

# CUSTOMS JOURNAL

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OFFICIAL JOURNAL CUSTOMS & EXCISE  
PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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MARCH, 1943

MONTHLY

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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.*

## THE CUSTOMS FUND

### NOTICE.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of Subscribers to the CUSTOMS ANNUITY AND BENEVOLENT FUND, INCORPORATED, will be held in the REFRESHMENT CLUB (Ground Floor), CITY GATE HOUSE, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.2, on THURSDAY, the 29th APRIL, 1943, at Five o'clock p.m., in accordance with the provisions of Rule 28; also for the purpose of electing Three Directors and One Auditor in the place of the undermentioned Gentlemen, who, in accordance with the provisions of Rules 20 and 21, go out of office on that day, but are respectively eligible for re-election.

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March, 1943.

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## CHANGES IN THE STAFF to 11th March, 1943.

### TRANSFERS.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER (ACTING):—  
Rae, J. S., from special service at Greenock, to Glasgow.  
PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—  
Mayne, R. J., Stranraer, Greenock, to Glasgow.

### PROMOTION.

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICER TO PREVENTIVE OFFICER  
(ACTING) (ON DETACHED DUTY):—  
Edge, G., Middlesbrough, Sunderland.

### OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

DEATHS:—

ASSISTANT PREVENTIVE OFFICERS:—

Andrews, H. C., Southampton.  
Butterworth, A., Partington, Manchester.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER:—

Burke, A. E., Liverpool.

WATERGUARD SUPERINTENDENT, 2ND CLASS:—

Ross, A., Glasgow.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICER.

Dunlop, C. R., Preventive Officer.

## OBITUARY

### Mr. A. BUTTERWORTH, A.P.O., Manchester.

We regret to report the death, on 4th February, of Mr. A. Butterworth, A.P.O., at Partington out-station.

He was buried on the 6th February at Partington, when Waterguard colleagues, Messrs. Peck, P.O., Dodd, Hadwen and Battersby, A.P.O.s, represented the staff.

Also present were members of the Dock Police, Manchester Ship Canal Staff, and Mr. Cracknell, of Messrs. H. Watson & Co., shipbrokers. Evidence of the high esteem and regard in which Mr. Butterworth was held.

His official contacts were unanimous in their opinions that he was a most loyal and conscientious servant of the Crown.

The village of Partington mourns his loss, as he had fitted very well into their lives, having organised many village activities.

Mr. Butterworth, who was 57, entered the service in May, 1908, served some time in Hull, and came to Manchester in March, 1911. He took over at Partington in October, 1927. He leaves a widow and daughter, to whom we tender our deepest sympathy.

J.L.M.

### Mr. H. C. Andrews, A.P.O., Southampton.

On 16th February, 1943, we received the sad news of the death of Colin Andrews, one of our youngest officers, and we mourn the passing of a fine, likeable lad and a good colleague. Colin was called up within a few weeks of entering the Department in December, 1939, and throughout the Battle of Britain he served the Royal Navy as an A.A. gunner, operating ashore, subject to long exposure and being continually in action. This undermined his health, and after leaving the R.N. on medical grounds, he was on sick leave for many months, returning to 29 Berth for a brief spell in 1942, only to re-enter hospital in a very poorly state.

At the funeral on 20th February, floral tributes expressed the sympathy of the Staff at Southampton and Portsmouth, and the officers from the latter port paid the last respects on our behalf. To Colin's parents we tender our sincere sympathy in their grief.

L.B.

### CURRENT COMMENTS—continued from page 19.

#### Cost-of-Living Index Figure.

	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
1941/2 ...	100	99	99	99	99	100	101	100
1942/3 ...	99	100	101	100	100	100	100	99

#### Promotions Board.

As we go to Press we receive notification of a meeting of the Promotions Board to be held at 10.30 a.m. on Friday, the 2nd April, to interview Waterguard Surveyors for promotion to Waterguard Superintendent, Second Class.

## CURRENT COMMENTS

### Executive Committee.

The Quarterly Meeting of the full Executive Committee (P.S.A.) has been arranged to take place at the C. & E. Federation Offices, Strand, London, on the 25th and 26th March.

### Recruitment to the Launch Service.

We have known that for some time the Board have found considerable difficulty in filling vacancies in the Deckhand and Stoker-Deckhand Grades, and we have reason to believe that this may be due to the rates of pay offered. This latter, however, is not our concern, but we were disturbed to learn (more or less accidentally) that the Board had been employing youths between 16 and 18 in these posts for some time. Further, that these boys had to qualify to act as Mates-in-Charge or Engineer Mechanics, as the case may be, under the standing conditions of entry. A group of six boys employed at Greenock included a Cinema Operator, a Farm Boy, a Butcher's Boy and a Shop Assistant. We mention this to dispel any notion that the Board were recruiting apprentices with river or engineering experience.

