

THE CUSTOMS JOURNAL

EST. 1904

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

CUSTOMS & EXCISE

VOL. 40. No. 968

MAY, 1943

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Preventive Staff Association

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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.

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THE CUSTOMS FUND ELECTION

The result of the postal ballot counted on 13th May, 1943, was as follows:—

Mr. May	...	...	1,394
Mr. Taylor	...	...	1,384
Mr. Henderson	...	...	1,072
Mr. Williams	...	...	936

Messrs. May, Taylor and Henderson are, therefore, re-elected as Directors for a further period of three years.

CHANGES IN THE STAFF

to 17th May, 1943.

TRANSFERS.

ASSISTANT INSPECTORS (WATERGUARD):—

Bateman, H. T. W., unattached, to Waterguard Superintendent 2nd Class, Glasgow.

Kewley, R.O., unattached, to Office of Inspector-General of Waterguard.

WATERGUARD SURVEYORS:—

Atwill, H. T., Middlesbrough, Sunderland to Liverpool.

Hall, W., unattached, to Middlesbrough, Sunderland.

WATERGUARD SURVEYOR (ACTING):—

Barf, J., unattached, to Greenock.

PROMOTIONS.

WATERGUARD SURVEYORS TO ASSISTANT INSPECTORS (ACTING AND UNATTACHED):—

Angus, A.P., Liverpool.

Griffiths, M. J., Greenock.

CHIEF PREVENTIVE OFFICERS TO WATERGUARD SURVEYORS (ACTING AND UNATTACHED):—

Mathers, F. J., Southampton.

Tarrant, A. T., Southampton.

OBITUARY OF SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS.

Brown, A. G., Preventive Officer.

Edwards, W. R., Preventive Officer.

OBITUARY

LIEUT. STANLEY WANDLESS, M.C.

It is with sincere regret, coupled with a sense of personal loss, that the death in action is announced of Lieut. Stanley Wandless, M.C., of the 1st Parachute Battn. He was killed on the 6th January last, and was buried at Mateur, Tunisia. Previously he had been posted as missing, but the War Office recently has notified his relatives of his death.

The award of the Military Cross to him for distinguished and gallant service was announced in March last, and the department was indeed proud of his achievement.

Stanley was within a month of his 28th birthday when he died. He entered the Service in April, 1935, and had served in London for the whole of his service prior to entering the Armed Forces of the Crown. Exceedingly popular with his colleagues, he was a quiet and unassuming chap, and was always happy in his work, being, for the most part of his service, engaged upon rummage duties, and was a member of the mobile crew. He had an intense love of outdoor activities and always represented the London P.S.S.C. at Chiswick on Sports Day for the more strenuous athletic events.

Stan has left a widow and a young son aged 10 months, and to these and other members of his family we send our heartfelt sympathy.

R.J.L.



CURRENT COMMENTS

C.P.O. Maximum Salary.

A SPECIAL Meeting of the Waterguard Sectional Committee was held in London on the 10th May, and the only item on the Agenda was the Association's claim for increase of the maximum of the C.P.O. Grade salary scale.

We are very pleased to report agreement in full. The terms of the agreement are:—

- (i) That the salary scale for Chief Preventive Officers shall be £450—£18—£600.
- (ii) That members of this grade shall cease to be paid overtime for attendance on Sundays and Public Holidays.
- (iii) That assimilation to the new scale shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement dated 17th December, 1936, circulated with Treasury Circular 1/37 (reprinted in Appendix C of Establishment Instructions, Volume 1).
- (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.

It would be churlish of us to omit reference to the efforts of the Official Side in this matter. The anomalous position of this grade has been a long-outstanding grievance on which, even in normal times, no satisfactory settlement could be reached. It is, therefore, particularly gratifying that notwithstanding the difficulties of the present situation, the Chairman of the Sectional Committee was able to indicate full agreement.

Seven-hour Day.

Members will have seen or at least heard about the Board's Order of the 5th May, suspending the operation of the 7-hour day at non-allowanced Small Ports as from 1st June, 1943, for the duration of the war.

As from the same date Waterguard Officers officiating at allowanced Small Ports in the absence of the holders of the allowance are to be schemed to give a daily attendance of 8 hours instead of 7, and any overtime calculated accordingly. This applies, of course, only so long as they are not drawing a proportion of the allowance.

This order gives effect to an agreement reached on the Waterguard Sectional Committee.

Allowanced Small Ports.

The Association's claim for temporary non-pensionable increases of allowances has resulted in increases for another twelve Small Ports. The agreement is to operate with a not ungenerous degree of retrospection. The Executive Committee's examination of this field continues.

Detached Duty.

