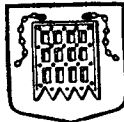


EST. 1904



# The Customs Journal

Official Journal of the

**CUSTOMS & EXCISE  
PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION**

Vol. 41 No. 9/7.

FEBRUARY, 1944

MONTHLY

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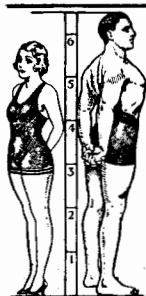
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## CURRENT COMMENTS

### Post-War Planning.

THE Hon. Board received a deputation from the C. & E. Waterguard Federation (representing all grades in the Waterguard) on Friday, the 18th February. The Deputation outlined the main defects in the present structure of the Branch and made proposals to remedy those defects.

Copies of the Federation's letter to the Board seeking the interview have been circulated to P.S.A. Councillors, and these will be followed, almost immediately, by copies of the statement made by the Deputation during the interview, which lasted for just over two hours.

Details cannot, of course, be given here, but we feel we ought to refer to it as an historic occasion. Never before have all the grades, from Superintendent to A.P.O., been agreed on essential reforms of the Branch, and never before has the Waterguard case been put so fully, direct to the Board.

The Executive Committee (P.S.A.) will consider the report of the P.S.A. delegates at the meeting on the 24th February.

### Man-Power.

The Waterguard man-power problem, which has apparently caused the Board as much worry as it has us, is well on the way to partial, if not complete, solution.

As members know the root cause of our trouble was the release of one-third of the Ass'tant Preventive Officers to the Forces and, what was perhaps not unnatural, a reluctance to worsen the position by promoting A.P.O.s.

Informal negotiations have taken place and we are pleased to report that future vacancies in the P.O. Grade, due to officers recalled to Home ports or sent to other ports to meet pressure of work, will be met by promotion.

Those colleagues in the A.P.O. Grade who qualified for promotion in 1940 will be particularly bucked by this news, but they must not assume that they will all be promoted forthwith. That will not happen. Indeed, all that we can claim, at this stage, is to have removed the obstruction—the flow of promotion will depend on the needs.

The full story is too long for these notes, even if it were permissible, but a detailed report is being sent to every District and Area Official in order that there shall be uniformity of action throughout.

### Staffing of Airports.

In the discussion at the January meeting of the Departmental Council, the Official Side maintained their view that it was inexpedient to apply any formula to the staffing of aerodromes under existing war-time conditions. The arrangements for staffing aerodromes in war-time has been on an *ad hoc* basis, and they considered that this must continue, on the understanding that, whatever those arrangements might be, they were made entirely without prejudice to the post-war arrangements. The Official Side would review these *ad hoc* arrangements in the light of quarterly returns showing the nature and volume of the traffic at each aerodrome. If, as a result of review, modifications were found to be advisable in any case, the Collector would consult the Vice-Chairman of the Local Whitley Committee. As regards the application of revenue controls to post-war air traffic, the Staff Side would be fully consulted in due course. In the meantime, should there be any developments regarding post-war civil aviation which seemed likely to affect this Department, the Staff Side would be informed.

The item was adjourned to enable the Staff Side to consider this statement.

### Departmental Council Reports.

We regret that in future we shall be unable to publish extracts from the Reports of the Departmental Council. The official dictum is "all or nothing at all."

We cannot help feeling that there has been some twisted thinking in this matter. The Official ruling (which strangely enough appears to find favour in some Staff Side quarters) is based on the fact that the Report is an "agreed report" released for publication, and must be reproduced verbatim in its entirety. We fail to see what bearing a paragraph in the Report relating to, say, Women Pension Officers has on a paragraph dealing with Waterguard matters, and we fail to see how the omission of the first paragraph could affect the accuracy of the second paragraph if it is published verbatim.

When the Treasury releases a statement to the Press they naturally expect it to

be published verbatim in case the sense should be changed by journalese, but if they issued a statement covering two or more specifically headed items, each unrelated, they would not dream of telling the Press to publish "all or nothing at all."

### Corrigendum.

In the January issue, under the heading "Post-War Staffing," we reported the names of the members of the National Staff Side team, and remarked that, with the exception of the Secretary, all were full-time officials of Associations.

We take this first opportunity of correcting that statement. In common with Mr. Jones, the Secretary, Mr. L. A. P. Herbert also is a serving Civil Servant, being employed as an Examiner in the Estate Duty Office.

### Alarm Clocks.

The attention of all members is directed to O.W.O.8/44. Our reason for stressing this is because the guidance given in the January issue may appear to run counter to the official instructions now given.

The situation at the time of writing the previous notes was that some of our members had been shut out by a closure which was certainly not put into O.W.O.50/43 at our behest, and it was the intention of the Association to take these late applications direct. Hence the invitation to write to the General Secretary.

During subsequent discussions between Official and Staff Sides, a way out was found, and it was agreed to re-advertise the buying permits, without stipulating a limit of time. The limit will be decided by the number of permits allocated to the Department.

Incidentally, the "conditions of eligibility" are not new conditions: they were inadvertently omitted from the previous announcement.

### When You Come Back.

This is addressed to the boys in the Forces.

As you know, when you discard the uniform you are now wearing and return to the Department, you will find another suit of uniform waiting for you. These are nicely stacked away in the Stores Branch ready for release, but the Superintendent of Stores is rather concerned about the fitting. Uniform made to pre-1939 measurements may not be of much use five years or so later. We've seen a few of you lads since you've had your "commando" courses, and, judging by

the width of your shoulders, we think the Supt. of Stores is probably quite right.