The Departmental Staff Side took a very poor view of this matter, and directed that the whole question should be discussed on the Waterguard Sectional Committee. The reference has been issued.

### Coupons for Uniform.

Faced with a refusal on the part of the Board of Trade to issue supplementary coupons to our members, we are now returning to the charge on a more limited claim, and in this we have the support of the C. & E. Staff Side.

We are claiming that supplementary coupons (under G.O.S. 10) shall be issued to officers engaged on Rummaging duties; that where an officer is unable to surrender current coupons those of the following period may be accepted, and that the incidence of surrender should be more directly related to the current system of issue of coupons.

On the general question, which is a National matter, we feel that something must be done. When the idea of surrendering coupons for uniforms was first mooted, the civilian quota for the year was 66, and a surrender of 12 was hailed as not unreasonable. Now, however, the annual quota is 48—operated in five-monthly allocations of 20 coupons—and domestic linen has since been added to the list of goods covered.

### Uniform Mackintoshes.

The Association have been called into consultation with the Official Side on the question of the design of the present issue of macintosh coats.

The complaint (an old one) is that the garment gives little scope for movement. The tightness under the arms causes the coat to split, and the straight-down narrow cut throws undue strain on the bottom button, which usually comes adrift with "half of the mac."

We informed the Official Side that a modified design of macintosh is an urgent need, and that to meet immediate requirements a "full-skirted Raglan" type should be adopted. A model coat on these lines was made up, and after inspection by the Association, was approved.

During the discussions we pointed out to the Official Side that quite a number of our people use privately purchased rain-coats of gabardine (similar in style to those available to Naval Officers), and suggested that when existing stocks of macintosh material were exhausted they should consider taking the Naval raglan coat as a pattern both in style and material.

### Respirators.

We have been notified that the Board are unable to accede to the request for the supply of either the Service or the C.D. type of respirators to Waterguard Officers. We understand that the Ministry of Home Security were consulted, and that their Technical Experts consider that the general civilian respirator is perfectly suitable for Fire Prevention work in Dock areas and adequate for all personnel other than those who if gas is used, would have to perform strenuous duties in the presence of gas.

The Executive will have to consider this reply, of course, but in the light of this expert opinion we are doubtful of our being able to secure any satisfaction yet awhile.

In the meantime, the question of the supply of gas-mask carriers may well be pursued. We remember that, but for Mr. Morrison's concession, Waterguard officers would still be expected to parade around with the cardboard box slung on tape or string.

### Annual Leave.

Although the 1942/43 Leave Year is all but closed, we had received no information at the time of writing of the amount of annual leave to be allowed during the forthcoming leave year. The ill-effects of restricted leave upon health and efficiency have been stressed, and the delay in issuing a decision may well be taken as a good sign.

Whatever the leave allowance may be, however, it is our intention to oppose strenuously the continuance of the farce of the four "separate days' leave." Waterguard staff detached at isolated places distant from home have been mulcted of this concession because they could not possibly take the leave in separate odd days. Many of these officers are schemed to give a seven-day attendance on most weeks, and also perform night duties. At one port relief was provided for the three A.P.O.s, but instead of them each being granted four consecutive days' leave, the leave was staggered so that they returned to duty between each day's leave.

In a certain section of the Post Office the Treasury instructions are interpreted quite differently. The four odd days are treated much in the same way as our pre-war Winter leave.

### War Bonus.

There are signs that negotiations with the Treasury on War Bonus will soon be re-opened. At the time of writing we have no definite news either of procedure or of aims, but we do know that a large body of opinion on the National Staff Side is in favour of immediate action. Both on the adequacy of the Bonus and the limited range of operation, the settlement of some ten months ago needs drastic revision. Week by week we read in the Press of large groups of employees being granted generous adjustments of bonus, and the Staff Side's evidence grows apace. The Service case is unanswerable.

Bonus for Pensioners is also in the news. Mr. W. J. Brown, M.P., instigated a move for a deputation of Members of the Commons to see the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to press the claim for payment of bonus to pensioners. We have yet to learn the results.

### Beveridge Reports.

The National Staff Side have set up a Committee to examine the effects of the Beveridge Report upon the position of Civil Servants, and to make recommendations accordingly.

Actually, the vagueness of the Report on many aspects and the uncertainty of the final form will make it extremely unlikely that the Committee will be able to make much headway at this stage.

### Air Travel Par Excellence.

In the London "Evening Standard" of the 13th March, Major Oliver Stewart contributed an article headed "*Bolder Action Wanted in the Air*." In the main it was quite a good article and, as the title implies, it called for long-sighted and bold policy to ensure that Great Britain takes its rightful place in post-war development of air travel. We agree with his sentiments, but there was one point we could not possibly accept.

