

The
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PREVENTIVE STAFF ASSOCIATION

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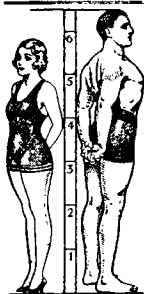
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CURRENT COMMENTS

From Our Chief.

WE have very great pleasure in passing on to the members the following message received from the Inspector-General:—

"I sincerely and heartily reciprocate your kind wishes for the New Year to you and all my colleagues in the Waterguard—not only throughout this country, but on land and sea and air all over the world.

"As I write, the guns are firing, and our thoughts naturally go out to all those of our boys who are fighting for us. I wish for them all a speedy and safe return to peace and their homes and families, and to a better world which they are devoting all their strength and courage to make.

"My sympathy goes out to all of those who are separated from their homes and families at this time, and I do thank them for the loyal and cheerful way in which they have borne the trials which this dreadful war has brought to them.

"That this year may bring peace and happiness to all, and that the 'All Clear' which is just sounding may be a happy augury, is my very sincere wish."

Waterguard Sectional Committee.

At the meeting of the Sectional Committee held on the 5th January, under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. H. Garrett, agreements were recorded on three items. These were (1) that crews' effects be admitted to Preference under the same conditions as passengers; (2) that the Allowances assigned to some twenty-two Small Ports be temporarily increased; and (3) that the number of Senior Engineers be increased from four to five.

Among the items adjourned after discussion were (a) limitation of Detached Duty absences; (b) first-class steamship travel for Assistant Preventive Officers; and (c) the period of wear, and style and material of Waterguard mackintoshes.

Executive Committee.

The February meeting of the Executive Committee (P.S.A.) has been arranged to take place at the offices of the C. & E. Federation, Walter House, Strand, London, on the 24th of the month.

Annual Leave, 1944.

E.O.C. 691 of 15th January, 1944, gives details of the Leave arrangements for the new leave year, and it is pleasing to note the improvements authorised.

In the first place, the number of days annual leave is raised from sixteen to eighteen; and in the second place, there would appear to be no restriction as regards the incidence of the odd days. Every Officer is, however, to be encouraged to take two weeks consecutively.

As regards Public Holidays, no official announcement has yet been made, but it is not expected that there will be any change, and the number will remain at eight.

O.W.O. 41/43 Again.

Action has been taken by the Staff Side arising from information that officers applying for leave involving the restricted travel periods had been asked to give a separate written undertaking not to travel. The Official Side agree that the address shown on the form of application for leave should suffice, and if it indicated that no travelling was involved, the leave form would be endorsed: "Granted subject to the conditions of O.W.O. 41/43."

As the result of Association action, steps are being taken to ensure that the minuted leave of Detached Duty Officers who propose to travel home does not involve travelling during the restricted periods. We assume that where, for official reasons, this is unavoidable, the Board would treat the travelling as necessary, and so grant the usual free travel voucher.

Alarm Clocks.

The statement in O.W.O. 50/43 that applications should be submitted by Collectors to Section I within fourteen days of the date of the order (i.e., before the 27th December) led to a belief that no qualified application made after this date would be successful. This is not strictly true.

The O.W.O. was the initial enquiry to ascertain the possible scope of demand and to secure an estimation of requirements. The applications made under the order will be dealt with, and we have reasons for believing that the allocation to this department will enable these to be met.

Future claims (e.g., from members who did not make application before 27th December, and those newly assigned to duties the conditions of which are within the scope of the B.O.T. ruling) should be sent to the General Secretary (P.S.A.).

Bonus and Pensions.

It is a personal triumph for Mr. W. J. Brown that, after so many blank refusals, the Chancellor of the Exchequer should at last concede a Government promise to look into the position of Service pensioners with a view to tabling some remedial measure.

As far as we have been able to follow this matter, the arguments in favour are as strong to-day as when the question was first raised by W. J. Brown; the only change in the situation would appear to be the increased support from all parts of the House.

Our congratulations, Bill.

The other outstanding claim is that war bonus should be reckoned for pensions. This remains unsettled. Indeed, the Treasury have recently rejected it again, but this time they said they could not accept it as valid *at the present moment*.

In the past the Official Side have objected to making bonus pensionable because such a concession might have involved granting bonus to those already pensioned. W.J.B.'s action regarding pensioners may well dispose of this obstacle and leave the way clear for the National Staff Side to press for pensionability of bonus forthwith.

Permanent Transfers and Billeting.

From the earliest days of the war the Treasury adopted a policy based on the thesis that all war-time absences from home called for similar treatment. No matter whether it was evacuation, detached duty or special service—all had to be governed by the same code; and if, as was presaged, this meant hardships or worsened conditions in certain smaller departmental groups, that would be just too bad. Remedy would be denied because of major repercussions.

Time and time again hard-won departmental concessions have been sacrificed for the sake of "Service uniformity," and O.W.O. 49/43 is just another example.

The National Staff Side, having agreed in the earlier stages to the inclusion of Detached Duty Officers in the evacuation conditions, found it difficult to oppose this further encroachment.

Post-war Staffing.