The intention is to arrange alterations, or, where necessary, re-issues as soon as possible, and so reduce to a minimum the period during which you would have to work in "civvies." We are still discussing ways and means, but one thing is essential to any scheme, and that is the earliest notification of the Collector or Waterguard Superintendent of your release from the Forces and possible date of return. This applies, of course, both to demobilisation and prior discharge, e.g., on health grounds.

More of this later.

#### News of an Old Friend.

We read in our "Evening Standard" earlier in the month that the King had sent a message of congratulation to Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Lidbury on the occasion of their sixtieth wedding anniversary.

Mr. Lidbury, who is now 81, was formerly Assistant Secretary of the Board of Customs and Excise. He will be remembered by the older Waterguard members as the Chairman of the Waterguard Sectional Committee prior to Mr. A. S. Lupton.

#### Ye Olde Riverites.

The Twenty-third Annual Reunion of the Riverites will be held on Saturday, 4th March, and the venue will again be the "Three Nuns," Aldgate.

Mr. Dick Matthews will be in the Chair and Mr. A. (Old Sko) Scholfield will handle the toast to the Chairman.

### CARDIFF DISTRICT

There is little local news to hand on the home front except a clever seizure at Cardiff (Mr. Douglas) of plugs of hard in the form of an electric coil.

From the lads in the forces we have an air mail from J. K. K., doing his training in Canada, and reporting fit, with extremely cold weather ahead of schedule.

Stan Couchman has a commission in the R.A.F. and we understand he is on his way home from training in South Africa. Sandy, as usual, keeps in touch and is on M.G.B.'s. We note that the lads not on flying duties have a hankering for the 4/11 watch.

We might see the return of Bill Gray now that the Fishguard rush is coming to an end.

Regards to all lads in the forces, including those whose silence hides their whereabouts.

F. S. L.

## CHANGES IN THE STAFF

To 9th February, 1944.

### TRANSFERS.

**Assistant Inspector (Acting Waterguard):**  
Warne, G. O., Unattached to Waterguard Superintendent, 2nd Class. Leith, Edinburgh.

**Waterguard Surveyor:**  
Hall, W., Middlesbrough, Sunderland to Birkenhead, Liverpool.

**Waterguard Surveyor (Acting):**  
Grey, G., Unattached to Middlesbrough, Sunderland.

**Assistant Preventive Officers:**  
Bush, T. H., Gravesend, London to Liverpool.  
Rae, J. S., Glasgow to Cardiff.

### PROMOTIONS.

Waterguard Surveyor to Assistant Inspector (Acting and Unattached).

Busby, A. E., Middlesbrough, Sunderland.

Assistant Preventive Officer to Preventive Officer (Acting):

Low, C. J., Plymouth to Macduff, Aberdeen.

### OFFICERS LEAVING THE SERVICE.

#### Retirement:

Waterguard Superintendent, 2nd Class. Girvin, W. A., I.S.O., Leith, Edinburgh.

#### Deaths:

**Preventive Officer:**  
Lindsay, J., London.

**Assistant Preventive Officer:**  
Gawn, S. J., Shoreham, Brighton.

#### Other Causes.

**Assistant Preventive Officer:**  
Kiely, D. P. K., London (Seconded to Customs Dept., Trinidad).

### OBITUARY OF SUPERANNATED OFFICERS.

Allwork, J. T., Waterguard Superintendent, 2nd Class.

Henderson, J., Preventive Man.

Gill, R. J. S., Preventive Officer.

Kitchin, J., Preventive Officer.

Muirden, J., Preventive Officer.

Norman, E. R., Chief Preventive Officer.

Patmore, W. I., Preventive Officer.

Saxton, C. S., Assistant Preventive Officer.

## OBITUARY

### H. ARNOLD, P.O. (Retired), Tyne.

It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the passing, at the early age of 48, of our late colleague, Mr. Harry Arnold.

Harry, who retired recently owing to ill health, suffered for many years under the burden of a very painful illness. He bore his troubles with admirable fortitude and remained of a stout heart to the last.

After a service at St. Peter's Church, Balkwell, the interment took place at Preston Cemetery, North Shields, the Department being represented by Messrs. G. Green, Waterguard Superintendent, W. H. Clough, Waterguard Surveyor, M. Reilly, C.P.O., A. Forster, C.P.O., F. McKenna, C. C. Robson, H. J. Charlton, P.Os., J. N. S. Moore, E. L. Grantham, A.P.Os., and G. White representing the Launch Service. Members of the staff acted as pall bearers, the coffin being covered by the Customs ensign.

Harry is survived by a widow and two sons, to whom is extended our deepest sympathy. J. S.

### Mr. J. F. JORDAN, P.O., Newcastle.

We are sure that many officers throughout the country will share the shock and sorrow which his colleagues on the Tyne felt when they heard of the sudden death of Jack Jordan, at the early age of 43.

He had finished work at 8 a.m. on Thursday, 27th January, 1944, and had potted about the garage during the morning (like many Waterguard officers, he revelled in working wood). After dinner he went upstairs and while preparing for bed he collapsed and died instantaneously. The cause of death was a clot of blood which reached the heart.

At the cremation ceremony on 31st January, in Newcastle, his colleagues acted as bearers. Mr. G. W. Green, W. Superintendent, Mr. W. H. Clough, W. Surveyor, Mr. G. Varney, C.P.O., and all available colleagues at Newcastle, together with Mr. G. A. Ballard, E.M. II, attended in tribute to one whose loss will long be felt in Tyne Waterguard circles.