Notwithstanding the sincerity of the Official Side in approaching this complex problem of the return of Detached Duty Officers it had been found impossible to reach a formal Whitley agreement. The reference on the Waterguard Sectional Committee has accordingly been adjourned *sine die*.

Staff in Orkneys, Shetlands, etc.

In our February notes we indicated that a claim had been tabled for the payment of the £50 "hard-lying" allowance to our members in the "Islands."

We are pleased to report part settlement of this matter. The unsettled part relates to the Hebrides (Stornoway), which were specifically excluded by the Board's proposals. The Staff Side is pressing for the inclusion of the Hebrides.

The allowance is payable to all members of the staff (other than those locally entered) employed in Orkneys and Shetlands

whose salary and war bonus do not exceed £420. Those who exceed £420 but are less than £470 get an allowance to bring their emoluments up to £470. One half of the Long Room Allowance and the whole of the Registry of Shipping allowance is included in the calculations.

The allowance, which is additional to subsistence or detached duty allowances, is payable as from 1st March, 1943.

Income Tax Assessments.

So numerous were the complaints from members regarding the late receipt of Departmental Income Tax Assessments (in some cases as late as March) that the Executive Committee decided to raise the matter officially. Operating through the Joint Committee (C. and E. Assns.) the Association has succeeded in getting the item placed on the Agenda of the Departmental Council.

The remedy? The proposal is that Departmental assessments should be decentralised and that the purely departmental system, in existence some years ago, be re-introduced.

Annual Leave.

We cannot trace where or by whom the "four separate days' leave" were first referred to as "odd days," but we suspect that the originator was a satirist. Maybe, like us, he was intrigued at the odd conditions surrounding them. Be that as it may, we are glad to note that good sense prevails and that at long last we are to be allowed to treat these four days as emergency or "short period" leave as we desire—the exigencies of the Service permitting, of course.

Waterguard Sectional Committee.

A Joint meeting of the Sectional Committee has been arranged for Friday, the 21st May. The Agenda is still rather lengthy (some thirteen items), but, judging by developments since the previous meeting, a number of the items should be disposed of.

Executive Committee.

The May meeting of the Executive Committee (P.S.A.) will take place on Friday, the 28th of the month, and will be held at Walter House, Strand, London.

Plymouth L.W.C.

We have just learned that Mr. G. T. Clarke, Assistant Preventive Officer, has been elected Vice-Chairman of the Plymouth Local Whitley Committee.

Mr. Clarke will be known to members as the A.P.O. Councillor for South-West England and a member of the Executive Committee.

Congratulations, Nobby!

Customs Fund.

As the result of the recent election of Directors to the Fund, the three retiring Directors were re-elected. They are Mr. W. Henderson, Mr. A. G. May and Mr. A. J. Taylor.

Cost-of-Living Index Figure.

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
1941/2 ...	99	99	100	101	100	100	100	99
1942/3 ...	100	100	100	100	99	99	99	98

The "Orphanage" Secretary.

Mr. S. J. Thorne, who has held the post of Hon. Secretary to the Customs and Excise Orphans' and Widows' Fund since the retirement some years ago of Mr. Johnson, is himself now due to retire from the Department.

A presentation is being arranged and lists are available in the various Collections. Interested members may, however, send subscriptions direct to Mr. F. Cloak, Office Surveyor's Office, Customs and Excise, Adelaide House, London, E.C.2.

C. & E. ORPHANS', WIDOWS' AND WAR MEMORIAL FUND

The Quarterly Meeting of the Executive Committee was held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, Finsbury Square, E.C.2, on Monday, the 5th April, at 4 p.m. The chair was occupied by H. Kimber, Esq., O.B.E.

Minutes were adopted, letters were read, and the Secretary's Financial Statement, covering the year, was approved. Loaned officials are requested to forward outstanding subscriptions to the Hon. Treasurer.

MEMBERSHIP.

Nine new members were elected. New members comprised Sir Richard Henry Archibald Carter, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., Chairman of the Board, two Officers, one D.H.C.O. and five C.O.s.

GRANTS.

Renewals.—Nineteen applications for renewal of assistance were considered, and the following grants were voted:—Ten grants of £20 each, five grants of £15 each, and one grant of £10. In three cases "no action" was taken "in present circumstances."

New Applications.—Ten fresh applications came before the Committee, and the following grants were made:—Two grants of £15 each and one of £12, under Rule 26; three families, each with one child, were voted £24 each, under Rule 23; one grant of £12 was made to a child under Rule 25. One case was deferred, and two applications were rejected in present circumstances.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Arrangements were made for the June Annual General Meeting.

REPORTS ON CHILDREN.

The half-yearly reports on the children showed that they were being well cared for and attending school regularly.

RETIREMENT OF THE HON. SECRETARY.