We have it on very good authority that formal negotiations on Post-war Staffing of the Civil Service have been (or soon will be) opened up between the Treasury and the National Staff Side. The members of the Staff Side are Messrs. Day

(Chairman), Broom, Crook, Edwards, Herbert, Houghton, Leicester, White and Jones (Secretary). A very strong team, this, but in our humble view there is one outstanding weakness—that is the absence of the Civil Servant element. With the exception of T. R. Jones, the Secretary, all members of the negotiating body are full-time officials of Service unions or associations.

Boots' Library.

As the library year draws to a close, we are prompted to remind members that the new library year commences on the 1st February.

Members desiring to renew library membership, and those who now wish to take advantage of the concessions granted to P.S.A. members by Messrs. Boots, must complete a form of application. These forms are obtainable from your District Organiser.

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Remembrance Day, 1943.

The Customs and Excise Wreath Fund balance has been distributed rather more widely on this occasion than in the past, when the bulk of the money was handed to the C. & E. Orphans' and Widows' Fund.

This time the greatest proportion was allocated to the Red Cross British Prisoners-of-war Fund, and the remainder was shared between St. Dunstan's, the British Legion and the C. & E. Orphanage.

We think this was a fine, though rather belated, gesture, and we hope the method of distribution will continue.

ONE OF THE NEW YEAR HONOURS.

We were very pleased to note in the New Year Honours List the name of Mr. J. F. Bell, Senior Executive Officer, who receives the M.B.E.

Mr. Bell is the Official Side Secretary of the Departmental Council, and for many years was the Hon. Secretary of the Customs and Excise Sports Club. It is probably in this latter capacity that Mr. Bell will be remembered through the activities of the Waterguard Sports Clubs.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENTAL WHITLEY COUNCIL

Items of Waterguard interest extracted from the two hundred and sixty-eighth meeting of the Council held in the Conference Room, City Gate House, E.C.2, on Wednesday, 22nd December, 1943, the Chair being taken by Sir Archibald Carter, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise.

Prior to the commencement of the normal business, the Chairman, on behalf of the Official Side, extended a welcome to Mr. E. E. Buck on his appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Council. The post of Vice-Chairman, always important, would become increasingly so when the Council had to deal with the many difficult problems arising out of the transition from war to peace.

Mr. Buck thanked the Chairman for his kind welcome, and shared his confidence that Whitley machinery could make a valuable contribution in the discussion of post-war problems.

The Staff Side announced the appointment of Mr. E. O. Wiggins to the Staff Side of the Council in place of Mr. Perkins.

Staff Side Proposals on Airports.

- (a) That the essential parts (paras. 7-13) of the report on the approval, Staffing and General Conditions of Control of Work at Customs Aerodromes, adopted by the Departmental Council in October, 1937, be incorporated in the Civil Aircraft Instructions;
- (b) That Part 10 (September, 1943) of the Civil Aircraft Instructions be amended accordingly; and
- (c) That during the war staffing arrangements at each aerodrome be reviewed every three months in the light of the traffic.

(a) In support of their proposals, the Staff Side stated that informal discussions had already taken place with the Official Side, but that little progress had been made. In their opinion, the relevant paragraphs (7-13) of the 1937 report should have been incorporated in the Civil Aircraft Instructions, and they felt that if this had been done some of the difficulties which have arisen would have been avoided. As it was, Collectors were unaware of material points as to staffing and accommodation contained in paragraphs 9, 10 and 13 of the report, and in the Staff Side's view, a useful purpose

would even now be served if those rules which were capable of application in existing conditions were published.

(b) Certain paragraphs in Part 10 of the Civil Aircraft Instructions were not in agreement with the 1937 report, and should be adjusted in accordance with the recommendations of the 1937 report.

(c) The proposal for a quarterly review at each aerodrome was simply one of machinery to ensure that the staffing arrangements for each aerodrome should be discussed between the Collector and the Vice-Chairman of the local Whitley Committee.

The Official Side stated that since the war-time conditions at aerodromes were subject to rapid fluctuations, it was not possible to regulate staffing arrangements by any formula for peace-time traffic. Each aerodrome was under constant review, and the best possible arrangements had to be made in each case having regard to the volume and nature of the traffic and the staff available. There were different classes of aerodromes: (a) Customs, (b) Royal Air Force, (c) U.S.A., and (d) a combination of Civil and Royal Air Force. This war-time traffic was largely passenger and Government cargo, with the passenger traffic predominating generally, and they felt that the wisest course was to make the best possible *ad hoc* arrangements. So far as initial staffing of aerodromes was concerned, the report had a bias in favour of the Officer Grade, but in view of the predominating war-time traffic, staffing must be entirely unbiased as between grades, and must depend on the facts of each case as it arose. Moreover, it was not always possible to consult the Staff Side fully as regards staffing adjustments, because the Air Ministry insisted that particulars as to the nature and volume of traffic at aerodromes should be kept secret.

In the opinion of the Staff Side, the formulæ in the 1937 Agreement were sufficiently elastic to meet war-time conditions, and the absence of guidance to Collectors should be remedied. On the question of secrecy, consultation with the Vice-Chairman was not regarded as a breach of that requirement, and without consultation they feared that precedents might be set up as regards grades and work which might ultimately react to the prejudice of the Staff Side.