In arguing that in assessing the value of air transport *vis-a-vis* sea travel, the time factor must play a big part. He states:—

"But no assessment of figures of merit will avail commercial flying if the Customs officers are still waiting for the unsuspecting world traveller to herd him about and tip out his luggage."

The idea of air travellers being exempt from Customs examination would be very attractive to the travelling public, and would ensure full bookings, but it wouldn't hold much attraction for the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Regarding his harsh remarks, we think it suffices to say that we do not "herd" passengers, neither do we "tip out" their baggage. We suspect that the Major is not a world traveller—unsuspecting or otherwise. He should try it some day.

(Continued at foot of col. 2, page 18.)

## Customs and Excise Departmental Whitley Council

The two hundred and fifty-ninth meeting of the Council was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 24th February, 1943, the Chair being taken by Sir Archibald Carter, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

### OLD AGE PENSIONS WORK

The Official Side observed that some slight changes had occurred in the figures given at the last Council meeting. As a result of the re-scheming consequent on the transfer of certain pensioners to the Assistance Board there were 169 Women Pension Officer Stations to be filled and 25 Unattached Women Pension Officers to be appointed in regional areas. Of this total of 194, 123 were being appointed under Rule (1); another Rule (1) appointment was in abeyance, leaving 70 to be advertised. Officers due to retire and on loan numbered 6. The total requirement was accordingly  $194 + 6 = 200$ . The present staff being 231 the number of surplus Women Pension Officers was therefore 31. The number of Women Pension Officers allocated for Pool appointments was now 9, one having requested cancellation of her appointment. The transfers to Ministry of Health remained at five, but an additional transfer had been made to a Third Class Officer post in the Ministry of Labour, making the figure now four. The number selected for the Pool not yet allocated was now eleven (viz., the former figure of ten plus the one who had requested cancellation of her first appointment); the uncovered surplus was now two, and this surplus would be disposed of by early retirements.

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

The Staff Side asked for their claim to be pressed.

The Official Side said they were unable to support such a claim. The Grades on whose behalf it was made were not overtime grades, and it could not be argued that they had become overtime grades as a result of war-time conditions. The Staff Side said that the grades were not normally expected to work overtime but the working hours had certainly become extended. Their claim was not for hourly rates, but for an allowance. The Official Side repeated that they were unable to give the proposal any support, and the Council thereupon recorded disagreement.

### PROMOTION QUESTIONS

- (a) Staff Side proposal that Officers successful at the last two Surveyorship Examinations, but not yet appointed to the Surveyor Grade, be given a presumed date of appointment based for each of these Officers on the date upon which a vacancy would normally have occurred in the Surveyor Grade, such presumed date to govern salary and conditions of service at the date of actual appointment to that Grade.

The Official Side said they had made further inquiries on this subject, and as a result they could only say that the grant of "notional" promotion in such cases had no chance of securing approval. The proposal could not be treated as an isolated instance only affecting this Department. It had been made previously clear that the "notional" date requested was not a current date for increased salary, but merely for the purpose of determining the point in the salary scale at which successful candidates would commence on actual entry to the Surveyor Grade.

The Staff Side were unable for the time being to make any comment on this statement, and the item was accordingly re-adjourned.

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

The Official Side stated that the position respecting this item remained unchanged. They were not aware of any redundant members of the staff over the retirement age in any grade. The

matter was being kept under continuous review. The Staff Side said they would like the item to be retained on the agenda.

### (c) Upgrading of Temporary Clerks, Grade III.

The Staff Side said that they understood that in some Collections proposals had been put forward for an increase in the number of Temporary Clerks, and they had not regarded such proposals as being contemplated by the Circular which had been issued to Collectors indicating the nature of the duties assignable to Grade II and Grade III posts. The Official Side replied that some Collectors might be investigating the question of further employment of Temporary Clerks, but they had not been called upon to make proposals for additional temporary appointments, and—in reply to a further question from the Staff Side—stated that further temporary appointments would not be made except with the permission and on the instruction of the Board.

### AMALGAMATION OF LEITH AND EDINBURGH COLLECTIONS

The Official Side stated that this amalgamation was intended to correct an anomalous and uneconomic position. Leith Collection at present comprised the Customs business of the Port of Leith, the sub-ports of Grangemouth and Boness, and the Excise business of the Burgh of Leith and the town of Alloa and its neighbourhood. The territory covered by the Collection included areas surrounded by territory assigned to Edinburgh Collection. The Excise business within Leith Collection was relatively trifling, but necessarily involved the maintenance of full Excise accounts. Edinburgh Collection, on the other hand, was wholly Excise, except for the small Customs business at Oban where there was a Preventive Officer in charge. The Official Side proposed to maintain the separate Custom House at Leith to deal with the Customs landing and shipping business and the Customs warehouses now laid to Leith. Grangemouth and other sub-ports, including Oban, would be sub-accounting offices to the Leith Office. All Excise business and all establishment work would be concentrated in the Edinburgh Office, and amalgamation would thereby avoid much duplication of (Accounting and Establishment) work.