The Secretary, Mr. S. J. Thorne, has been notified by the Board that the period of his extended service in the Department will be terminated on the 30th June next. In consequence, Mr. Thorne will relinquish the office of Secretary on that date, and a new Secretary will be elected by the Executive Committee at the July Quarterly Meeting.

Bristol District Meeting

At the Annual General Meeting, held on April 20th, a good muster of members took lively interest in the items down for discussion.

Election of officers resulted in only one change—Mr. De Cothi, P.O., taking Mr. A. St. J. Rump's place as District Organiser, who resigned after holding office for three years. The financial statement for the year ended March 31st, 1943, was read, and during his remarks Mr. Rump stated that Association membership now stood at 84 per cent. of the staff.

The remaining items on the Agenda were to do with staffing at Whitchurch Airport and at Avonmouth. After considerable discussion it was decided to press for the Airport to be schemed for a P.O. and A.P.O., and not for one P.O., with the option to call on the services of an A.P.O. from Bristol whenever he required assistance, as at present.

In view of the general A.P.O. shortage, the question of increasing the staff at Avonmouth called for a solution, which at least had the possibilities of meeting with success. This resulted in a motion, unanimously carried, which proposed the disbanding of the Rummage Crew at Bristol and transferring the strength to Avonmouth, there to form a second Rummage Crew. This crew to travel outside the area to Bristol, Portishead, etc., for the very occasional rummages now necessary at those places.

A very interesting meeting closed at 8.45 p.m. with a hearty vote of thanks to our Chairman, Mr. B. J. Burge.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

RECONSTRUCTION.

Sir,

Many moons ago I entered the Waterguard service. I was arrayed in a new cap, a greasy old jacket (uniform) and a pair of civilian trousers for a considerable time.

After some period of service I was presented with a big pile of codes and G.O.s and a bigger pile of amendments thereto.

Enquiries elicited the information that these were to be closely studied in order to fit myself for promotion. Nobody, however, knew when this was likely to be, and when I should be tested on my new-found knowledge.

Some said within 10 years—others doubled that figure. As a consequence the urgency of amending codes and orders and becoming acquainted with their contents faded somewhat.

This kind of thing need never have been, and certainly should not be in the future.

Upon entering the Preventive Service it should be a condition of entry that the A.P.O. would be examined after a number of years (say five) on his suitability to perform Customs duties.

If he failed after two attempts at the Crown's expense (as now), he should be given the opportunity to sit again, as often as he likes, at his own expense.

I think that this would eventually obviate the so-called "failed" A.P.O.

On passing, he would be placed in order of seniority in his exam. (as now), and wait for a suitable job. If this is not forthcoming by the time the £250 per annum was reached, he should automatically continue to receive increments to the maximum above (at present £400 per annum).

How many D.C.O.s, for example, fail to pass the efficiency bar test, which guarantees them the right to go to the maximum salary of their grade?

Of what does this efficiency bar test consist?

I am certain it is not a massacre, as some of our P.O.s exams. have been.

Most of our officers can perform the normal routine duties, whether they have passed or not. When some problem out of the ordinary arises they have superior officers to consult, as have D.C.O.s and Officers.

What are highly paid supervising officials for, if not that?

C.F.S., in his last article, seems to think that if a higher standard of entrance examination is insisted upon it would, or should, automatically guarantee the successful candidate a trouble-free run to the maximum of salary scale.

I don't agree. The possession of academic knowledge is not a guarantee that the person will be a good officer.

My contemporaries of the present exams. are now R.A.F. pilots, navigators, Naval and Army officers. Others—equally good—are in the ranks. Would a higher standard of entrance exam. have attracted better men than these?

Are they to be examined, after a number of years in the job, as to whether they are worthy of receiving a higher salary—while a youngster fresh from school obtains it automatically? I think not.

These schemes must operate equally for *all A.P.O.s now in the department.*

It is desirable to have a higher standard in order to attract a good class of entrant, but that need not be a guarantee that later entrants have no need to worry as to whether they will reach the maximum of £400 per annum.

Finally, this boggy of aircraft examination. Why should there be any doubts, as there seem to be, as to whether we shall be doing the job?

The same class of person who disembarked at the Channel and other ports will do so from aircraft.

Our officers who dealt with them in the past so efficiently will continue to do so, even if they step off magic carpets.

If and when this reconstruction takes place, its main object should be the sweeping away of this ridiculous grading—A.P.O., P.O., C.P.O., Surveyor.

We should then be an efficient body of officers, steered by a few capable supervisory officers, as are the landing staff. The net result might be a nearer approach to their conditions of service, i.e., seven weeks' holiday a year and a £600 maxi-

mum—reached without intermediate exams. Surely we are at least as important as Immigration officers—but their conditions of service are superior to ours.

Our P.S.A. officials will need to go all out to convince the Board, but if they do as well as they did last time it will be O.K. by me.