The Official Side was not prepared to be tied to any formula under existing conditions, but agreed that it was important to keep the Staff Side in touch with any developments which seemed

likely to form a basis for future practice. They undertook to examine the matter further from this point of view.

The item was accordingly adjourned for further consideration by the Official Side.

Staff Side Proposal that an Autonomous Income Tax Branch be set up in the Customs and Excise Department.

In reply to an inquiry by the Staff Side, the Official Side confirmed that they understood that it was the intention of the Inland Revenue to take over assessments for members of all Government Departments, and in the light of this information, the Staff Side suggested, and the Official Side agreed, to adjourn the item *sine die*.

The Official Side promised to approach the Inland Revenue with a view to expediting the assessments still outstanding for the current year.

WATERGUARD WALLACE

(Having no connection with any person, living or deceased. I doubt.)

This is the tale of Wallace Wymple,
Whose rule of life was very simple.
When asked about it he would bellow
"Just leave it to the other fellow!"

When he grew up he joined the ranks
Of the lads who stop the smugglers' pranks;
But true to style he wouldn't pay
Subscriptions to the P.S.A.

You see, he joined us in the year
When boatmen strode two paces rear.
His lot, indeed, was far from happy,
And his uniform was not too snappy.

Our hero, staunch in his belief,
Left all he could to his relief;
And foolish to the last, young
Wallace he
Ignored Association policy.

When, thanks to efforts of Beer Lane,
Our service reached a higher plane;
Wallace was shamed, and did repent
And read the Journal, but kept his rent.

As Wymple's salary rose quite high, Sir,
He more and more became a miser;
And when his turn came to buy beer
Remained two paces in the rear.

You see, he couldn't doff the yoke
Of "leave it to the other bloke";
So really, it is not surprising
That W.'s savings kept on rising.

But while still Young, 'tis sad to say
Wallace quietly passed away.
He'd pinched and scraped too much,
our hero,
And so poor Wallace got a zero.

'Tis sad to think of all the gold
He'd saved for when he'd gotten old;
As in the past he used to bellow,
He'd—left it to the other fellow.

The moral of this tale is clear,
Each one should buy his share of
beer.
But, more important to the nation,
We all should join our Association.

We still have colleagues such as
Wymple,
But their remedy could be quite
simple.
It only needs each one to play
The game and back the P.S.A.

With all our shoulders to the wheel
We'd stand a chance of a real new
deal.
A united front. Who'd ask for more?
'Twould even satisfy Battshaw.

Come on you chaps, push out the boat.
Man the pumps. Keep her afloat.
Our course is clear. Our compass true.
The tide is fair. It's up to YOU.
JELL.

**Retirement of
MR. ALEXANDER DODD, C.B.E.,
Collector, London Port**

On the last evening of the year a representative gathering filled a large room overlooking the City to say "farewell" to the retiring Collector. A wider circle still shared in this tribute to Mr. Dodd. Letters from Output Collectors and others—at Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast, Sheffield and Inverness — showed how great is the company of his colleagues who call him friend.

The Collector, Manchester, travelled to London to speak of 37 years association. Representatives of every grade in London Port told of their high regard for Mr. Dodd as Collector and as a man. The Watchers, said their spokesman, had found him to be a great gentleman, and would long remember his understanding

of their problems. His successor, Mr. Preston, spoke of Mr. Dodd's outstanding personal position in the Service, and of his sincerity and serenity. Salting with humour his affection for him, Mr. Hoare said he had often wondered whether his successor was really as wise as he looked—whether, indeed, any human being could be as wise as his old friend, Alex Dodd, looked. The Chief Inspector said "farewell" to "a great official and a great gentleman," and, for the whole Outdoor Service, wished him and Mrs. Dodd (who, to their regret, was prevented by indisposition from being present) long life, health and happiness.

As Mr. Dodd rose to reply, the early dusk was closing in upon the City, and on the Custom House dimly seen through the tall windows behind his impressive figure. One saw there the historic background of his office, and remembered how, for over 1,200 years, it had continued at or near that small stretch of London river now shrouding itself again in winter mists. Mr. Dodd regretted that his three years as Collector had not known the full surge of commercial activity (now beginning to return, he hoped) which in peace-time flowed through this greatest port of the world. But as he looked back through 43 years of service, he chiefly recalled the human side of it, represented by those of every grade about him that evening, and remembered the many, many kindnesses he had all those years received, crowned by their gift and good wishes to him now. He spoke movingly of his own good fortune in his family and happy home, in health, and a host of friends.

As one present witnessed, speaking from boyhood memories: "There goes a good man indeed."

1st January, 1944.

G.J.E.C.

OBITUARY

Mr. J. T. ALLWORK (W. Supt. Retd.)

The Service will learn with regret of the death of Mr. J. T. Allwork, late Waterguard Superintendent. His funeral took place on Monday, 20th December, 1943, and was attended by Mr. G. Stanford (Waterguard Superintendent) and other members of the Plymouth staff.