The Official Side continued that staffing estimates for the Collector's Office, Edinburgh, and for the Long Room at Leith were not yet available, but the Edinburgh clerical establishment might probably be increased from the present figures of one Chief Clerk, two Departmental Higher Clerical Officers and seventeen Departmental Clerical Officers. The Leith staff would be further reduced from the present figures of one Chief Clerk, three Departmental Higher Clerical Officers, and about twenty Departmental Clerical Officers.

Schemes for both offices would be submitted to the Local Whitley Committee for consideration in accordance with normal practice.

The approved Controlling Grade staff was at present one First Class and one Second Class at both Edinburgh and Leith. Owing to the reduced Customs business one Assistant Collector would be sufficient at Leith for the present.

In reply to a question from the Staff Side the Official Side said there would be no question of reconstituting Leith as a separate Collection after the war.

The Official Side stated that they proposed to operate the amalgamation as from 1st April, 1945.

The item was adjourned at request of the Staff Side.

### MISCELLANEOUS

A Belfast local agreement in respect of the Preventive Officer staff at Goragwood was ratified, and two disagreements from that committee were adjourned.

Five local agreements regarding Women Pension Officer Stations were adjourned, and one was referred back.

The Council decided to hold its next meeting on 24th March, 1943.

## MR. ALEXANDER ROSS

It is with deep and personal regret that we report the sudden death on Thursday, 11th February, of Mr. Alex Ross, Waterguard Superintendent, Glasgow, at the early age of fifty-two. Mr. Ross left the office on Thursday evening, apparently in his usual health, but became ill shortly after reaching home, and collapsed in the doctor's surgery where he had gone for attention. Mr. Ross's father and grandfather were both members of this department, and the family link with the Service is maintained by his brother, Mr. Roy Ross, and his son-in-law, Mr. A. S. Boak, members of the Officer Grade; and his sister, Miss Nessie Ross, who is on the Ministry of Pensions staff. Three other brothers, Mr. Archie Ross, Australia; Mr. John B. Ross, Calcutta; and Mr. Robert Ross, reported missing in Java, along with two more sisters, Mrs. Kneen, Surrey, and Miss Marion Ross, at present serving in the W.R.N.S., complete a family whose record of personal achievement both in and out with the Civil Service must be almost unique. Mr. Ross is survived by his widow, two daughters, and two sons, one of whom is serving abroad in the Indian Army. To them our sincere sympathy is extended in their tragic and unlooked-for bereavement.

The funeral took place at the Western Necropolis on Tuesday, 16th February, and was remarkable for the number of Service tributes received. These included wreaths from the Inspector-General and Headquarters Staff, the Waterguard Staffs at Liverpool, Northern Ireland, Aberdeen and Greenock, as well as wreaths from the Customs House and Waterguard Staffs, Glasgow. The coffin was borne by members of the Waterguard into the crematorium chapel, where a sincere and moving tribute was paid to the deceased by his brother-in-law, Reverend George Girvan, of Walsall Baptist Church, Birmingham. The simple funeral service was conducted by Rev. Mr. McClure, minister of Union Church, Lenzie, of which Mr. Ross was a member.

Those present included Mrs. Ross and her two daughters, Mr. Ross's brother, his three sisters and his son-in-law, of whom mention has been made. His sister-in-law, Miss Girvan, and Miss Lindsay completed a large family gathering. Representatives from the Customs and Excise department included the Collector, Mr. Dunning; Mr. G. O. Warne, Assistant Inspector; Messrs. Wadmore and Griffiths, Waterguard Surveyors; as well as members of other Waterguard grades in the Glasgow and Greenock area. Mr. John McLaren, late Deputy Inspector-General, and Mr. C. A. Boyle, M.B.E., Mr. Ross's predecessor as Superintendent, were among past members of the department who attended. Captain Meadows represented the Postal Censorship department.

Owing to an unforeseen alteration from the published time of the funeral, many members of Glasgow shipping firms and other bodies were unable to attend, and letters of apology and condolence received included one from Major Drake, Provost Marshal, Glasgow Area, and Mr. W. T. Docherty, Assistant Chief Constable, City of Glasgow Police.