I sincerely hope, however, that the A.P.O.s and P.O.s will never be offered, much less accept, a substitute reward in the shape of a few more C.P.O. and Surveyorships, as in the past.

Yours, etc. H.W.C.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

When I entered the Service in 1935 the main topic of conversation was "Reorganisation." To-day, eight years after, the main topic is still "Reorganisation," the Waterguard Department still being structurally what it was. As a whole we must admit failure of our pet schemes in the past, and cannot look forward to success in the future except with misgiving. One gathers, therefore, that as a department we are too small to gain much success through negotiation, and represent only a very small voice crying in the wilderness. Surely, therefore, we should forget the word "Reorganisation" and substitute the word "Unity," and strive for amalgamation with the Officer grade, making thereby one unified Customs and Excise department. At first glance the idea seems rather fantastic, but upon further examination proves to be much more feasible (and probably more acceptable) than any reorganisation scheme yet proposed, including even the excellent scheme at present in circulation and bearing the initials C.F.S.

Briefly amalgamation could be carried out on the following simple lines:—

(1) Waterguard Surveyors and C.P.O.s to accept the rank and responsibilities of Landing Surveyors.

(2) Waterguard Officers below the rank of C.P.O. and exceeding five years' actual service (excluding failed A.P.O.s) to become Officers of Customs and Excise (note capital "O").

(3) All Waterguard Officers and W.O.s under five years' service to undergo a "refresher course" at a C. & E. Training Depot upon their return from the Armed Forces, with the option of taking up *any* duties which may fall to Officers of the department.

(4) An extension of the Watcher grade to take in keen, moderately young ex-Servicemen of good character, etc., for rummaging duties—to be trained and led by "failed" A.P.O.s, among whose ranks are many of our finest rummagers. (This grade to be unestablished except when promotion to "Leading Rummager" is gained through merit, when a commission could also be awarded.) Thus can the ex-Waterguard form the nucleus of a uniformed branch of the main service, to be responsible for all duties in connection with shipping and for staffing of aerodromes, thereby preventing the present wasteful overlapping of duties in the shipping line and preventing also future "squabbles" over staffing of aerodromes. Baggage examination would be performed by Officers under the direction of Surveyor, such Officer being responsible for collecting duty "on the spot."

The experience of Officers at present engaged on Landing and Shipping duties could be well used to assist the "new" personnel, as could the experience of the ex-Waterguard men to guide their new colleagues over the tricky parts of present Waterguard duties.

Recruitment to the unified department could be by an examination, of the present standard of Officers' entrance examination, the recruits thus gained being directed after training to the branch of the Service for which they seem best suited.

I am submitting this scheme in fuller detail at our next district meeting, to be discussed and probably amended, and I would like it to be given a fair, unbiassed discussion at other district meetings.

Perhaps good will result, especially if the Officers' Association be approached for their opinion on the matter. The whole scheme, of course, is based on the assumption that the Landing Department will undergo no great change of structure in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

A. E. AYLEN.

Membership Drive: Preface to a Report

The "Batt" section of this combination is now recovered from his illness, and wishes to thank all who sent him words of cheer. The second part wishes to thank the Executive for their kind message on his wife's illness.

In recent "Journals" there has been a good deal about Reorganisation, and we regard that as part of the Drive. Such "Utopian" and "dream-like" schemes may not spring merely from enthusiasm, and a 100 per cent. membership (as *practical Platsow* accuses us *hot-headed youngsters* of thinking), but reform certainly will not come without them. I don't think we'll achieve 100 per cent. membership, because of the existence of a section in the Waterguard equivalent to what Marx called the "lumpenproletariat," the grown-up version of little boys who torture flies and tear the adhesive tape from tramcar windows. But in the degree in which we fail to get 100 per cent. membership we'll fail to get 100 per cent. reform: and by 100 per cent. we mean something more even than full paying membership. (Thank you, "Skyward"). In Liverpool the District Secretary, in a well-considered circular some months ago, bewailed how local Whitley effort is hindered by the feeling a Staff representative has when he has not all the Staff behind him—and the other side *knows*.

However, there is plenty of evidence that, with the inevitable exceptions, we approach 100 per cent. paying membership and also that, among payers, apathy is dwindling. Enthusiasms can be as embarrassing as criticisms, perhaps, but they are much more refreshing. Good Staff leaders like both if there is goodwill. A certain Councillor recently circulated his area with his version of a Reorganisation scheme (he has asked us, by the way, to thank all who replied to him). He says it was disconcerting to get the scheme back punctuated alternately with "sez you" and "hear b——y hear," but that from the varied commentary he has received much which will be useful. (Incidentally, "Platsow," no plan can ever be solely one man's own idea). Likewise, the "Journal" correspondent who wrote on Seizure Rewards that advocates of their abolition have poor seizure records is very wrong, but his remarks in other ways were useful.