In the 14 years of his retirement Mr. Allwork has lived up to his name, for up to the illness which terminated in his death he was actively concerned in the

affairs of the City of Plymouth. He was a City Councillor and served on the Electricity, Water, Public Libraries, Blind Welfare, Local Information and Plymouth Insurance Committees. He was also Secretary of the Coastal Trade Protection Society and the Local Blood Transfusion Association, and for 20 years had been secretary of his church.

G. T. C.

Mr. J. LINDSAY, Preventive Officer.

It is with deep regret that the passing is announced to the service of Mr. John Lindsay, P.O., of London. He had been in failing health for some considerable time, the immediate cause of death being heart failure following an attack of broncho-pneumonia.

Jack had been "off sick" for nearly a year and, indeed, had been placed upon pensionable rate of pay, when, by sheer will-power, he determined to get back to his job and succeeded. Alas, it was not for long, and during the brief period between September and December of last year he grappled with an office job; then, on January 2nd, once more he had to enter Walton Hospital, where he died on the 7th inst.

Aged 45 years, he entered the service as a P.M. in 1919 at Leith, subsequently transferring to Cardiff. From that port he went on promotion to London in May, 1937, remaining there until 1940, when he was sent on detached duty, arriving in Liverpool in 1942.

The funeral service was held at his residence, being conducted by the Rev. S. Singer, and the interment took place in St. Luke's Churchyard, Great Crosby, Lancs. Fifteen of his colleagues attended the last rites, among them being Mr. W. A. Colwill, Asst. Inspector, representing the Waterguard Superintendent; Mr. L. J. Hall, P.O., representing his former colleagues in Cardiff; and Messrs. Charles and Flaxman, P.O.s; and R. J. Lowe, A.P.O., who appeared on behalf of the London staff. The coffin was borne to its last resting-place by Messrs. Bowen, Charles, Flaxman and Stevens, P.O.s, who acted as bearers.

Jack is survived by his widow, three sons (one of whom is an engineer officer in the Merchant Navy), and two daughters, to whom is extended the sincere sympathy of the staff.

R. J. L.

LEITH PRESENTATION

MR. W. A. GIRVIN, I.S.O..

Waterguard Superintendent

A large gathering attended at the Custom House, Leith, on the 30th December, 1943, to bid an official farewell to Mr. W. A. Girvin, Waterguard Superintendent of the Leith Division, on the occasion of his retirement from the Service.

Mr. Saunders (Collector, Leith) presided, and spoke highly of his association with Mr. Girvin. Letters were read from the Inspector-General, Mr. Kerr (Deputy I.G.W.), Mr. Herrington (Waterguard Superintendent, Liverpool), Mr. Little (Waterguard Superintendent, Aberdeen), Mr. Bateman (Waterguard Superintendent, Glasgow), and from the staff at the Outports in the Division.

Tribute was paid to Mr. Girvin's sterling qualities as a colleague and supervisor by Mr. McHarg (Collector, Edinburgh), Mr. R. Duncan (Officer), Mr. H. Skelton (Indoor Officer), Mr. F. Brown (Appointer), Mr. G. O. Warne (the new Super.), Messrs. McKinnon and Jenner (C.P.O.s), and other members of the Leith staff, and all speakers expressed the hope that Mr. Girvin would have many happy years of retirement.

Mr. Sheehan (Waterguard Surveyor), in making the presentation of a silver tray suitably inscribed, spoke of the honour which had been conferred on Mr. Girvin by H.M. the King in decorating him with the Imperial Service Order. He drew attention to the fact that Mr. Girvin had entered the Service in Leith in 1901, and it was fitting that he should end his career there.

Mr. Girvin thanked those present for the honour they had done him, and outlined briefly his career in the Service. He spoke of the improvements which had taken place during the past 40 years in the Waterguard, and expressed the hope that the next 40 years would see even greater improvements.

THE LADS O' LONDON

Many thanks to those who sent cards at Christmas. I hope that you enjoyed yourselves wherever you were, and that next time it arrives we shall all be once again in "Civvy Street." On Euston Station I met George Pearce returning from leave spent at home, and was pleased to learn that he is now in an O.C.T.U. of the Artists' Rifles, and that he will soon receive his commission. We

congratulate him upon this, and couple it with the fact that he is now the father of a daughter—Jennifer.

Charles Armstrong, too, hopes soon to enter the ranks of the commissioned officers. A cadet in the R.A.F., he is now enjoying a well-earned rest in Southern Rhodesia after his sojourn in Malta.

This will now mean that 33½% of the London boys in the Forces are commissioned. Good work, lads.

Lieutenants Jim Ayton and Jim Sutton, R.N.V.R., called in at various offices recently and sent seasonable greetings to all friends and colleagues.

A greetings card received from Walter Pedder told of the arrival of a son—Martyn John—to him and his wife, and those of us who knew of Walter's accident some four years ago will rejoice at his complete recovery.

The news of our contingent in India continues to be good, and Harry Farren has sent quite a long account of his experiences at his station situated in the Himalayas. Apparently he had to spend a month in hospital, and whilst there enjoyed a diet consisting of chicken, steak, eggs, etc., and even had his breakfast in bed. It passed all too quickly, and he is now back on duty.

Flying Officer "Pip" Penfold, who arrived home some time ago from the States, is now stationed in Yorkshire.