The Preventive Service in the West of Scotland and Northern Ireland ports which were under Mr. Ross's control have suffered a heavy loss by his untimely passing. From his appointment to Glasgow in May, 1936, until his last day on duty as Superintendent, the interests and well-being of every member of his staff were matters of personal concern and often of anxiety to him. He maintained with dignity and ability his position as Superintendent, and despite the tremendous burden of responsibility which the onset of war laid to his charge, retained his characteristic qualities of geniality and consideration intact.

Forthright and forcible in personality, he was yet the most approachable of men, to whom the least of his subordinates had access at all times. It could truly be said of him that he "never bruised the broken reed," as all who came before him in trouble or difficulty can testify. He was cheerful in his nature, kindly and understanding in temperament, deeply religious in his personal beliefs; and in losing him not only those who served under him, but the department which employed him, lose a man of just and humane character, whose service in His Majesty's Customs was distinguished by loyalty and ability and an integrity apparent to all with whom he came in contact.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Sir,

A. J. Riley's "blue-print" reads well, but I think it is unworkable because in many parts there would be "more generals than privates," and the most efficient men would not necessarily be in charge. A competitive examination is the only solution to this.

The facts that we serve for forty years and there are few grades makes rapid promotion, generally speaking, impossible. The term, "failed A.P.O.," ought never to be made. Every one of us will "fail" at some rung on the ladder except the few who ultimately become Waterguard Superintendents. The average man outside in normal times, whose income was equivalent to that of an A.P.O. on his maximum, would not regard his life as a failure.

My "blue-print" is conservative but, I believe, practical. All new entrants should attend a school in London for initial tuition. All A.P.O.s reaching their present maximum should be given an opportunity to qualify for the P.O. grade; if successful further increments of £10 annually should be awarded until P.O. minimum is reached. By this time it is likely all would be appointed, but if not, there is no reason why it could not continue to rise, as the last appointed P.O. would still be considerably above this figure. A second chance to be given but, in this case, an increment would be lost. The competitive examination should be re-introduced to promote keenness, hence, efficiency, and the various groups affected immediately after the war to be kept separate. A mark of distinction would be worn, and all relieving of the P.O. grade, as far as possible, be done by them.

A similar plan could be adopted for the C.P.O. and Waterguard Surveyor grades.

D.R.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

The case for a one-grade footing has been very reasonably put by "A. J. Riley" in the February, 1943, "Journal."

In making any suggestions for the betterment of Civil Servants as a whole it is far too often overlooked that it is an improvement for posterity we are fighting for, as well as improvement in existing circumstances. Let us, therefore, look upon this question of "one grade" for the Waterguard Service from that angle. The question of existing grades of Failed A.P.O., A.P.O., Failed P.O., P.O., Failed C.P.O., C.P.O., Failed W. Surveyor, W. Surveyor, Failed W. Superintendent, W. Superintendent, could easily be adjusted if a little charity is extended to those whose rank is prefixed by the word "Failed." In many cases they have been the victims of adverse circumstances, and any benefit which they would receive in reorganisation would, in a matter of a few years, adjust itself. If "A. J. Riley's" blue-print for a reconstructed and happy Waterguard is adopted as Association Policy, I am sure that the lads who are away in the Fighting Services would feel that they are indeed fighting for something worth fighting for. Their position is, in fact, "worrying" a lot of them.

The all-important question of entrance into the Waterguard Service after the war is one that should be tackled with vision. In order to obtain the best type of entrant the Service must be made infinitely more attractive. In the future, "Freedom from Fear" for the future must be every Waterguard Officer's RIGHT!

M.W.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Mr. Editor,

What is all this pother about seizure rewards? From remarks in the Service and correspondence in the Journal it now appears to be a matter of disgrace to be a successful rummaging officer.

For years, in every type of work or service, it has been pleaded that the best man shall receive the swiftest promotion and the greatest reward. Every young man commencing a career hopes to advance on his merits and, naturally enough, to beat some of his fellowmen to it! What is the position in the future to be? Examination on a pass-mark basis and non-competitive? No competition at all whilst performing one's duties, therefore no chances of promotion or better prospects

other than the "dead man's boots" business? What type of man is such a service going to attract?

What disgrace is there in accepting seizure rewards? I have earned all mine and am proud to have done so. Let us be really honest. The men who make most seizures are the men who work the hardest—use their eyes and wits to their fullest capacity; they are the men unafraid of dirt or ridicule. The men who make few or no seizures are those content to rummage the officers' cabins and yarn about this and that! These men are, in my opinion, the noise-makers about seizure rewards. To quote an old but mighty true watch-house saying, "They have never been known to refuse a reward."