And thus we can say, studying the membership figures in the light of the Drive, now nearing its end, that though there has not been the increase desired, the revival of interest has made it all worth while, as has the accumulation of information from D.O.s and others on matters other than membership. (All Association matters in one sense, we realise, impinge on membership.) When next month we give the figures which practically every D.O. in the country has given us—and it is significant that the Districts where membership is good are the districts where the D.O.s are most prompt to answer correspondence—we will also give points from D.O.s' letters. But we can indicate now how useful the correspondence has been by points almost at random from letters:—

Northern Ireland is very concerned about its lack of representation. In this respect, we can anticipate that, after the war, Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right! . . . From Hartlepool we learn that even Southampton is outshone. Every P.O. and A.P.O. in the port is a member. . . . X. Port finds that the best way of collecting the subs. is on Overtime Pay-day, especially if some system of deduction can be agreed to. . . . Scotland names two members who pay subs. though finished with active service (J. Houston, P.O., A. Stuart, A.P.O.). . . . Cardiff says officers of Association are energetic but others aren't. . . . Many ports complain of "cut price" for re-entry and Headquarters failure in notifying transfers to D.O.s. . . . Aberdeen advocates economy. . . .

Thank you, D.O.s, and thank you, Councillors G. Clarke, Grant, Bevan, Taylor, Titherley, Sutherland and Moore. Has anybody else any idea of how they can help the Drive? In welcoming back the Prodigal Son, we don't forget those who have been faithful all the while.

BATTSHAW.

If our correspondent "Nor-West" would furnish his name and address, not necessarily for publication, but in evidence of good faith, we shall be pleased to publish his letter.—ED.

Southampton Notes

This month the column is the answer to the Editor's prayer, which is perhaps as well. The Forces news is brief but good. From North Africa we have a descriptive letter from Ernie Soane, who had a pleasant outward voyage following a good send-off in the company of our friend, Mr. E. G. Hooper, P.O., and others. Ernie sends his best wishes to you all, and we reciprocate those wishes sincerely. Also from Overseas we've had mail from Jimmy James, Cliff and Joe—in fact, three months' mail in one delivery. Jimmy is in good form and has been Overseas since the end of January. Joe being around Alex, has had more interest in things generally, and he reports a record receipt of mail in December, and also that he just missed meeting an old friend in Paymaster-Lieut. M. A. Freeman-Cash one day in December. The snaps which accompanied the mail show that Joe is getting "bonnier" than ever. Cliff writes rather confidently of a visit to home waters before long, and we'll be glad to see him after two long years away. The Maritime mail included a very welcome letter from Sub-Lieut. S. G. Roberts, to whom congratulations and good wishes upon his gaining a commission. Good for you, Robbie, and good hunting aboard your destroyer. Thanks for the good news of Mr. Foley, P.O.; of Arthur Cheney, and of Sexton Blake.

A letter from L./Corporal J. C. Smith was another pleasant surprise. He is very well and is still with the Royal Marines in Devon. Jock Strachan, still instructing in Cumberland, sends good news of himself and his activities, which seem to include leave spells unlimited.

Our latest reunions have been with Dudley Heal and Ron Greenhalgh; we hadn't seen the former since 1940, and it was grand to go over the intervening years. The latter is still instructing in Cumberland, and both are very busy doing a real job, very fit, and looking forward to the time when they are again with us.

Peter Ryan and Bill Foot were April visitors to Manchester. They were both well and had a good line to shoot: Bill is now clean-shaven, but not so Peter—far from it.

Home and exiles' news is meagre, but the lads are well, and we are very pleased to know of the return to duty of Mr. B. A. Bacon, P.O.; we wish him all the very best and hope he will continue to keep well.

The "Post-War" reconstruction ideas ventilated in the C.J. are of great interest to the Forces, and the faith of some of them in the P.S.A. is demonstrated by the receipt of subscriptions from men as far apart as North Africa and Devon. This is an example which might well be followed by some of our civilian brethren!

Cheerio. Forces!

L.B.

Hull News

Personal.

On Tuesday evening, 4th May, Mr. Howard, C.P.O., was rushed to the Hull Infirmary and operated on for appendicitis. On Wednesday the whole Port was shocked at the news. However, at the time of writing, his condition is expressed as "favourable," and we all wish him a very speedy return to good health.

Mr. C. P. Rawcliffe (R.A.F.) is on leave and, having passed his W/O. examination, is expecting shortly to go abroad to finish his training in flying duties. Our very best wishes go with him.

Association.

There are no Association activities to report, but it is very pleasing to note, in passing, that the number of members is on the increase.

Sports.

The Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Hull Waterguard Sports Club was held at Minerva Pier on Wednesday, 21st April, 1943. Mr. Howard, C.P.O., occupied the chair.

The Officers of the Club and Members of the Committee were re-elected *en bloc*.

Mr. W. Thompson, P.O. (Treasurer), reported a satisfactory financial position, and a vote of thanks to, and confidence in him, was recorded.

Mr. F. Nightingale, P.O. (General Secretary), then gave a brief report of his activities, and a vote of thanks was accorded to him.

The meeting decided that the voluntary subscriptions to the Club should be continued.

While activities are very much restricted, the machinery of the Club is ready to begin work as soon as happier days permit. The exception is the Golf Section. Plans are being formulated in an attempt to resume the competition for the "Burkey Cup," possibly to be run in conjunction with the "Churchill-Lemon Cup." We wish the venture every success.

In closing the meeting with a vote of thanks to the chair, Mr. Nightingale voiced the feelings of the meeting (and of the whole Port) when, in view of the pending retirement of Mr. Howard, C.P.O., he expressed regret that it was possibly the last General Meeting of the Sports Club over which he would preside. As such, it was a fitting occasion to put into words the appreciation we all felt for the interest he had taken in the Club, and the generous support he had given it throughout its history.

N.S.M.

Merseyside News

With the advent of summer our thoughts sometimes turn to cricket and the happy days before the war when our Waterguard team used to play regularly in local circles. Since those days the tackle, which was already well used, has been in store, and much of it has deteriorated somewhat.

Members not actually consulted will no doubt be pleased to learn, however, that, by a resolution of the Committee, it is to be put to good use forthwith. All except a small quantity, which will store indefinitely, is to be passed over to the authorities of a local Military Hospital for use by members of the staff and the less severely injured patients.

It has occurred to me that some other of our Waterguard clubs might like to follow this fine example. What about it, chaps?

Forces news this month is scanty, and apart from a letter from Sergt.-Coder Harry Worthington, stationed in India, there is little to report. Sid Dixon, our speedy outside-right, is also serving out there, so both these boys will no doubt by this time have traced Curry and Rice to its source!

We have had one or two serving colleagues from other ports travelling overseas recently. Unfortunately they don't always leave details when they call, but an exception was Mr. E. H. Daniels, A.P.O., who sends regards to his friends in the Bristol Collection.

The results of the recent Promotion Board interviews were received on Merseyside with much pleasure, and we hasten to add local congratulations to both Mr. A. P. Angus and Mr. W. A. Colwill. It is learned that Mr. Angus has already received his promotion to Assistant Inspector (unattached), and that his place as Waterguard Surveyor, Liverpool, is to be taken by Mr. H. T. Atwill, an old friend whom we are happy to welcome back.

Most members will now be aware that all agreements between the local Staff Side and the Official Side, arrived at over a period of many years, have recently been embodied in one document and confirmed by both sides in complete agreement.

This is a progressive step which will secure the position of both sides in any future negotiations, and our Staff Representatives are to be congratulated on having finally secured this long-desired result.

And that's the news to this hour.

BILL HUGHES.

Bristol News

It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce that Mr. J. H. Rawdon, A.P.O., of the R.A.F. (Sergt.-Pilot) has been reported missing. Though our colleague had only been with us a short time, Jack was very popular. We all here express our sympathy to his mother and family. B.J.B.

Bangor, Co. Down, Meeting

P.S.A. "Meeting."

An Association "meeting" was held in the Customs Office, Central Pier, recently, and it is pleasing to record a 100 per cent. membership attendance, i.e., one P.O., G. A. Coppard, who occupied the chair. The "meeting" opened by the member carefully perusing old "Journals." The last issue he didn't get, probably due to a "technical hitch" by the Belfast redistribution centre for used copies.

The solo-member devoured the "Lads o' London," "Sunderland Calling," "Southampton Notes," and he understood how much the "Journal" means to the Waterguard staff these days, especially those splendid chaps who are in the Forces. Being a bit of an old war-horse, he champed on his bit as he read the lists of names of renowned units to which some of the Forces members belong: "Royal Air Force," "Royal Tank Regiment," "1st Parachute Regiment." He closed his eyes and, in a flash, he was riding with Alec Gerrie on the great Augsburg raid, yet sharing not the glory of that gallant boy's supreme sacrifice. He rode with young Layton, looking handsome in the black beret of the R.T.R., and watched him directing his unit on the "inter-com." in those suave, cultured tones of his. Standing beside Lieut Wandless, of the 1st Parachute Regiment, the member gasped as Wandless said: "Now, don't forget to count so and so, and then pull!" and straightway lunged himself into space, leaving the member in a ghastly funk, frantically gripping the sides of the aircraft, realising that it was not in him to follow the lead given him by splendid youth. His fantastic imaginings took him afloat with Lieut. Cheney, D.S.C., R.N.V.R., and he watched and marvelled at the cool, commanding behaviour of that young officer with such heavy responsibility, yet so recently a junior member of the Waterguard Service with little or no responsibility. It struck the member with great force that we Waterguard who are at home are really the custodians of the Service for these fine young men who are fighting for us, and that while they are absent it is our duty to improve and build up the Service which will be theirs by logical succession on their return.