Walter Blake—one of our prisoners of war in Germany—is terribly keen to hear more of the reconstruction plans for the Waterguard Department, and I shall be only too happy to let him know concerning same. It must be very encouraging to our Association officials to know that most of their colleagues in the Forces are interested in the future status and conditions of this branch of the Customs and Excise.

Jack Sides has been a frequent visitor of late, and he has now a job ashore in Liverpool for a while and is enjoying the change. After a long time spent in the Army Cooking Department at a barracks in Essex, Alec Wheatley has been moved to the Quartermaster's department in the same place, and is responsible for keeping certain types of equipment up to date.

This season of goodwill has not been without its touch of sadness. Firstly, tidings reached me that Walter Varney met with an accident whilst cycling to the Blackwall office on Christmas morn'g, and is now in Poplar Dock Hospital; secondly, Jack Lindsay passed away in his sleep after having had indifferent health for a long period. He left London in the

summer of 1940 for D.D. in Swansea, and after a period of sickness returned to duty in Liverpool, where he has died. Most of his service in London was spent on the Woolwich Station, and he was a model of punctuality. The sympathy of the staff is extended to Mrs. Lindsay and her family at this time, and best wishes are extended to Walter Varney for a quick recovery.

Mr. G. (Gerry) Grey, Waterguard Surveyor, has left London for his new district of Middlesbro', and the members of the Sports Club in particular will wish him well in his new sphere, coupled with the desire to see him back in London ere long.

One last thing, once more I am returning to London, and shall be glad if correspondence is addressed to me, c/o Room 11, Custom House, London, E.C.3, or to my home address, 29, Scaven Road, London, S.E.8. I shall have more time to write to you then, and in passing, let's hear more of you.

Let's hear from you, then.

Till the lights o' London shine again.
R.J.L.

SOUTHAMPTON NOTES

The New Year brought good news indeed, and we are glad to tell you that a card has been received from David Youdell, prisoner of war in Malaya. It bears the formal information limited to such cards, but after two years of complete and anxious silence, great was the relief and joy that card brought to the early hours of 1944. Likewise, the news received in Greenock by our old friend, Bill Hackett, whose son, after breaking captivity in Italy, has returned to the Allied lines, safe and sound, though his escape and southward trek of four hundred miles was full of hazard second to none. Happy tidings, indeed.

The festive season was accompanied by greetings from practically all of the lads and, of course, our D.D. pals. Summarised, from you to them, and in reverse: "All the best for 1944."

From Ceylon, news of interesting length from Sergt. Charlie Cardall; from an Eastern seaboard, air-mail from Joe, and airgraphs from Tom Carnell (Kenya) and Jimmy James (Central Mediterranean). All are well and all write with optimistic hopes of seeing us during 1944. Home mail includes letters from Dudley Heal, who had a spell of sick-leave in December but rejoined his squadron before Christmas; from Jock Strachan,

now Flight-Sergt.; from Ron Greenhalgh and Ted Midlane, Dudley Jarvis, Steve and Jack Welsh. The boys are in good form and, like our War Cabinet, they converse with familiarity upon post-war prospects.

More early 1944 news was made by the arrival of an airgraph from one of whom we had heard nothing since May, 1941—Geoff Madeley (Preston), now Major, R.A., attached to the R.A.S.C. at G.H.Q., New Delhi. Our congratulations are speeding back. Meanwhile, Geoff's friends are asked to accept this report as a greeting from him.

Two years, almost, have passed since we last heard of that popular sportsman, "Jack" (A. C.) Hobbs, R.N., well known in Cardiff, Greenock and Southampton. We now hear that he is due home very soon, following overseas service since 1942 in Far Eastern waters.

Our humble duties afloat in local waters were recently made the more interesting by a chance meeting with Lieut. Jack Berry, R.N.V.R. (need I add "of London"?). A good scout, doing a monotonous job, and certainly enjoying his entry into the correspondence columns of the C.J.!

The exiles continue to maintain form, even though playing away these long years, and their remembrances—received from Greenock, Holyhead, Liverpool and Manchester—are appreciated. The absence of these officers is daily the more conspicuous, and it is time that some of them were returning. This opinion is founded on fact.

The friends of our former colleague, Charlie Saxton, will regret to learn of his death, reported in the Portsmouth Press early in January.

Finally, we join in congratulating the staff at Speke, who have written on the wall with timely emphasis.

Cheerio, Forces!

L.B.

SUNDERLAND CALLING

Hello, Forces!

News is to hand from Charlie Scarfe; he reports being fit and well. He has some caustic remarks to make about gold braid for A.P.O.s, and suggests that winning the war would be more important. It appears to be niggardly picking from his end. My letter should put him in a different mind about the braid, and I can safely say that we are all out to finish the

war as soon as possible. Good luck, Charles. Leave the braid, etc., to us; we won't let you guys down.

The Big Boy dropped in on a spot of leave last month; as usual he was looking remarkably fit and well. He regrets being unable to visit the Watch-house, but sends his regards to you all. He is somewhat worried about his subs. to the P.S.A., being under the impression that they were deducted from balance of pay; however, that matter will be put right from now on. Keep smiling, "Big Boy," your visits are very welcome.