Jack Jordan spent his early life in the Navy. In 1925 he entered the Waterguard, and after a short period in Leith, transferred to his native Hull. Here he remained, some time as "office wallah," until his promotion to P.O., Newcastle, in 1938—six years to the day before his death. War brought him a spell of de-

tached duty at Aberdeen, and later, another shorter one at Leith. He often spoke of the kindness of the Aberdeen staff, but he was a home bird and when he returned he tore delightedly into the jobs which had accumulated during his absence. That is what makes his death so incredible. His enormous physical strength and boundless energy gave one the impression that he would be doing woodwork in the garage when we were wearing smoking caps and complaining of draughts.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his wife and three daughters.

We will remember him. H. R.

## IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL

### Mr. B. E. STOUT, A.P.O., Methil.

A very interesting ceremony took place at the Custom House, Methil, on Monday, 17th January, 1944, the occasion being the presentation of the Imperial Service Medal, which the King had been pleased to confer on Mr. Benjamin E. Stout, Assistant Preventive Officer, Methil, for meritorious service during the latter's 41 years in the Customs Service. The presentation was made by Mr. Wright, Collector of Customs and Excise, Dundee, under the chairmanship of Mr. G. Warne, Waterguard Superintendent, Leith, assisted by Mr. A. MacDougall, Chief Preventive Officer, Methil, and in the presence of Mr. Stout's colleagues.

Born at Longhope in 1878 and prior to entering the Customs, Mr. Stout was recognised by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for services to the Longhope Lifeboat, of which his father was coxwain. Mr. Stout entered the service on 23rd April, 1902, and with the exception of a break of four years at Longhope, and again of five years during the last war, when he officiated at Anstruther, Mr. Stout has spent the remainder of his service at Methil, where he is a well-known and respected citizen.

In pleasing speeches Mr. Stout was warmly congratulated on the honour which had been conferred on him, and, in reply, expressed his pleasure on being selected as the recipient of such an honour, and thanked the Collector and his colleagues for their congratulations.

Mr. Stout then related some of his experiences in his early days, and recalled some of the friends he made then, particularly mentioning the late Mr. W. McLwaine C.P.O., Glasgow.

Though due now for well-earned retirement, Mr. Stout has agreed to carry on meanwhile during the present emergency, and on account of the lack of man-power in the service, whose young men are serving with the Forces. The meeting ended on a happy note, everyone wishing "Ben" Good Luck.

At the same meeting the opportunity was taken of introducing to the staff, Mr. G. Warne, our new Superintendent, who has recently taken over the Division; Mr. MacDougall, C.P.O., introducing each officer individually. Mr. Warne expressed his pleasure on being appointed to the Leith Division, and hoped for a happy and successful future, the staff assuring him that these hopes were fully reciprocated.

R. B.

## OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

"The watch-house conditions here are appalling, and those of us who seek to put them to rights are naturally unpopular, as are all reformers.

The local staff have been content with one roller towel between eight men per week for years. There is no retiring room for either grade, and little bug hutches of offices are used for meals; and, of course, the public may enter our meal-room. One room in which we cook, and also keep our gear, has not been cleaned for at least six years, and it would not surprise you to know that it smells. One of the local staff scrubs out the sink and sweeps up pretty regularly . . . whether we shall ever get this horrible place clean I don't know, for every time we arrange a Whitley Committee at — the place gets blitzed, and one can hardly kick-up about one's official troubles amid ruins of homes."

And that, gentlemen, is an extract from a letter written by an Officer on detached duty at one of England's most famous seaports, from where we have no report of improvement; on the contrary, the same filthy conditions prevail. And why? Because any reconstruction in the district in question is opposed by local landowners, who object to any change in the mediæval appearance of the landscape!

It will also be apparent from the quoted letter that the local staff are

apathetic to any hope of improvement. An apathetic staff will always convey an untrue expression to the views of any local official side. What the eye doesn't see, or doesn't wish to see, will always remain unseen, and if the official side are not informed of the dissatisfaction of their staff, they cannot be expected to presume on it.

Marching in step with any post-war re-organisation discussion, the subject of office accommodation is equally as important as any conditions of work, and now is the time to cast your eyes upon your present accommodation, and your thoughts upon your future accommodation. Are you satisfied that what suits your working conditions *to-day* will meet the demands of *to-morrow*? Or on the other hand, does your present official environment only meet with the limited and cheeseparating requirements of *yesterday*?

The war has given many of the staff an opportunity to compare watch-house conditions up and down the country—small ports, large ports; those owned by railway companies and those by water transport companies; those by local boroughs and by gigantic utility concerns. Accommodation is always a lively staff topic and rarely do we find any shortage of ideas on so simple and yet so important a subject.

In an emergency we can adapt the most humble of habitations to our use. For perfect example, we quote conditions at Greenock (1940-43) and at Liverpool for a decade or two or three.

On the other hand, we can vouch for what united staff action can achieve in obtaining accommodation worthy of the name: the type of watch-house which commands the respect of all comers, those who use it daily, those who maintain its cleanliness, and those shipping, railway and supply officials whose business takes them there. These, in short, may be termed "the general public."

What can be more beneficial for a Department, which intends to stake its rightful place post-war, than to be working in light, spacious, ventilated and clean accommodation, where clerical work (of which we perform more than you would guess in man hours per week) may be done without detriment to health; where an interview may take place without a C.P.O. or P.O. being ashamed of the inferiority caused by the knowledge of the drawbacks of his en-

vironment; where officers may wash, cook and eat uninterrupted by the comings and goings of any old Tom, Dick or Harry who cares to wander into the watch-house?

