion.

The Council decided to hold its next meeting on Wednesday, 30th June, 1943.

Membership Drive : So Far

Winston Churchill's father, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, complained about the decimals in the Accounts: "Those damned dots." We've done more than damn them the last few years, but in giving you this month a little arithmetic to start with, we must thank those District Organisers who first wrestled with the cursed figures and also insist that all figures are *estimates*, though we have tried to be accurate. So:

(a) Total number of new members in nine months	40
Total percentage increase	18%
Estimated number of non-payers still	180
Total annual income of Association	£1,947
Total annual increase if all serving members paid	£2,120
Total annual income if half the serving members paid (which is the most we could expect)	£2,032
Total if all staff (except Forces) paid	£2,087
Total if staff now paying paid increased subs. of 2/6 per quarter	£2,050

It is thus seen that only the hundred per cent. membership will give us the increased income we already need, with a revival of Executive Committee (already more than justified, as those in small ports alone will testify, let alone our newly enriched C.P.O.s) and the Annual Conference—if a balance for fighting Reconstruction Schemes, etc., after the war is to be built up. And you will see that even the tapping of the Forces would not achieve so good an object. Nor would any large measure of Association economy, though a degree of this might be possible.

The idea of increasing the subs. by 2/6 a quarter does not even meet the case (it's not our idea, by the way!) even if such a measure, combined, perhaps, with a Benevolent Scheme, would be welcomed. We doubt it.

If the present state of increase were maintained, and no backsliding, we would have an annual income of £1,975. *Not enough.*

So you will agree that there is nothing for it but *one hundred per cent. membership*, or, as some would not be converted if we got them each a rise of ten pounds a week immediately, as near that as possible.

(b) Number of words written by Battshaw during the period —9,235.

Every D.O. has been written to, some on a number of occasions, and most of the 22 Councillors. They have all—with a few exceptions—been most helpful, and in a later article we will add to the tribute we attempted last month. A pity we cannot pillory bad D.O.s and persistent non-payers. However, a few port items are illuminating. Before we give 'em, there's one word of warning: D.O.s vary in their estimate of what constitutes a payer, and what a non-payer, and some port strengths vary considerably from quarter to quarter. By "increased membership" we refer to persistent non-payers who've come in. The proportionate increase in subs. (Xmas, '42, quarter averaging £12 per month) has been very high. Bad ports below may shine towards the year end:—

Best port: Hartlepool.

Runner-up: Leith.

Worst paying port in the country: London.

Runner-up: Liverpool, but big increase during year 1942-43.

Best increase in the nine months: Swansea (*Eighty per cent.!*)

Tyneside's increase is also most commendable.

Harwich is doing well.

Bristol is an in-between sort of place, but is picking up gradually.

Good ports: Manchester, Dover, Belfast, Southampton (but going down a little), Plymouth and Gravesend.

Room for improvement: Hull (once an outstanding port), Glasgow and Cardiff.

Now a word on grade membership increases. Liverpool C.P.O.s set an example to the country. D.O. after D.O. tells us how hard it is to get these, often old stalwarts of the Asso-

ciation, to fork out. Many, however, give as soon as they are asked. By the way, we have done many things to increase membership since October last, much more than write Journal articles, and one of the ideas was a circular to C.P.O.s. A big increase in C.P.O. membership resulted, but not so big as we expected.

In one port, one C.P.O. out of three is not paying, three P.O.s out of 25, two A.P.O.s out of 17. That can be taken, roughly, as the national proportion.

What can be done to restore the balance? C.P.O.s and P.O.s do not want to have A.P.O.s paying their trade union subscriptions, we're certain. The D.O.s (Lord help 'em) must find some way of approach to those grades. If the D.O. is an A.P.O. and thinks approach is difficult, he must get a paying P.O. or C.P.O. to approach them. And listen to their arguments. Have your answer ready. Never assume because it is years since a man paid that he mightn't pay now.

The A.P.O.s who don't pay puzzle us most, because our grade has been getting the plums for some time, and will continue to get them, and "failed" A.P.O.s especially must realise that only the Association can better their lot. To be plain spoken—we assert that no A.P.O. can *afford* to be a non-member.* In one port all the P.O.s, except one who is expected "in" at any moment, are paying, but three A.P.O.s are back-sliding. Two of them, the D.O. says, "are redundant, and as a transfer looms they seem to be *getting more interested* in their protective organisation." The other, says the D.O., is "rather young." If youth is no crime, as Pitt said, it is surely no excuse. The young in this job have least excuse of all. (Battshaw's age, 34 next Martinmas).