Stan. Gill, Jack Gaston and Brian Horn are still silent. If any of you are in contact with either of them and can pass on their address, I shall be grateful.

Ron Greenhalgh reports once more. He is fit and well. I note your request re address, Ron. Keep smiling, I have no news of Buster for you, it's ten weeks since we heard from him.

Jack Crosby reports once more. He is fit and well. I hear that the son now does his 18 holes regularly with Dad. Life in the H.G. appears to be somewhat boring. Never mind, Jack, it can't last for ever.

George Simmons dropped in last month on domestic urgency leave. Our deepest sympathy to you and Mrs. Simmons on the loss of the infant daughter.

Bill Sutton I have contacted personally. At present he is on sick leave, having been home since the 20th November and due to return on the 10th January. I have my doubts about his being sufficiently fit to do so though. Bill wants an operation doing, but his medical man says he is not fit for it to be done. Keep smiling, Bill, we all hope you will soon be fit once more.

Nothing exciting has happened here, except when the Chief's cushion was found to be smouldering. I offered the use of the stirrup pump, hoping to get a spot of practice, but the offer was declined.

Owing to the 'flu epidemic I missed my usual gossip last month, being one of the victims. At one period the staff was reduced to the Chief, one P.O. and one A.P.O., but they kept the flag flying until reinforcements arrived.

To you all, Forces and exiles, may 1944 bring a victorious peace and a speedy return to the fold. The old shack still stands and our flag is mast high.

Cheerio, Forces! Over to you—Over.
O.H.L.

MERSEYSIDE NEWS

Since my last report there is splendid news of the successful way in which the Waterguard Officers have tackled the job at a North Country Airport since taking over from the Landing Staff.

One Preventive Officer and one Assistant Preventive Officer have been allocated to the Station, and two seizures were made on the very first plane to be dealt with. This, by the way, is one more than had been obtained previously in several years.

The good work has been maintained, and in some two months to date 30 revenue seizures have resulted, and, what is perhaps even more important these days, upwards of a dozen Security seizures have also accrued.

Several prosecutions for both Revenue and Security offences have resulted, and the good work of the Department has been praised in a letter of appreciation sent by the C.O. of the Intelligence Control.

Nearly all the Revenue seizures have been of a substantial nature—in fact, only two could be classed as small. Offenders have been detected among all classes of passengers, and included in their number are a famous racing jockey and trainer, a well-known author, and a famous B.B.C. concert singer.

T.V.D. involved has already passed the four-figure mark, and the goods seized have included many varied items throughout almost the entire range of high-duty goods.

Congratulations are due to our colleagues who have done such a splendid job and thereby enhanced the already strong claims that this type of work should immediately be laid to this, the proper, department wherever it arises.

It has been said by the Airport staff themselves that almost any Waterguard officer could have performed with equal success, and it is earnestly to be hoped that due note has been taken of all the circumstances and factors in appropriate quarters.

Forces news is limited this month to reports about three of our colleagues.

Major (Acting Colonel) F. T. Hill, O.C. 152 Pay Corps, arrived back from North Africa almost as soon as his last letter. He looked fit and well, although his letter told, with his usual touch of good humour, of some hard times in Tunisia, including a time when he and

his Company were lost for some days in a desert sandstorm. He looks forward to the day when he can take down the old "boots and saddle" (seal duty slip-book, etc.) and resume where he left off in '39 as Preventive Officer, Liverpool. He sends his good wishes to all the staff and anticipates their helpful co-operation when he does resume; expects to be a trifle rusty, but, knowing him well, we can't see it.

Sergt. Pilot Bert Ralph also came back recently from the Middle East. He had ferried a plane to an overseas station and was returning by boat.

Harry Worthington writes another cheery letter from India, telling of his engagement to a Junior Commander A.T.S. (Captain Missie-Sahib). They met when both were Staff Sergeants, and as Harry is now on an O.C.T.U. course and hoping to get his two pips soon, we hasten to convey our congratulations on both achievements.

That's all for now, chaps. All the best.

BILL HUGHES.

BRISTOL NEWS

Interesting airgraphs were received from two of our lads at Christmas, E. H. Daniels is in N.W. Africa ("Danny" now has his wings), and G. J. Hibberd, R.A.F., in India. Both were well at time of writing.

B. I. B.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."
Dear Sir,

Your correspondent, J. W. Berry, is perfectly correct in his remarks regarding "Examining" (how I hate the words "Waterguard" and "Preventive!") Branch Uniform. I claim to have instigated the controversy re Gold Braid for the A.P.O. grade, and advocated its adoption in the "C.J." in 1930, only to receive a slating by (I remember the initials of one in particular, J.E.T.) quite a few "dead-heads." At that time I had passed the "Exam." for P.O.

Nearly fourteen years have passed, and still nothing done by the "heid vins" (or should I say "deid yins") in London and the other "Yes" men. "Slippery Sam" states, "For heaven's sake, let us remove our cap only to the King and God," and it is high time the "Slaughter Guard" inculcated this clas-

sic quotation into their minds, indelibly, if we are to "go places."