Are you satisfied with your office accommodation? If so, then presumably you have the aforesaid amenities; but if not, remember that suggestions made now and followed up post-war will be to the benefit of all concerned, and will eventually see the end of such conditions as outlined in the opening paragraph of this reminder to you from one who has the good fortune to work in a criterion of all office accommodation.

L. B.

### DELETE "WATER"

The official title of the Preventive Branch of the Customs and Excise has long been out of date and is likely to become more so in the future.

It is possible that none of us realise to what an extent air travel will alter this job. Every day the newspapers record how shipping companies are obtaining air interests, and now all major companies, an amalgamation of the small companies, the coasting firms and the cross-Channel trade are, or soon will be, in the air. Add to this certain Anglo-American Government pronouncements, the number of airdromes in this country, and the immense output of aircraft. We can say that it is likely that, without any great diminution of sea traffic, we will have a vast increase in air traffic. It will be mainly passenger traffic, and it will be a quick trade.

We will want adequate staffs of officers of a proper type for this job. We will want men trained to preventive work who will yet act as a welcoming body, as it were, to returning Britons and visitors. As the airports may be anywhere, the best air routes being so different from the sea routes, we shall not be able to draw staffs from the big ports, and one or two permanent staff will not be enough. (One P.O. was recently sent to an airport where about 150 passengers per week arrived and he had almost immediately to have another P.O.—he already had an A.P.O., of course—to relieve him while he was at the police court.)

This may not only solve the stagnation problem, but should lead to big improvements in accommodation, con-

ditions and uniform, which should have a reflection eventually in salary and status.

Modern airdromes will bring modern depots, as old-fashioned docks gave us our present slums of offices.

The uniform of the Officer of the Crown whom the plane passenger will first see on arrival must likewise be modernised. We read of the stewardesses in the air lines that they must be "efficient, charming and well-dressed." So must the Customs officer be.

The problem presented by aircraft in the matter of revenue control is a big one. There will doubtless for some time be other controls to operate, too. The maintenance of the purchase tax is likely. In America recently a poll asked people if they preferred an increased sales (purchase) tax to an increased withholding (income) tax. Overwhelmingly favour was shown towards the increased sales tax. It is most likely that people in this country would also prefer a higher, and graduated, purchase tax. And public policy may require it.

The prevention of smuggling, then, becomes most important and difficult. The Preventive Service is not an office job. It is undoubtedly the most adaptable body in the Civil Service. We know our codes, but they are no great aid to detecting revenue offences. For that the code is more important than the codes, and that can only come after proper recruitment (a purely academic type is worthless), training and the imbibing of the old and valuable tradition of the Waterguard (with many a fault, too, we must admit), which means a healthy, salt-breezy contempt for a deal of red tape.

Now Seversky, the American expert, believes that the standard aircraft will tend to be small. Small air-planes can land almost anywhere. There will be no lack of a daring type of young man to attempt "runs" at obscure parts of the country. We must have more than adequate airdrome staffs. We must have a force adequate to deal with all possibilities. We must cease, then, to be purely water-minded, coast-minded. We must be able to detect any revenue (other than income tax) offence internally. Likewise the linear rather than zonal apportioning of Superintendent's areas becomes out of date (as does a deal of close supervision: much more initiative and self-responsibility has to be

permitted). We must not guard Glasgow or Ruffley Creek and leave Birmingham and Bendham Vale wide open.

If it be said that the Special Inquiry Staff already exists for such non-coastal work, we must explain that it is **special** and, in any case, there is no certainty that it will continue to work effectively as a body separate from us.

Here we are only touching on the very fringe of future possibilities. Be assured your officers in the P.S.A. and the Executive are aware of every one of them. Meanwhile, local officers and others can do their part.

Prepare yourselves for your rôle in this future, to fight to eliminate less far-sighted obstructionists, to co-operate heartily with all people ready to recognise that we are now about to step out of our swaddling clothes.

To make you aware of the possibilities (or rather more keenly aware, for I am quite certain few officers have overlooked these things) is my main job as Publicity Officer.

In wartime publicity must be utility, but it need not be ersatz. We are not inventing phoney issues, shouting worn-out slogans, arousing gaseous emotions and false hopes. The P.S.A., whatever others may say, is in earnest, working for a better Customs Service appropriate to a Crown body in a victorious country, quite confident that its other purpose, of bettering the lot of the individuals in that Service, will thereby be met.

We've only to pull the cord and the parachute will open.

C. F. S.

**P.S.**—It is said that the Censor intercepted a letter in which a native of a certain neutral State warned a friend who was to travel to a certain airport: "Be careful, dear, they're **real** Customs officers there now!"

## HOSPITAL SAVING GROUP, E/G. 1010

Will members of the above please note that the name and address of the Hon. Secretary is now R. G. Foakes, 62, Hertford Road, Ilford, Essex, to whom all communications should be sent. A stamped addressed envelope enclosed with applications for vouchers, etc., would greatly facilitate.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The brighter outlook on the war situation has caused the P.S.A., in common with other bodies, to concern itself with post-war plans. Vocational Education has taken a correct place, and in the 1942 Annual Conference an *ad hoc* Committee was set up to report on the structure of a scheme. That report was duly presented by Mr. Burgess in the 1943 Conference, and it was decided to proceed forthwith with the plans as drawn up by the Committee.