The member straightway put the following resolution to the "meeting":—

"That the P.S.A., in its post-war reconstruction programme, give priority to measures for the re-entry into the Waterguard Service of its gallant Forces' members, so that the Service will be a fit one, with ample opportunity for advancement and a greater share of responsibility, for those who have shown themselves capable of shouldering heavy responsibility under the most exacting conditions man can conceive."

The resolution was carried.

The final item discussed at the "meeting" was the Waterguard cap-badge. The member produced a rough sketch, similar in design to the R.N. badge, though slightly smaller, with the substitution of the traditional portcullis of the Department in place of the R.N. anchor. The "meeting" expressed its appreciation of the design, and the general opinion was that, subject to the Board's approval, the inclusion of the portcullis, being the Department's very own "coat of arms," would once and for all rule out any possibility of imitation, at the same time looking exceedingly smart. The "meeting" instructed the chairman to send a copy of the sketch to the General Secretary. A reply has since been received from that honourable gentleman, who stated that he was in entire agreement with the idea and design, and that the matter is now included in the "post-war reconstruction" file.

At this stage the privacy of the "meeting" was intruded upon by a bunch of mariners—one, a master, who wanted foodstuffs granted for his half-starved vessel; two, a Lieut., R.N.V.R., handing in a stack of letters from merchant ships for transmission to the censors; three, the postman, to say he had just found a barrel of oil along the coast.

The "meeting" just faded away.

G.A.C.

Gravesend News

At last Gravesend is being in the happy position of hearing from old colleagues in the Forces. We were wondering at their non-appearance when in walked "Henry" Hall, complete with commission outfit, taking a rest after "Ops" (the hops came later). We are very pleased to let our D.D. pals know that he is very well and sends his regards to all. Well, a couple of days later to crown our pleasure in walks Bertie Woodrooffe, all smiles around his famous moustache. He also was enjoying leave after a journey home across the water. We are hoping to see him again before his leave is up. We have heard that Jack Foers has his wings and is waiting for a commission. We wonder if he'll meet up with Eric Little.

On a less lively note may we sympathise with London over the disturbing news of Stan Wandless, whom we all knew so well in his mobile activities. In case some of our D.D. friends don't know, poor Trevor Spark was killed out East last October. Owing to a misunderstanding, mention of this was not made before in the Journal.

If anyone has news of Stan Harriss and Lt. Tapster, please drop us a line.

On the 12th April a general meeting was held at Gravesend. Our Councillors went over the Conference Agenda, item by item, and after the conclusion the meeting was unanimous in its satisfaction at the way in which the Conference personnel attended to a full agenda. The meeting also voted its confidence in the District Councillors. Several items of local business were discussed, and the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m. with a vote of thanks to the chair. In closing, Gravesend staff send their best wishes to the Brennan household. Cheerio, Jock, and all other D.D. officers.

E.A.C.

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APOTHEOSIS OF THE BOATMAN

(See article, Nov., 1942: A P.S.A. Plan for Reconstruction.)

Customs Station XY, in the port of Liverchester, was not the cushiest of stations, yet it was better than some of the Central European jobs which had been wished on to the service, less sporadic in its work than the many airports surrounding the city, and more straightforward than a small port or land boundary post. When, after the second World War, it became clear that one of the causes of the prolonged war was our inefficient Civil Service, and that this inefficiency had been well demonstrated where two branches of the Customs Service, an Immigration Service, a Censorship Service, a Security Service and a Ministry of Shipping had worked in and out of one another's fields under a dual control of Navy and Treasury with a little interference by the Military. The job had been clumsily administered in pre-war days, and the Waterguard section of the Customs had obtained the service of officers of a type not justified by the entrance examination, the conditions of service or the remuneration. These officers were sent to do most important tasks in ill-fitting uniforms, they were disciplined in the wrong way so that being ten minutes late was considered more reprehensible than being inefficient on the job, and the channels of regular promotion had been dried up for years. But the reform, as a result of vigorous staff action, had come, and here was one of the grumbling A.P.O.s of these pre-war days, a lineal descendant from the semi-illiterate boatman of forty years before, one of the Examining Officers in charge of Customs Station XY looking over some documents prepared by his Clerical Officer as he answers the telephone.