If we must wear uniform, we must have the same quality, cut and style as worn by Officers of the Royal Navy at once! Let the Crown give us the same allowance as Officers of the R.N., and we will follow the same regulations and buy our own. So please get on with the job. To be smartly and correctly dressed is a tonic to mind and body. Can any Waterguard Officer state that he feels comfortable, from a uniform point of view, when in the presence of Naval Officers or "Liner" Merchant Officers?—Yours faithfully,

"DYNAM."

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Dear Mr. Editor,

May I once again trouble you for a few inches in your columns in which to say a final word to Jack Berry.

A fair, rational reply, Jack, much better than your last effort. Maybe I did miss the point in your first letter, BUT, remember in future, that when writing for publication your reader is unable to divine your thoughts. He has only the printed word before him, and any subtleties of voice are lost. You will agree that some of your remarks were, shall we say, unfortunate, especially to a rating.

Whilst we are being so horribly honest with one another, I don't think either of us need be so gushing about the lower deck. You know as well as I do that, just as some N.O.s are little pip-squeaks, some of the ratings are a pretty crumbly crowd, and, boy, do I mean crumbly!

However, consider yourself de-pip-squeaked, Jack. Best wishes, and thanks for the space, Mr. Editor.

Sincerely,

MAX DUNSTONE.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."

Sir,

I protest against the creation of the office of Publicity Secretary to the P.S.A. and against the activities of the present holder of that office.

I do not think that Mr. Shaw's ebullient spirit will be unduly depressed by this expression of my disapproval, but in case it is I will soften the blow by confessing, at the same time, how much I admire the energy he displays. But I am convinced that the creation of the office was a mistake, and I sincerely hope

that the next Conference will expunge the error.

Judging by his work so far, it seems that Mr. Shaw's main purpose is to convince a not-too-intelligent membership that whatever their LEADERS do is right, and that ideas which the ordinary members may wish to contribute on questions affecting their own interests are only acceptable in so far as they coincide with the decisions arrived at by those LEADERS. Unswerving obedience is demanded, and any deviation castigated.

Apart from the recent and obvious examples of the disastrous results of this LEADER complex, how far does it coincide with the basic principles of association? I may be wrong, but it is my view that the Secretaries and the Executive should be the servants of the membership, and their primary function that of representation rather than leadership. I yield to no one in my admiration of Mr. Powell, for instance, as a capable and efficient representative, but to ask me to accept Mr. Powell as a Leader who will in all matters think for me and decide what is good and what is bad for me is to ask more than I am willing to concede. I will listen to his advice with respect, but I WILL NOT be a yes man.

Mr. Shaw cannot even make out a good case for the policy he preaches. I would remind him that the last substantial increases in our basic salaries were secured as a result of a salary claim which the *membership* insisted should go forward after revolting against a scheme of re-organisation prepared by the Executive Committee.

I would also remind him of the time when Civil Service Association leaders rejected an offer of consolidation at 70 per cent. of the cost-of-living scales introduced during the last war, to be subsequently grateful for a Treasury concession to consolidate at 55 per cent. Again, there are indications in a circular just received on the subject of "Pay-as-you-go" Income Tax that again our leaders have displayed a very human tendency to fallacious judgment.

The judgment of a General, Organising, or even a Publicity Secretary is as liable to error as that of the humblest member, and any attempt by Mr. Shaw to convince me otherwise is vain.

Indeed, I would say that one of the liabilities (there are many, I know!) of office is that it imposes on the holder the necessity for constant vigilance

against the tendency to warped judgment which is a natural consequence of enhanced authority. I would commend to Mr. Shaw, who seems to be fond of quotations, this one: "All Power Corrupts: Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely," though I would myself amend Lord Acton's first phrase to read, "All Power TENDS to Corrupt."

Of PSAmphlet No. 1, I think it would be best to say that it is deplorable and leave it at that. If this is a PSAmple, we want none of the goods.

What I *would* like to see Mr. Shaw do is to turn his admirable energy (unfettered by office) to the task of rousing the members of the Association to the practice of thinking for themselves and to contributing the results of their thoughts to the common pool. Then would the task of our REPRESENTATIVES be easier in arriving at a composite and coherent expression of the sum result of necessarily varied opinion.

Good presentation of intelligent and well-informed opinion is the finest publicity any Association could wish for. A good Association and good representatives need no Publicity Agent. And if our Association is lacking in either respect it is of no use to try to hide the fact.

In a letter to a Staff Side Chairman on the subject of "Pay-As-You-Go," the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked "if the Staff Side quite realised" what they were asking for? That question carries with it a reproach which should shake every member of the Civil Service. Do YOU realise what you, through your Association, are doing? If not, I urge you to take steps to arrive at a full realisation.

And when next you choose your delegate to a P.S.A. Conference, choose a REPRESENTATIVE, not a Leader. And give him something to represent.

"EPH JAY."