There can never be any doubt as to the wisdom of that decision, and, if the scope and outline of the scheme is limited to what existed pre-war, it offers a modicum of comfort in the knowledge that there is movement towards active preparation for a live acceptance of peace-time responsibilities. At the moment, then, we have a team of able and willing workers busily engaged in drafting the actual courses of instruction; and prospective candidates for post-war examinations will find consolation in the information that organised assistance and guidance in study is near at hand.

A peep behind the scenes would convince the sceptic of the prodigious efforts being exerted in the general interest. It must be remembered that, during the interval since a V.E.S. last operated, many factors have contributed to the necessity of providing new sets of direction and question papers. When these are ready, tutors will be appointed and on them will descend the main responsibility of departmental training as it has hitherto been known.

At this point it would be prudent to consider whether such a limit to vocational education is adequate to requirement or whether we should branch out into something more imaginative and enterprising. To call, or even allow, a halt on the completion of the present plans will mean having a static state of instruction without proper recognition of the progress of events, procedure and knowledge. It will, sooner or later, be apparent that the Waterguard is a body without mental range, oblivious of inside and outside movement, and, by its apathy, failing to provide an outlet for the exercise of that individual ambition which is the chief agent to evolution. It is unthinkable!—and so we are left with the latter alternative. Let us accept it energetically, and in doing so, mark the present activity as the first stage in our educational programme.

The Government White Paper on Educational Reconstruction is headed with the quotation: "*Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of the country depends.*" The sagacity of this statement is equally true of any and every department, group or concern, and its significance should not be lost when planning for the future.

Vocational Education is a progressive study in itself, requires continual attention and amendment and, periodically, a complete overhaul. Hence, we must produce a team of interested experts, ever vigilant, ready to advise and undertake the arduous tasks of drafting new schemes and preparing up-to-date material which, from time to time, will be thought advantageous. Let there be no mistake—this is no one-man job. If we are to be on time, we must pool ideas, draw out the best, and properly apportion the work. The staff generally will be required to give their full support.

Some remarkable and striking changes have occurred in recent years in the methods of tuition. Even to those of us who have left our school days far behind it is evident from our children's school books and B.B.C. broadcasts on educational subjects that methods of teaching have undergone some radical changes for the better. Those improvements in general education must be matched in vocational training. Perhaps one of the most outstanding features of recent years is the presentation of subject matter. Every artistry known is employed to gain the interest of the student and, thereby, his attention. That should be the aim of every course worth compiling. It provides fertile ground for the teacher, and gives the pupil a maximum capacity for assimilation. Inability of comprehension is more often the lack of interest than the absence of intelligence.

Another important feature of education that is becoming more and more pronounced is the necessity of training well beyond the range of actual requirement. It supplies an easy resilience to the shocks which are to be experienced on occasions in a varied and long period of service. For example, it is worth noting that, in the teaching profession, elementary school teachers have to hold a C.M. certificate, and secondary school teachers have to be trained to degree standard. In both cases we find qualifications much in advance of the standard of actual work. There is wisdom in this in that it allows a facile and able discharge of service.

We must aim to assist and, if possible, satisfy all justified aspirations existing among members of our department. To do this we must muster our team and properly place its members. First, we require those who are prepared to record the lessons of experience, framed in such a way as to provide a ready take-off for those who follow. Secondly, we need those who are qualified to do research in the many subjects which are permanently with us, and who are willing to compile the results of their explorations into "guide" books. Then we want advisers in the latest methods of tuition. And, finally, we must have a liaison with the Official Side which is to assure that the examiners and tutors are in harmony on all matters affecting training. We have an able captain in Mr. Burgess, and when his present commission is ended, we should seek his further indulgence to see us through a more comprehensive scheme.

If we are to accept the general spirit of the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, we cannot escape the fact that proficiency is of mutual benefit to the employer and the employee. In that case, it is not beyond the bounds of reason to consider whether the authorities be approached for a grant towards vocational education and for the provision of that equipment which only they can supply.

With the termination of hostilities, the return of our colleagues from the Services, and the re-introduction of entrance examinations, P.S.A. policy must again be to seek training for the new entrant. Its scope and depth, of course, will depend on whether we shall be operating with one or two basic grades. In either case, however, it will be one of the most important steps in the history of the Waterguard, and it is not too early to examine the problem to decide what such training should consist of.

As a preparatory move it would be advisable to get rid of all those misnomers which are misleading and psychologically inimical to the beginner's delicate susceptibilities. The atmosphere and conditions of training should be such as to guarantee an inspired start.

So that there be no misapprehension of his new sphere of operation, the general outline of the Customs and Excise Department should be explained, followed by a more detailed account of the activities of the Waterguard.

Particular attention should be paid to the correct mental attitude to be adopted

towards the work.

An early familiarity with nautical terms and nomenclature, together with the general lay-out of a ship, will do much to remove doubt and misunderstanding, enable a more precise and direct application of instructions, and tend to hasten the tyro's movement in his new environment.

Some considerable time will have to be occupied in making the round of those Dutiable, Restricted and Prohibited goods we are charged to control, special attention being given to those requiring expert knowledge in estimating, classifying and in applying the regulations. With regard to Dangerous Drugs, the difficulty may be overcome by an arrangement with the Pharmacy Section of some conveniently situated Technical College.

Methods of questioning members of the public, with the correct attitude and bearing to be adopted, should be fully emphasised.