Is it not time that the men in the Service realise that some P.O.s and A.P.O.s are more gifted for rummage and baggage duties? I see in the Greenock news that objections have been raised to a specially selected rummage crew. Have members of the Association thought of the splendid work of the specially selected mobile rummage crews in London; of the specially selected men sent to Croydon Airport? Did not these men, by their splendid record of work—by which I mean seizures—enhance the reputation of the Preventive Service? Should these duties have been handed to any in the rut, P.O. or A.P.O.? No, Mr. Editor, I think not. The best man should always be selected for the most difficult task and should receive his reward for his extra ability.

I am, Sir,

Yours sincerely,  
"WHISKERS."

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

Those who have seen Appendix A of Minutes of ninth meeting of the War Emergency Committee must think that we are having a good time on detached duty. Under a heading "Other Privileges," it is shown that we are allowed to travel home the day prior to leave and return the day after. For this we are very thankful. What we cannot understand is the heading. We were under the impression that this was our only privilege. Apparently it is a privilege to receive a maximum of 38s. 6d. per week, in some cases 21s., for subsistence, instead of the peace-time 42s. Perhaps I am dense. Maybe it is a privilege to receive anything at all towards keeping a second home. Under heading "Remarks" we are told that in a billeting area sick bays are provided and that social amenities are arranged. I spent a lot of time in a billeting area, but was never aware of sick bays. I was never informed either by word of mouth, or in writing, of any social event to take place or of having taken place, for us. In any case, no privilege—however much appreciated—can solve the D.D. question. What have D.D. officers done about it? Some have called meetings, sent resolutions to, had correspondence with, and visited Mr. Powell regarding the matter.

It has been stated by a London P.O., to a detached one, that most London officers are very concerned, fully appreciate our position, and think they should be called on to relieve us on a twelve-months basis. (Probably quite a few outside London have the same feelings). Have these officers done anything about it? Have they notified the Association or petitioned the Board to be allowed to relieve us?

There are some whose ports have been closed down and who cannot be returned. Surely some other arrangement could be made than to move these particular people from the port in which they have had to make war-time homes for families!

No, as I have said previously, the hardships of Detached Duty is in the indefinite time. It is possible to alleviate the hardship and therefore we think it should be done. I have been told it is difficult to approach the Board on this matter, as it looks as though we are not prepared to carry out our war effort. Rubbish! We are. Although we have done two to three years Detached Duty already, we are quite prepared to do a further spell on the twelve-months basis if necessary. We just cannot see any justice in some having to bear all the hardship whilst others, who could share in the scheme, are not allowed to take their share, but, instead, enjoy the comforts of home life all the time.—Yours, etc.,

A D.D.O.

## The Lads o' London

All his colleagues were pleased to learn of the award of the Military Cross to Lieutenant Stanley Wandless, of the 1st Parachute Battalion, for gallant and distinguished service in North Africa. It is not generally known that he married a Polish lady, whose brothers had been killed earlier on in the war by the Huns. Stan had promised to avenge their deaths, and in a letter to his wife he said, "I got those Jerries I promised."

Says the "London Gazette," making the announcement of the award:—Lt. Wandless and his platoon had been given the task of taking a difficult enemy position (an enemy A.A. gun) at the summit of a very steep hill. As Lt. Wandless and his men began to climb the slope they came under intense machine-gun fire. Wandless, his batman, and another man tried sniping the enemy machine-gunners, and Lt. Wandless got the No. 1. The Germans replied with hand grenades, one of which killed the batman, but Wandless shot the fellow who killed him. Eventually Wandless rallied his men and charged the enemy position with grenades. The entire garrison of the hill was either killed, wounded or captured. This post was only captured by the powers of leadership and extreme courage of Lieutenant Wandless.

There is still no news of Stan, but we are not without hope; and the Inspector-General has written to his family offering the congratulations of the Department.

Have heard recently that Sergeant Fred Harvey has been joined by Corporal Dick Jones at an Intelligence Corps Depot in the north-east. They are engaged upon an intensive course of training and hope when they have completed same to be stationed at King George Dock. Fred wants to know if he can claim informer's rewards if he makes any seizures! A number of the chaps are going into this Corps lately, some without seeking the transfer. The reason is probably due to the fact that the I.G.W. has sent a list of names to the War Office of colleagues who are in the Army, and the authorities there did the rest. Ted Waters and Ken Battershaw are together now in the same Prisoner-of-war camp in Germany, and are quite well.

Yet another meeting is that of Jim Dunn with John Lamble, who are together in the Middle East forces. The former is a sergeant and the latter a lieutenant, which makes frequent contact a little difficult, but no doubt they have often the chance of a chat.