From another port we get "two non-members out of a staff of fourteen. The two are not worth postage and paper." See, Chronic Non-member, what decent people think of you. Those who fail to pay from sheer apathy or through some petty grievance are classed with such as these.

Other points from the ports, and maybe more figures, will be given in a later article. Already we have strayed too far into prose from arithmetic.

So we'll just say thanks very much, you District Organisers, and to everyone else, *do your best*. Really, non-members, you are not doing us a favour. You shouldn't need all this remonstrance.

And that is our progress—"So Far." BATTSHAW.

*(Flashback: In December, 1937, the maximum salaries of the C.P.O., P.O. and A.P.O. grades were £515 18s., £349 5s. and £215 3s. respectively.)

"Sunderland Calling"

Hello, Forces!

News is to hand of Charlie Scarfe. He is still going strong and hoping to soon be getting plenty of action. He sends regards to the blokes and wants to know if we are yet in "Battle Dress." No, we are not yet in "Battle Dress," Charles: maybe we shall be some day. Don't get into too much pother. Good luck and good scouting.

I have had no news from the Big Boy for some time. I'm afraid he will have to go on the defaulters' list and appear before the Captain. Jack Gaston remains silent, so another big strip will have to be torn off him. However, good luck to you both.

Jack Crosby has reported "all well," and is by now, I expect, bashing the square with the awkward squad of the Home Guard. Not Ack Ack I hope, Jack. All's well this end. Good luck.

George Simmons dropped in on a spot of leave. Still the same old George. He reports having a quiet time, though the two week-ends he had here were by no means quiet. Good luck. All O.K. so far.

The Bos'un saved himself from being logged by reporting personally at the Old Shack. He still likes his billet. Still the same old Bos'un. I have just learnt that he is on transfer to Middlesbrough. Good luck at the new Port, Tom.

Bill Sutton reports "all clear," though, from what he says in his letter, they are having a tough time up there with lodgings. It would appear time that the P.S.A. got busy on it.

Cheerio and good luck!

Over to you, Forces—Over.

O.H.L.

Southampton Notes

Sadly but proudly we write these notes to place on record for all time our personal tribute—nay, homage—to the memory of two Southampton men whose passing has left a shadow on the Port in recent weeks. Fred Farthing, after long service in Southampton, died suddenly whilst at home on leave. His comradeship and interest in the boys in the Forces will be missed. Never did Fred write to us but what he asked for his good wishes to be sent to the boys at home and overseas, and we are glad that he was spared the shock of the tragic news of the death of one he greatly admired, Sergeant Ernie Soane, who was killed in action in Tunisia on 23rd April, 1943. This news, following so soon the receipt of a letter from Ernie, was a sickening shock to everyone who knew that huge, happy and great-hearted boy. We mourn these two pals, grand chaps that they were, in the Service which they had served with such credit.

Since 8 a.m. on 28th May, 1943, letters, messages and address requests have showered in from all corners of the U.K. to honour and acclaim the award of the Distinguished Flying Medal to our Sergeant-Observer Dudley Heal for his part in the great R.A.F. attack upon the Ruhr dams, and we proudly offer our congratulations to one of the most unassuming boys it is our privilege to know. One extract alone from a current letter can speak for those outside of Southampton; it comes from one who flew with the Royal Flying Corps in the war of 1914-18: "When you see Sergeant Heal please tell him that though few here know him personally, they are proud to be numbered among his 'Civvy Street' colleagues." We are trying to imagine the pleasure which such grand news will bring to Dudley's "other twin," Les Twentyman, Sergeant-Pilot, Middle East Forces. Here's to both of them, and "Happy Landings" always.

You cannot keep these R.A.F. boys down! Here comes Sergeant Ron Greenhalgh, home on leave just when Bolton began its "Wings for Victory" week, and pausing awhile by a "Hudson" bomber displayed in the city square, Ron recognises the "kite" in which he flew the Atlantic from West to East. The news soon spread, and the civic authorities collared our "peace-loving" Sergeant and placed him alongside the visiting Air Vice-Marshal at the opening ceremony, made him a guest of honour at the "Wings" Ball, and gave him a local press column. Ron is now "recovering" up in Cumberland!

Jack Welsh hopes to complete his radio course this month and follow it up with the all-important navigation instruction, probably overseas, but we expect to be seeing Jack before that is decided.

Cliff and Joe keep the trail warm with airgraphs of speed, and they get their money's-worth on those brief forms! Both these boys in blue are well and, of course, send you their greetings.