The primary duty of the department—the protection of the Revenue—should be treated in full detail and with special care. Both sides of the subject, Prevention and Detection, should be drawn up by experts, and provision made for a complete supply of material and diagrams for demonstration. This study should exhibit all the significance of its first call on the energy and ability of the individual officer, and contain its relative bearing on every section of the work we have to perform. The progress in this age of machinery, coupled with the higher standard of education, makes it imperative that there be no effort spared if the competent officer is to be produced. Prevention, as distinct from Detection, could be brought into more prominence and may be thought to be worthy of special concentration.

The "Caution," how and when to deliver it, is an item long overdue for inclusion in our training programme.

In court proceedings, officers of this department are classed as expert witnesses, but there has, as yet, been no attempt to give them any form of training in this feature of our duties. It should not be omitted in any future scheme, and it may be considered advisable to arrange for visits to Police Courts so that officers may become familiar and at ease with procedure and atmosphere.

Space does not permit of dealing with this vast subject other than in very rough outline. Still, it is hoped that sufficient

has been said to show that much hard and laborious work lies ahead. At the moment, with reconstruction of the department in the air, it is not possible to give every aspect its proper sequence. We can, however, concentrate on the several parts, building each in its right relation to the ultimate whole.

When training for the new entrant has been obtained, the P.S.A. will still be required to furnish further study and generally to control the advance. Indeed, it is only with its inauguration that the Association will be able to plan with a correct line of direction and every degree of fullness. It behoves us, therefore, to give every attention to our preparation for negotiation in this vital matter.

As an officer develops experience of the many types of work, so he will desire to increase his knowledge of them, and there should be available not only intermediate and advanced tuition in the regulations, but special courses in such subjects as Court Proceedings and the like. The more ambitious will want guidance in Higher Departmental Training which would qualify them to hold any post within the range of the Water-guard. There appears to be no reason why this should be lacking.

The younger a man is, the more may he take advantage of education. Now is the time to discover what is the demand in this direction, and districts would do well to include vocational education in the agenda of any future meeting.

H.E.P.B.

## FROM KIRKWALL

"Taxation in Sicily is inordinately complex and the man who is now chief revenue officer under the Allied military government has a hard job ahead of him.

He is Major T. W. Gilbertson, Kirkwall, son of the late Mr. C. J. Gilbertson and of Mrs. Gilbertson, Wick. His duties range from poor rates to drafting the Sicilian budget.

Major Gilbertson was an officer of the Customs and Excise in civil life. He did special branch work in London for a time and later was posted to Kirkwall, where he joined the Orkney Royal Artillery A.A. (Territorial) unit. During the last war he was in the Seaforths."—Aberdeen Press and Journal.

It will be of interest to our readers to know that Mr. Gilbertson entered the Officer Grade from this Dept. whilst an A.P.O. at Aberdeen.

## SOUTHAMPTON NOTES

From the boys serving with the Royal Navy comes most of our news this month, and we kick off with our wedding congratulations to Lieut. Stan. Roberts, R.N.V.R., and Mrs. Roberts. Stan enjoyed a brief spell ashore in New York, and returned to the U.K. at the end of 1943, serving aboard one of H.M. Frigates. During his present stay in home waters he has enjoyed the warm hospitality of some of our colleagues, and he writes appreciatively of the welcome extended to him. Ldg. Tel. Jimmy James spent Christmas at Malta and we would not be surprised to see him before you are reading this. Petty Officer Ted Midlane has left the south, temporarily, for a course somewhere in Lancashire, and from overseas we have had more breezy air-mail from Tom Carnell and Joe. Cliff Pearson is still based on local waters, and we see him occasionally in the watch-house. He anticipates a draft elsewhere in the near future. Alan Hobbs has returned to the U.K. from India, and we are looking forward to seeing him very soon. R.A.F. news is that we had the pleasure of seeing Dudley Heal in January, quite fit again and "on the job" as usual. He tells us that Les Twentyman, after his long spell overseas in the Middle East, is expecting to go overseas again for additional training, prior to partaking in Coastal Command operations from the U.K.

From the Army we hear that Lieut. John Sykes is still in East Anglia, and that Doug, Joy and Jack Langford are still operating in London and Holyhead respectively, although the latter expects an early 1944 move elsewhere.

Turning to the exiles, we are glad to hear from Len Bassett (Heysham), and "Sexton" Blake (Rosyth), not forgetting the regular news from our several pals in Glasgow and Greenock.

Alan Hollingsworth has just moved from Manchester to Runcorn, still on D.D., in the place of Bert Fry, who rejoined the home staff in late January.

In common with Liverpool and Manchester, the A.P.O. grade in Soton, expects to do plenty of studying during 1944, as February will see the beginning of a class, thanks to the willing assent of Mr. H. S. Young, P.O., who will be "in the chair."

P.S. Amphlet No. 2, "Man Power," was well received in the port likewise the new layout of the "C. J."

Cheerio! Forces!

## "SUNDERLAND CALLING"

Hello, Forces!

News is to hand of Charlie Scarfe. His air-graph, dated 26th December, reached me just too late for inclusion in last month's effort. Charles reports being very fit and well and not having too bad a time, all things considered. He hopes that the end of the shambles will be in sight by the year end, and concludes by wishing all you blokes the best of luck for 1944.

O.K. Charles, we all wish you the best of luck and a speedy and safe return. Good Luck, Good Scouting Always.

There is news from the Big Boy also, he reports being very fit and well, though having some beastly weather, same having to be experienced before believing. As usual, Eddie adheres strictly to the slogan "SILENT NAVY," he tells nothing, even when spinning a yarn on a spot of leave. One can only appreciate and admire those qualities. He came along with some subs, for the P.S.A. In his note he says: "I feel that I would still like to pay these subs., if only for what they have done already. I fully realise if they are going to continue the good work they will need all the subs, they can get, and we in the forces should do our bit." That is the spirit "Big Boy," let's hope non-members and forces not paying will follow the lead given. Keep smiling. "Big Boy." All's well here.