The Publicity Officer adds: Individuals don't matter in the Association, so whether I am depressed or not by this is irrelevant. A reminder to the membership was needed that it is their Association and that those they elect are their representatives, not their leaders. This fits in so fully with my conception of what the P.S.A. should be (in fact, what the social system generally should be) that I can't be hurt. I would, though, ask Eph Jay, in fairness, to re-read what I have written in the JOURNAL for years now (he's not thinking of that little

leg-pull on WHP?) or ask any fellow P.S.A. worker what I've said, and then to tell me if I've really preached the Leader-principle. I have shown as great a faith in the rank and file, quite often in opposition to our "top table," as Eph Jay does in this letter—and I always got my facts right. However, I leave defence, as far as it is needed, to those members.

I must add that the Executive protested against the National Staff Side's action in the matter of Pay as you Earn. Our little association is often the victim, or butt of bigger unions where the Fuhrer-prinzipel does operate. To counteract this, by creating a live membership, is my main task, and I have no fear of such a membership. An occasionally interested membership is what we suffer from now. If Eph Jay helps to cure that, pending my dismissal, I'll be glad to have met a fellow No-man.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."
Sir,

I am amazed, on reading your December issue, to note an enquiry from a member of the staff, who asks, "Why are Waterguard Officers being directed into the Home Guard." Please tell him that soon we are to witness an invasion of the most fortified positions in the world, that millions of our brothers and cousins will be killed or maimed, and that a hard-pressed Government would like any able-bodied young men such as H.W.C. to man the guns, etc., one night in eight, or to train to be able to deal with any paratrooper who dares to land on these shores, and thereby relieve the regular forces who will be called upon to make these sacrifices!

Tell him to read of many of our colleagues who, by virtue of the fact that they were slightly younger than H.W.C., have already been shot down in flames from the sky, drowned, or lost on the field. Of the others who have been years away from all they hold dear, or are suffering in P.O.W. camps.

Ask your correspondent, Mr. Editor, to define some of these alleged hardships he is suffering, from Waterguard duties, a job which is, in my opinion, the most congenial of any reserved occupation.

He further suggests that he would be careful to "not antagonise a dock worker or similar personnel" if the said person happened to be his superior in the Home Guard. Words fail me to reply to a statement like that. Surely we are not so easily led away from our duty?
J.C.M.

The Editor, "The Customs Journal."
Sir,

About 14 years ago I was told that I was a successful candidate in the A.P.O.'s examination, and being very enthusiastic, I made enquiries—officially and unofficially—to ascertain the promotion aspects. The average service that A.P.O.s were being called to sit for promotion was then 11 or 12 years, and whilst this didn't seem too good, I set about to gain experience and study the Regulations in case, as I was so often and still am told, "something might turn up" to reduce the waiting period. Well, here I am, with nearly 14 years' service, still an A.P.O., still waiting for that bread and butter job, with little chance of qualifying within the next 4 or 5 years unless "Something turns up." I am beginning to feel like a swimmer who dives off the deep end waiting to reach the surface so that he can breathe and show the people on the side that he really can swim besides hold his breath under water.

It is not very encouraging to temporary Civil Servants, employed in other Departments since the outbreak of war, to gain promotion, even if it is on an "acting" basis, when established men in this Department will have to wait nearly 20 years for their first opportunity.

STILL HOPEFUL.

We regret that through lack of space several articles and correspondence intended for publication have been held over.—ED.

ROBERT BURNS ON THE PREVENTIVE SERVICE

(On 25th January Scotsmen throughout the world celebrated the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns.)

The Preventive Service.

But then to see how ye're neglectit,
How huff'd, and cuff'd, and disrespeckit.
—*The Twa Dogs.*

Our Councillors.

In gath'rin votes you werena slack;
Now stand as tightly by your tack;
Ne'er claw your lug and fidge your back,
And hum and haw;
But raise your arm, and tell your crack
Before them a'.

—*Earnest Cry.*

The Probationer.

Ye'll try the world fu' soon, my lad.
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
You'll find mankind an unco' squad.
And muckle they may grieve ye.
—*Epistle to a Young Friend.*

The Man who Started Studying Too Late.

O man! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time!
Misspending all thy precious hours.
Thy glorious youthful prime!
—*Man was Made to Mourn.*

The Non-member.

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us.
—*To a Louse.*

Seizure Awards.

This pass'd for certain—undisputed;
It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,
Till chiefls gat up and wad confute it,
And ca'd it wrang;
And muckle din there was about it,
Baith loud and lang.
—*Epistle to W.S.*

The Sassenach on Detached Duty in Stern Caledonia (we hope).

When death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
A time that surely shall come;
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more.
Than just a Highland welcome.
—*Verse Left at a Friend's House.*

'05.

May health and peace, with mutual rays,
Shine on the evening o' his days.
—*Dedication to G.H.*

The C.P.O. in the Baggage Shed as he weighs up the evidence.

But, och! mankind are unco weak,
And little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted.
—*Epistle to a Young Friend.*

Around the Watch-house Table.

Wi' merry sangs, and friendly cracks,
I wat they didna weary;
And unco tales, and funny jokes,
Their sports were cheap and cheery.
—*Halloween.*

Persons who think that Civil Servants would be foolish enough to strike.

But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themselves to vex them.
—*The Twa Dogs.*

Toast to the Preventive Service.

Long may we live! long may we love!
And long may we be happy!
And may we never want a glass
Well charged with generous nappy!
—*Clarinda.*

"BOB."

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