London suits our War Office pal, Steve, who looked very fit when we saw him in June, as did Sergeant Bob Jenkinson, R.E.M.E. Corps (best wishes to all at Gravesend), who dropped in on us one fine day in May. Bob is busy on technical duties, and studies, and is happy in his particular work, but will be glad to change uniforms when the time is due. Glad to see you, Bob; you'll share our pleasure in knowing that we had a long letter early in June from Dudley Jarvis, of whom we had lacked news since 1940. All Southampton will be glad to know that "Jarvie" is A.1 and still in the U.K. He sends his good wishes to you all, and requests news of George Gray (and so do we).

Finally, we are thankful to know that Bill Hackett's son, John, is safe and well, though a prisoner-of-war in Italy, and glad that our exiles at Greenock, Holyhead, Silloth, Maryport and Liverpool are in good form. Keep it up!

We close wishing Messrs. Mathers and Tarrant well upon their Waterguard Surveyor appointments, and Mr. C. A. Turvey likewise upon his C.P.O. appointment. We hope they will carry to their new grades the understanding of staff welfare they displayed in Southampton.

Cheerio, Forces!

L.B.

STOP PRESS.

We have just received the news that Davy Youdell is safe and well, and is a prisoner-of-war in Malaya. Splendid news to get after fifteen months of anxiety. Address to follow.

The Lads o' London

I have now returned to Liverpool and letters should be sent, addressed as before, i.e., "VILLA MARINA," WILSON ROAD, WALLASEY, CHESHIRE.

After a very brief spell in the ranks, Tony Colan has received his commission and is now a pilot-officer in the Royal Air Force. He is at a pre-war R.A.F. station and is enjoying life there immensely and has asked me to say that he would welcome letters from any of his colleagues, his address can be obtained, on application, to me. From Tony I learned that Tom Hill, of Chatham, and late of London, has secured a commission as an observer in the Fleet Air Arm. Our congratulations to both.

Whilst in Surrey Dock recently, I met Fred Harvey several times on board ships in that dock. Now a corporal in the Intelligence Corps, he was obviously glad to be almost in the job again. One noticed his hand instinctively wandering along the ledges under a saloon table. The hunting instinct still prevails. Dick Jones will soon be following in his wake. Harry Farren has arrived in India and had a pleasant journey to the coral strand, marred by only one tragic incident. In May he ordered a bottle of beer which cost him 9s., but it was such a bad brew, that it has driven him T.T.

'Tis pleasing to be able to report the return to duty of Jimmy Willis after a long and painful illness. News of other invalids is that Bob Storker is making good progress after breaking his leg some four months ago, but unfortunately such is not the case with Jack Lindsay, who has had to re-enter a hospital in Liverpool, still suffering from dropsy. In his case, it is all the more distressing, because he is on half-pay, having been off sick for over six months. The sincere wishes of all the London staff are tendered for the speedy recovery of the invalids.

Although some time has elapsed since the publication of the result of the recent Promotion Board interviews, nevertheless we were glad to note the name of Mr. W. G. Thomson, Waterguard Surveyor, among the successful candidates for future promotion to the rank of W.S.II. Mr. J. T. Sutton, C.P.O., has been advanced to the position of Waterguard Surveyor unattached, and his place as a C.P.O. in London has been taken by Mr. W. G. Burgess, who for the time being has been sent on D.D. to Manchester. Sincere congratulations to the three gentlemen concerned, coupled with the hope that London may yet retain their services.

Perhaps it is not generally known that if members are killed on active service, the C. & E. Widows' and Orphans' War Memorial Fund assists with financial grants to their widows and children. Quite a few of the lads have married since their enlistment into the forces, and it would be advisable for them to become members of that fund, not so much for what can be obtained by way of financial benefit, but that it will help others. The maximum contribution for A.P.O.'s is 5s. per year, and arrangements can be made for deductions from the balance of civil pay. Write to Mr. F. GLOAK, Office Surveyor's Office, Customs and Excise, Adelaide House, London, E.C.2, for full particulars.

From letters received from colleagues in the forces, it is plain that they are extremely interested in the question of the re-organisation and future place of this department in the sphere of the Customs and Excise after hostilities have ceased. We must not let them down but endeavour to create a better service for them to return to after the war.

A few more letters will be welcomed from all in the forces.

Let's hear from you then.

Till the lights o' London shine again.

R. J. L.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."
Sir,

I am only too pleased to enlighten C.T.K. regarding his comments on the abolition of seizure rewards.

It was on the authority of members of the P.S.A., in the usual manner, that this proposal was tabled at the P.S.A. conference held in 1942. The movers of the motion were keen, hard-working, intelligent seizing officers. It was thoroughly discussed and unanimously carried that seizure rewards should be abolished. It was then agreed that the first stages of approach in securing this would be the abolition of seizure rewards to the P.O. grade.