"Is that you, Johnson?" says the voice at the other end—the Assistant E.O. at the hailing station which all arrivals pass unless they fly the flag indicating "dealt with by the launch."

"Johnson, yes." The shop-assistant "mister" had long passed out of use.

"M.V. 'Hilarity' headed for Berth 2."

With a few final words of instruction to the clerk, he discarded his shed coat, for he had just come in from examining a cargo, smoothed down his well-fitting jacket (with its two rings on the sleeves) and collected a "float" for duty-taking from the Registrar. This latter E.O. dealt with all Customs' cash transactions on the station, in and out. On the way to Berth 2 Johnson passed the word to another E.O., somewhat his junior, who was examining a cargo. Off they went together, leaving the cargo to be watched by an Assistant. At the one exit from the shed was another Assistant seeing that all conveyances had the E.O.'s pass, and other E.O.s and Assistants were busy guarding gangways or checking imports and exports, including ships' stores, near other berths. Of course, the Customs population in the sheds fluctuated. Sometimes Assistants might be performing minor boarding jobs on coasting steamers or small "home trade" craft, or maybe rummaging a hold or examining crew's effects (as they would in the case of this arrival if, on the Registrar informing the senior E.O. at the central office, the Appointer, of the arrival—though they probably knew already—it was not decided to send a rummage crew. These crews varied in size and consisted of E.O.s, Assistants, a fine young type of ex-service men, and, a dying class, the "failed" A.P.O. Johnson's present mate had been a failed A.P.O. but, getting another chance, had passed for E.O. This system, though temporary, was not popular with other E.O.s, who had a stiff examination to pass, followed by a spell at "school" and a long probationship).

As soon as the gangway was out they went on board, and Hardy, Johnson's mate, was already busy with the List I42-cum-Aliens List when he came down from the bridge after issuing pratique and dealing with the other arrival formalities. He didn't interrupt, though he could see he would have difficulties

soon (though small amounts of duty were not taken these days), but checked and sealed, with the now universal lead plomb, the ship's bonded stores. (The hardy old revenue-raisers still lived in the now thinner tariff along with those goods from abroad which were taxed so that the foreign manufacturer paid, as the Chancellor had said, "at least as much income tax as we do ourselves." Punitive and discriminatory and purely "protective" tariffs were fast disappearing.) Then he joined Hardy and helped him for a while to stamp the landing card which each seaman had to show he had satisfied Customs formalities. As the queue thinned, Hardy left him to it to go and have a rummage around. The old desire of a police court job was still in his blood, and although because of more control of exits and gangways smuggling was becoming rarer in the bigger ports (there was still a deal around the coast because only the most impossibly expensive system—and Lord knows the Customs C.I.D., a combination of the old mobile crews with the Special Investigation Staff, cost a lot, snooty motor-cars and all—could give full revenue protection in isolated places, especially since the increase in air transport), it was still possible to find drugs or firearms or firewater. Even then, as the E.O.'s option figure was a high one (the Surveyor's was higher, but one rarely called in the services of this advising officer who had supplanted the old C.P.O.) and the "procedure by summons" system had been extended, police court prosecution was rare. Even prohibited goods could often be dealt with summarily, by at least a Surveyor. The Service was disinclined to drag men into court for petty offences, and the men felt that they did better by leaving it to the officers. In fact, altogether police courts were less congested than they were, for summary treatment for small offences, e.g., bicycle lights, was becoming a practice. Such unexpected changes often come with war when the braver ideals are found to have been missed.

And so, much as always and yet miraculously changed in efficiency and "atmosphere," boarding and rummaging of ships still went on. And if I had time to take you around the rest of the station or into the central office, with its complete record of every port transaction, or into the Assistant-Inspector's office (he controlled a "region" under the national "chief"; the Inspector-General-Collectors controlled the Excise groups only), where those pretty girls, that plump "father of his staff" had such an unerring eye in picking, tapped typewriters so incessantly (for much work formerly done in the "Customs House" of an "establishment" kind, etc., was now performed in its proper department), or to a Whitley meeting where the staff representatives who had had so much to do with these changes were planning with an "official" side greater improvements, and the word "grievance" seemed to have been conquered by the word "efficiency"... Perhaps you would prefer to go on board S.S. "Scratcher" and find an Assistant E.O. giving an issue and jollying the Chief Steward about his activities the night before in true doxological form of speech, making a great blot as he records the issue on the back of the Jerque Note, and telling the Chief Engineer to go to hell when he asks for a bit more baccy. For though these changes may come and efficiency must be our watchword, other words, such as humanity and tolerance and understanding, must retain their power.

Pay your subs, brothers, and work for the brave new world which will still contain the best of the brave old world.

C.F.S.

(A third article in this series, dealing with baggage examination, etc., will appear later in the year.)