Jack Crosby reports fit and well, in fact his letter was once more his usual breezy piece, the result of his Good Lady's recovery. I'll be writing later. Meanwhile all's well, keep your tail up, lad.

Our pal, Bill Sutton, is still on the sick list, but I believe he returns to Greenock on the 7th February. I was somewhat surprised at the medical decision, for he is by no means fit, even the specialist admits it will be a long time yet before he reaches normal. The treatment he is ordered is impracticable away from home. Good luck, Bill, keep smiling and no recurrence of the trouble. Treat him lightly, Greenock.

Tom Coffey revisited Manchester as witness in a court case. He tells me it was a treat to renew old friendship.

We are pleased to welcome back to the fold George Simmons, our exile at Ardrossan.

Cheerio, Forces! Good luck Always. Over to you--Over. O. H. C.

## GREENOCK NEWS

If ever a way was paved with sweat and tears it is that rugged road we have hewn from the rockface of that mountain of difficulties which is Greenock. Casting our minds back to those early days of the war we recall that era of disorganisation and dissension which ever and again threatened failure and defeat, and which from time to time I have so poorly and inadequately tried to portray. We remember those fantastic scenes in an office so crowded that people literally did their clerical work on window ledges and even on the floor; those gallant little motor boats in which daily the boarding officers battered their way through the turbulent waters of the Clyde to an anchorage so crowded that, once among the shipping, no part of the shore was visible, yet so vast that (Dare I mention it?) a vessel might lie undiscovered for a week. To deal with this phenomenon was a gallimaufry of disgruntled detached officers to whom, after a lifetime of carrying out regulations with reasonable exactitude, it often seemed impossible to carry out any at all, and each grade, in their more exasperated moments, were tempted to believe that their superiors or subordinates, as the case might be, were bent on working against them. We were indeed an unhappy band of anything but brothers.

Through the constructive sympathy of the Deputy I.G.W., who paid us a personal visit, our plight was much alleviated although, to mention but one of his creations, even the new office is far from adequate.

Looking back over 1943 one cannot but be aware of a change. That once heterogeneous collection of individuals has welded itself into a port; a port with a history and traditions of which the founders, who started almost from scratch, are rather proud. Our methods may be unorthodox, but we carry out regulations in the spirit even if not always to the letter; for which we assume approval from "topsides" not only in the negative form of acquiescence but because we understand a more positive appreciation of our work has been expressed. Though often concealed to the stranger beneath a show of boisterous polemics there lies a bond of mutual trust and understanding between all ranks: though there may be a certain individuality in various methods, working side by side through years of difficulty and hardship has won for each due respect for the way he overcomes the one

and endures the other. Reviewing the last few months it can fairly be said not only that all have their shoulder to the wheel but that nearly everyone is pushing the same way, and as we climb ever higher towards those lofty pinnacles of ultimate success so are we reminded that though the going may be smoother the way is still narrow and bounded by a sheer precipice over which one false step could send us hurtling to that dark abyss of chaos from which we have so laboriously climbed.

### Association Meeting.

A well-attended meeting of all ranks, with the P.Os. present in unusual strength, was held on 1st February. The Whitley Representatives reported on various items raised at the last meeting and, after discussion, further decisions were adjourned pending developments.

Finding the District entitled to a third Whitley Representative, Mr. Stobbs, A.P.O., Ayr, was elected. The many outports in this very extensive district have a number of urgent problems which only those on the spot can fully grasp and deal with. It was therefore felt that Mr. Stobbs would be in an advantageous position to solve them, and we not only wish him luck in what will doubtless be a difficult task, but assure him of the sympathetic co-operation of his colleagues in Greenock.

Items of a local character were then discussed with some candour until a late hour, and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chairman for skilful handling of his delicate task.

B. A. BENNING.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor. "The Customs Journal."  
Sir,

Reference your footnote to my letter in the December Journal, Penultimate sentence "The Customs Curl and Navy Curl are identical, . . .": I should, of course, have stipulated the R.N. Curl, otherwise I have little to add except that I made the statement only after careful and repeated comparison. It is to be noted, however, that in recent issues of our uniform with the half band the sleeves appear to be inserted haphazard in either shoulder so that some jackets have the curl running one way and some the other. Perhaps this could be attended to.

Last sentence: "The Navy copied it (The Customs Ring and Curl) from us, anyway, so I've been told." This is the story as I heard it:—

"In olden days, when there was a naval battle, the vessels taking part, although navigated by a merchant seaman called the "sailing master," were commanded by the landed gentry, who as often as not were soldiers rather than sailors, and they went to sea in any clothes it took their fancy to wear. The only officers present in uniform were the Revenue Officers aboard the Revenue Cutters, who wore on their uniforms the traditional Customs Rings and Curl. At a later date, when the R.N. as we know it was being founded and rank distinctions were required the Customs Ring and Curl was copied. Long afterwards, when people had begun to think of it as a "Navy" Curl, the Lords of the Admiralty petitioned the Commissioners of Customs to forgo the right of their officers to wear this ancient badge of rank, but the Hon. Board, claiming H.M. Customs to be the senior Service and therefore with the prior right, refused and that is why to-day we still wear the Customs Curl, sometimes referred to as the Navy Curl."