Being an energetic and successful seizing officer, I would like to say that I am strongly in favour of the abolition, and would argue against C.T.K. and ask, Why should rewards be paid for something we are employed to do?

Surely it does not warrant any reward to create incentive to do one's job, i.e., to prevent smuggling.

I feel sure C.T.K. knows that it is against all principles of any association of individuals to allow exclusive rights to a certain number within it to vote on a question of general policy.

C.T.K. can see only how it affects certain persons' pockets and not the far-reaching effects it will have in creating a stronger faith (which results will no doubt prove) that the Waterguard Officer requires no monetary incentive to do his duty. All he asks is a comparatively reasonable salary.

Yours faithfully, A.S.R.

Sir,

Is it not remarkable the amount of activity now being shown in post-war air-traffic plans by Great Britain and America, even although at the moment they are locked in a death-struggle with the Axis? The appointment of Viscount Knollys to the Chairmanship of the British Overseas Airways Corporation is an augury of the importance with which Great Britain views the coming peace-time struggle for air supremacy. Whether he is the right man for the job only time will tell. That dynamic Latin-American, Mayor La Guardia, of New York, has already forecast the rough strategy of the vast American post-war air schemes. He visualises at least an hourly crossing of the Atlantic. For the first year or so after the cessation of hostilities we can safely reckon that the bulk of these services will call at Britain. Eire will probably be most anxious to offer facilities, in order to share in the prosperity, but with the tremendous advance in aircraft and engine power design during the war, the slight geographical advantage which Eire enjoyed prior to the war will be discounted, and the bulk of transatlantic air traffic will probably fly from America to the United Kingdom direct. It is certain that America plans to be ahead of us in this grim competition for global air-mastery. The country which has the greatest air lines will capture the bulk of the world's trade. We know that thousands of passengers will be carried by air, but the carriage of goods will undoubtedly take up a great percentage of the pay-loads of aircraft. The needs of China and the Far East will be colossal and assuredly a large proportion of such needs will be carried by air. We must rely on the far-sightedness of our Government to see that we are not lagging in this "race of the swift," and we know that the men of the R.A.F. will form the backbone of our own "Empire Merchant Air Service."

How will all these vast schemes affect the Waterguard? It seems to me that our service is destined to become a very important branch of the Civil Service. It will be in the public eye, night and day, and from its behaviour very largely will be the spirit of the new Britain be judged. One can imagine that it will be with extreme trepidation that foreigners, especially Europeans, step on to our soil for the first time after the war.

The Waterguard Officers, as in the past, can surely be relied upon to show their old courtesy and fair dealing with such anxious travellers. Many of our great aerodromes will be inland, and this brings to mind the unsuitability of the name "Waterguard." Quite obviously the title "Customs Airguard" will be more fitting, self-explanatory and consequently less

confusing. I remember that when the Waterguard first went to Croydon they were called the "Airguard," and this appellation was actually painted on their office door. But when, owing to a change over of office accommodation, the Landing Staff took over the "Airguard" office, they took over the name on the door also, and were henceforth known as the "Airguard," while the Waterguard were known as the "Customs." This situation was, of course, ridiculous, and the question of the future title of the Waterguard on duty at airports must be thrashed out once and for all. We read of the vast new aerodrome just recently taken over exclusively for the use of the U.S. Air Force. It is very probable that after the war the aerodrome will become one of the most important Customs Aerodromes in the country, suitable for the landing and servicing of aircraft of gargantuan proportions. It requires very little imagination to realise that in addition to an adequate number of baggage officers, there will also be full rummage crews required, both night and day. There will be little use for merchants' requests for attendance as in the case of sea-going liners. A full staff (the numbers being determined in the light of experience) will be permanently required, sufficient to cope with the number of passengers carried by the largest aircraft in service. Three-legged watches will most certainly be the order of the day at all Customs Aerodromes. Up to the outbreak of the war only the Landing Staff were on night duty at Croydon, and many a good camera slipped through their fingers. This was only to be expected, for the actual rummage of these night-freighters was performed by watchers. We must see to it that *all* preventive duties after the war are performed by our own staff. An appreciable increase on the pre-war strength of the Waterguard will probably develop, for activity at the seaports will correspondingly increase with that of air-traffic during the early post-war years, bringing in the raw materials so badly needed. Timber, for instance, will be imported by the millions of tons. In addition to the welcome return of our gallant "forces" to the department, the essential swelling of our ranks by young ex-service men entrants will assuredly build up our service to one of first-rank importance. One can foresee a period of great opportunity ahead, and it is up to every one of us, irrespective of age or grade, to be on our toes, ready for the call of the Promotion Board.—Yours faithfully,