Harry Newlyn has at last left Madagascar, and is now in South Africa, and sends his regards to all. Jack Berry, who was commissioned recently, has been posted to "Combined Ops," and hopes to meet Arthur Cheney (Soton) soon. Lieut. Cheney called in at City Gate House after having been decorated by the King, and our Chief was very pleased to meet him. Lt. Bill Pearce, R.N.V.R., called there, too, and he is now on his way overseas to take up an important post.

News of Ben Battle told of his general well-being and of his experiences in Cairo. Now in the Sudan, he is still attached to the R.A.M.C.

Mark Flynn has had to go into dock once more owing to knee trouble, and one hopes that he is out by now. He, too, is attached to "Combined Ops."

Our first recruit to the forces, George McFetrich, has been promoted Battery Quartermaster-Sergeant. You've a good job, George; look after it!

Sid Bennetts has returned home from detached duty at Liverpool owing to ill-health, and Spen. Jones has gone there in his place.

Let's hear from you then.

Till the Lights o' London shine again.

R.J.L.

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## "Sunderland Calling"

Hello, Forces!

The month has brought little to record of the Forces—undoubtedly because "those contacts" have not yet been established.

Greetings to the staff were received from Brian Horn. Thanks for your card and wishes, Brian. It was good to see your card adorning the place of honour.

It is pleasing to report a good response in correspondence from "our exiles." Ossie Lennon, who reported to be settling down so far as one could amid such conditions, had need to enlist the doctor's aid and, after a spell "sick," has had need to return home for treatment. Happily I can report progress, and we wish you all the best, Ossie, and that you will soon be fit and well again.

Tommy Lewer reports being fit and well in a long and newsy letter. It is good to feel that the "Bosun" is his old breezy self again; in fact, the only complaint to be found was of the weather. Keep it up, Tommy. Thanks for the well wishes, and here's to seeing you again in the not-too-distant future.

George Simmons has enjoyed that well-earned "break," and it was a pleasure to hear his cheery voice. Let us hope it will be a longer spell next time, George, so as you can cut out the wire. We are glad all is well.

That "Journal" reminder, it seems, scored a "bull" with Jack Crosby, for I received a long and interesting letter from him. He writes of happy associations and of his well-being, but, like all our D.D. Officers, the magnetic pull of HOME is ever present. Many thanks for your kind wishes, Jack. We all join in hearty reciprocations. Aye, and if your progress is not too rapid, I'll look forward to the time when I can stride the sward with thee for a round!

Our Chief reports news from his sons, who are fit and well.

News is also to hand from another of our colleagues, Clifford Rabbits, now with the Security. It is good to hear from you, Cliff, and to learn that all is well. Thanks a lot for those well wishes.

A letter is also to hand from Charlie Scarfe, who, we are happy to say, is fit and well. Charlie is busy just now, but not too busy to receive letters. Contacts are few nowadays. We are glad to learn the "Journal" arrives safely, Charles. The best of luck, pal!

The address is still the same, Forces. We look forward to your letters. Meantime, cheerio and good luck!

Over to you, Forces—over.

W.S

## Cardiff News

We have recently had news of a Cardiff colleague, Gordon D. Pattison, A.P.O., now a Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R., and operating aboard an aircraft carrier. To have gained a watch-keeping ticket on one of these craft is, we gather, something of an achievement in itself apart from the fact that he has also been recommended for a long navigation course.

But nothing has given him so much pleasure as taking part in the great North African expedition which he regards as a fine experience. Our best wishes to you, Gordon, and may all your ventures be equally successful.

### WE REGRET

that owing to lack of space the following items are unavoidably held over:—Glasgow, Greenock and Merseyside News, Soton Notes, Articles by H.E.P.B., C.F.S. and Tyrconnel, together with correspondence from "Plaiستow" and B. A. Benning.—Ed.

## Tyne Topics

### P.S.A.

At the District Meeting held on the 11th January at North Shields the attendance showed a considerable improvement by comparison. A wide range of subjects came up for discussion, including several motions on local fire-watching, which were left in the hands of our local Whitley representatives for action.

Filling a vacancy caused by the departure of an esteemed colleague (on Detached Duty), Mr. E. L. Grantham, A.P.O., was elected to the office of District Organising Secretary. Will local officials concerned please note?

Arising out of a discussion on uniform coupon surrender, a proposal emanating from Mr. H. G. Roberts was forwarded to the General Secretary. As others may be interested in this subject, here is the motion:—

"That as coupons are not surrendered for uniform in respect of specific garments issued, but rather in view of the saving in wear-and-tear of civilian clothing, the coupons surrendered should be a percentage of the total received for any one period, with the result that the number of coupons surrendered would fluctuate in accordance with the number received."

Other matters coming under discussion were office accommodation at Albert Edward Dock; method of calling P.S.A. meetings in the District, and possible inception of the 16-hours scheme of attendance at North Shields.