I am no historian, but it sounds a good story to me; I find considerable pleasure in telling it on suitable occasions and so I see no reason why I should make any effort to disprove it.

Yours, etc.,

B. A. BENNING.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."  
Sir,

I ask your indulgence in regard to a little space in which to draw the attention of readers—P.S.A. members, we hope—to what is, in my opinion, a sadly needed reform. This is in reference to the present conditions which govern an allocation of part pension on retirement. As most of the Service is aware, before a retiring officer can elect to allocate part of his pension to a dependant (e.g., his wife), he must be certified to be in good health and—here comes the rub—he is not given the option to allocate until within six months of his normal retiring age. Much attention has been given in recent years towards ameliorating the lot of any person who has had

"hard luck," and surely a failing in health and faculties when approaching the Haven of Peaceful Retirement, after many years of active duty, can be called "hard luck"? Justice and Mercy can be made to go hand-in-hand in such a case by a recalculation—give an individual the opportunity to allocate *ten years* before he is due to retire and let the actuary who faces risks work out figures on this basis.

If any of my readers agree, I suggest that we commence by tabling a resolution at the next local meeting, on the following lines:—

"That this Meeting is of opinion that option of allocation of part pensions to a dependant should be made available to an officer ten years before his normal retiring age, and that the Executive Committee take the necessary initial steps to that end."

Yours faithfully,

L. W. CUMBERLIDGE.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."  
Sir,

I have pleasure in submitting the following suggestion received by me.

#### Philatelic Club.

"It is proposed by Mr. R. W. Ellingham to start a Philatelic Club among the Staff, to be run on the usual lines, and enquiries for particulars should be addressed to Mr. Ellingham, at the Custom House, Oban. It is believed that four persons have already intimated their intention of joining. It must be realised that all transactions will be through the post, and each stamp priced by the owner and each book returned to the secretary with cash for stamps purchased, and the proceeds finally remitted to the member with his unsold stamps, a small discount being deducted for club expenses and postage. The cash can alternatively wait till the books have been the rounds and purchases offset by sales."

Would intending members please say which system they prefer when writing to Mr. Ellingham.

Yours faithfully,

W. W. BISHOP.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Sir,

Your correspondent "A.D.," writing in a recent issue of the "C.J.," appears to have taken exception to the suggestion that the A.P.O.'s' war contribution is "puny" and that there is a shortage of man-power for the Forces. Indeed, he implies that there is such an abundant supply that the Ministry of Labour is hard pressed to know what to do with all the man-power on their hands. With your permission, Mr. Editor, I should like to address a few words to him.

First of all, "A.D.," my letter did not state that the Department's war effort was puny, but that of the younger A.P.O.s. Secondly, recruitment into the Army has been in abeyance simply because more men are urgently needed in the Navy, and many of those who would be normally directed to the Army are being sent to the Navy instead. The same applies, of course, to the direction of some men to the mines. That must be obvious to anybody who troubles to read the newspapers intelligently.

Now, "A.D.," let me enlarge a little on why I consider the work of the younger A.P.O. as a puny contribution to the war effort. I've been around the country a good deal these last two and a half years, in ports both large and small. The two years following Dunkirk I spent a great deal of my time sitting in the office waiting and hoping for an "arrival" and walking round empty docks with a security rummage of a few small coasters which occasionally showed up. For two years this went on, "A.D.," and I was one of many. A brief visit to a small port saw the same procedure, plus a little Navy work. Another large port which came within my experience was a brighter proposition. At periods we were definitely busy. Indeed, it was often essential for the A.P.O. to take over some of the P.O.'s work on boarding duties. But, "A.D.," while A.P.O.s were thus engaged, P.O.s were doing office work that a fifteen-year-old clerk would do for a pound a week.

Don't you think there has been something very unsatisfactory about this department during this war? Hasn't it struck you as curious the number of

jobs created by the war that we could take in our stride but have been given to other or newly created departments? I mean primarily the censorship and security controls, of course. Have you noticed how we have been gradually shouldered out of these jobs, "A.D.?" In the early stages of the war we had a certain amount of scope in this work. But now we find that the censorship officials have the authority—I nearly wrote audacity—to question passengers after we have completed our questioning and examination regarding censorship matters, and, if they have a mind, order a search of his or her person. Then, in the S.C., "A.D.," we find a port mobile squad, consisting of a squad of soldiers, ex-clerks, schoolmasters, etc., with a C.P.O. in attendance. Not, as you would think, "A.D.," a squad of A.P.O.s, all well experienced in this type of work, with an S.C. officer in attendance.

Sometimes, "A.D.," I wonder just what the Official Side have got up against us. And when I read that they have suggested that two P.O.s at Greenock should be employed solely on making out Prime Entries, I give up wondering, "A.D." Aren't there such things as temporary clerks employed in the Civil Service who, at school-leaving age, are perfectly capable of that arduous task? It gives me small hopes for the department's post-war reorganisation. It certainly makes you realise the task that faces the Association. And these, "A.D.," are a few reasons why I am dissatisfied with my job as a war-time A.P.O. I realise that there are a few out of the many ports up and down the coast that have plenty to do. I realise, too, "A.D.," that there are some A.P.O.s quite satisfied with the job they are doing. Let them carry on. But I repeat, let those of us who feel we could and ought to take a more active part in winning the war, have our chance. With a proper reorganisation of staff and a real appreciation of the needs of various ports, I feel sure that we few could be released without any detriment to the Department's war effort.

That's all for now, "A.D.," and thanks, Mr. Editor.—Yours sincerely,

"G.B."

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