G. A. COPPARD, P.O.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."
Sir,

The reconstruction plan put forward by "C.F.S." and his "brief" letter enlarging the views therein with regard to carrying out his proposals is, to say the least, staggering. Admittedly having its good points, it also has many of the opposite, which weigh the scale down. The plan of "C.F.S." is apparently "A Clean Sweep." Destroy and Rebuild, regardless of past efforts, present situation and future events. He is visualising what he would like to happen and seeing himself as another "Beveridge," but has he thought for a moment how his plan would appear in the cold light of the Honourable Board's eyes?

It appears to me that the central pivot around which "C.F.S.'s" fertile brain has revolved is the question of stagnation in promotion in the Waterguard. "C.F.S." sets out nobly to solve this on lines suggested by his scheme, by wholesale reconstruction—but the stagnation problem will still be there.

To my mind, what "C.F.S." and all of us should devote our efforts to is (1) to go all out for lowering the present retiring age to 55 years with full pension; (2) to go all out for more stations (particularly air ports, which will probably be a fact post-war and not confined to coastal areas).

(3) More opportunity to apply for suitable appointments open in other Government Departments; in other words, a subsidiary channel open to Officers of this Department with suitable qualifications who wish to apply.

(4) Staff Officers to be appointed (P.O. grade) to train new entrants during the whole of their probationary period.

(5) Raising the age of the entrance examination.

The above five points might help to solve the promotion stagnation—a difficult problem which cannot be solved by wholesale reconstruction.

NOR-WEST.

GRANGEMOUTH PRESENTATION

MR. A. THOMSON, C.P.O.

The Service generally, and Grangemouth in particular, has lost a most popular C.P.O. through the retirement of Mr. Alexander Thomson, which became effective on 31st May.

"Sandy," as he was affectionately known throughout shipping circles and among his staff, has been in the Waterguard forty-two years, the last twelve being at Grangemouth as C.P.O. He began his duties at Bo'ness and has since seen service at Ayr, being promoted to the P.O. grade from that port to Dundee. He transferred to Grangemouth, was promoted to C.P.O., Falmouth, and eventually moved again to Grangemouth, where he remained until his retirement.

He will long be remembered for his retiring disposition, his lovable nature, his many kindnesses and his ready willingness to help anyone who came to him for guidance.

As a tangible token of the esteem in which he is held, Mr. Thomson was the recipient of a wallet containing a number of banknotes at a farewell gathering of the Waterguard and Landing staffs at the "Letland Arms" Hotel, Grangemouth, on 28th May. There was a large number of well-wishers present, including a contingent from Glasgow and others from Leith, Bo'ness and South Queensferry. Mr. J. Bell, P.O., presided, and in an opening address referred to the many striking qualities of Mr. Thomson. He had known him for many years and had always found him to be a very conscientious and reliable officer, painstaking and attentive. His place would be hard to fill. Mr. Bell then read messages of goodwill from officers at outlying ports.

Mr. W. A. Girvin (Superintendent, Leith) made the presentation and paid tribute to the able manner in which Mr. Thomson had conducted the port.

Replying, Mr. Thomson gave a short resumé of his career, from which one could realise the enormous benefits the Service has gained since Mr. Thomson first donned his uniform.

Eloquent testimony to "Sandy's" popularity was forthcoming from speeches by Mr. R. M. Murray, C.P.O., and Messrs. J. Currie and W. Henderson, A.P.O.s (Glasgow); Messrs. H. Arnott, G. Murray and W. MacDowall, P.O.s, and D. Budge and D. Humphrey, A.P.O.s (Grangemouth); Mr. E. Mera, P.O. (Bo'ness); Mr. W. Riddell, Landing Surveyor, and Messrs. W. MacCullum, L.O., J. Hill, H.C.O., and J. Morrell, Messenger (Custom House, Grangemouth).

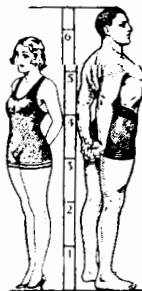
A musical evening followed, items being rendered by Messrs. R. & J. Rae, P.O.s, W. Henderson, A.P.O., and last, but not least, we had two plaintive Scottish airs by Mr. Thomson himself, who is well known as a singer locally. Mr. H. V. Sykes, P.O. (South Queensferry), accompanied. Towards the close the rousing chorus of "For he's a jolly good fellow" made the rafters creak, and which nobody can deny.

R. E. W. CRANE.

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