On the whole, a good, businesslike meeting.

### Fire-watching.

With regret we have to advise colleagues of the disappearance, while on fire-watching at Tyne Dock, of Mr. George Collins, Mate-in-charge.

### Forces.

Jimmie Reay bobbed round early in January. He is fit, and well on the way to becoming a good radio mechanic. All the best, Jimmie!

### Detachees.

Ted Wilkinson had a long trip from Thurso. The northern air seems to suit him. Dick West sends best wishes (and plenty of news) from Glasgow. Not so bad! Thanks, Dick.

L.N.C.

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## THE DREAM OF GERONTOIT

Gerontoit sends us the following account of a dream:—

"The old watch-house was tastefully decorated with cancelled orders and empty condensed milk tins when the staff gathered to present a silver-mounted piece of lead, in memory of forty years of swinging same, to O. Five, P.O. (Lower Section). O. Five, for the occasion, had put on one of his twelve unworn uniforms, having presented his old one to the salvage authorities (after four days' waiting for a conveyance), from the waistcoat alone of which soup for three hundred hungry dockers had been provided, to whom the ghostly reminiscence of garlic and aquavit particularly appealed. After many pleasing and quite unoriginal speeches by various members of the staff, not one of which failed to hope Mr. Five would prove a bad bargain to the Crown (as he had been up to now), and O. Six, P.O. (with a cherry on his cap) had been forcefully ejected for recalling the time in the exciting days, when Lloyd George was the Beveridge of his day, that O. Five had given an issue on his of his (O. Six's) ships; the lead was presented by the youngest A.P.O. present, Mr. Cinder Scratcher, thirty-seven next birthday, up next time. There followed some well-chosen words by Mr. Bulsh, Waterguard Surveyor, and Mr. E. Dunwell, Waterguard Superintendent. Mr. Dunwell recalled the time when the only firearms we dealt with were bows and arrows and men were imprisoned in the Tower for asking for a half-day. There was much to be said for those old days. Men like O. Five could hold their own in any solo school, and he for one didn't think all this education had got us nowhere. When he heard talk of the future of the Waterguard, of aerodromes, and all that there, he often thought, etc. At this stage we all became aware that three figures were sitting quietly at the back of the room: one was clad in khaki, one was clad in air-force blue, one was clad in navy-blue, and it seemed that under their steady gaze O. Five and O. Six and Cinder Scratcher and the dirty watch-house and the burbling supervisors and the lead and the swinging thereof, and all talk and bad tradition and lack of faith in the future . . . all faded before us. . . . It was only momentary. Presently we had all adjourned to the Gluepot and Goat, and the interesting programme prepared by Mr. N. Parker, P.O., was being enjoyed by all. It opened with the piano solo by Mr. Phutsore, Patrol, 'I Cover the Waterfront,' and was followed by O. Five himself saying, 'Thanks for the memory. Of boarding in the dark. Of many a watch-house nark, Of getting up at four o'clock and being on duty late, Of hours spent at the gate, Of asking for a Sunday off and being told to "Wait." Thanks'—etc., bringing tears to all eyes. At this stage, among hearty cheers, the symbolic act of Pushing the Boat Out was being performed by Mr. Dunwell, when Mr. Bulsh was heard to shout, 'No, let me pay. It transpired that a ventriloquist was the next item on the bill. Before the interval we had a new promotee, a slip of a fellow of forty-six, singing, 'Praise the Board for bettering our position,' and after the interval we expected to see the same old set giving their encores, voices a little hoarser perhaps, wrong notes struck more frequently on the piano, Mr. Sleeve's hand a little unsteady as he burnt the pound note. Instead, imagine our surprise when the three uniformed and silent figures from the watch-house again appeared on the stage, forming, with a fourth, in Customs uniform, a quartette. The fourth was the popular Mr. Fawkett, the District Organiser of the P.S.A. He asked each person there, from the supervising officers to the new pensioner, from the A.P.O. up next time to the A.P.O. just promoted, from the old P.O. to the young P.O., including watchers and launch crews, and he asked each in turn, under the searching glance of the young A.P.O.s home on leave from fighting for them on land, sea and in the air, if any one of them could say that his position had not been benefited by the Association. None could answer no. He then asked them, excluding the highest and the lowest in grade, if each one of them was paying his subs. regularly. Many could answer no. He looked at these and from them to the soldier, the sailor, the airman—and walked off."

Gerontoit wakened up full of a resolve to get cracking in making a brave new world for the Waterguard right away. When he got to the office he found it was Sunday and he was off duty.

C.F.S.

## A QUARTER OF EVERY CONTRIBUTION GOES TO HELP RUSSIA



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