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THE PILOT

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THE drift away from the Association of the pilots at a few ports should not be received with any undue alarm. In a unique community like the pilotage service with a rare amount of individuality and an almost incredible range of varying rules, regulations and customs it would be phenomenal to find all the men of one mind. Perhaps it is the realisation of that which prompted the founders to choose as their motto "United we Stand, Divided we Fall." The motto of those Victorian days may seem a bit weather beaten, but as a slogan for to-day its wisdom is undeniable.

Moulded in an essentially democratic cast the Association has allowed every man his say and its policy has always been framed by the majority. Nothing could be more alien to its methods than any attempt to coerce pilots into membership. The minority who have left it are at perfect liberty to transfer their allegiance, but it is opportune to ask why they have done so. It must be assumed that the answer would be that they are dissatisfied with what the Association has done and is doing on behalf of the piloting fraternity. That constitutes a serious challenge which cannot be ignored.

Right away we claim that a complete answer is provided by the record of U.K.P.A. activities in the pages of *The Pilot*, particularly in the past ten or fifteen years. They contain countless instances of the Association having given its moral and monetary support to the pilots of a port as a community and individually where a principle has been at stake. In this issue for instance there is a striking case of the prompt response made to an appeal for help by a Preston pilot who was in some jeopardy at a local inquiry where a series of complaints about his handling of a steamer which grounded were made by owners and agents. The pilot was completely cleared and the Association has paid the legal expenses of more than £50. It is rightly regarded as money well spent.

Our advice to any who doubt the effectiveness of the Association is to take up any Conference issue of this magazine and read again the report of Sir John Inskip. It is always a record of a ceaseless watch on the pilots' interests—interviews, negotiations and correspondence. A good example of how successful those efforts have been may be seen in the epitome detailed in *The Pilot* of January, 1945.

There you will find the sober facts with no trumpeting and boasting for Sir John is the last man to make the mistake of which our President, Lord Mountevans gave warning in his address to Conference this summer—over-egging the pudding.

In case the references already mentioned are not enough we will set out some of the matters which have been handled by the Association within the past few weeks. We would emphasise that these are only examples and by no means the complete picture.

Choice pilotage and the system of working it.

Method of appointment of a Pilot Master and consultation with pilots in reference thereto.

Control of pilot cutter when owned by pilots and restriction on right of user.

The position of pilots on returning from service in the Armed Forces.

Foreign passenger vessels and the avoidance of pilotage.

Employment of unlicensed pilots.

Various rate applications including introduction of boarding and landing rates and revision of schedules so as to leave as far as possible the pilotage rates proper for the remuneration of pilots.

Handling cases for pilots in connection with local Inquiries of various kinds following accident or complaint, and, where necessary, engaging at the expense of the Association counsel to appear for the pilot.

Handling several salvage claims for pilots, negotiating settlements where possible and in some cases commencing proceedings, all without cost to the pilot concerned.

The position of pilots under the National Insurance scheme, protecting their interests and preserving for pilots the benefits which they got under the Workmen's Compensation Act, which was incidentally the work of this Association.

It is a lamentable and puzzling fact that some of the ports which have benefitted most through the Association have broken away. Among their members may be some of those restless critics who clamour for roughshod tactics which would gain nothing, but would destroy the respect the Association enjoys at the highest levels for its reasonableness and dignity in negotiation. Unfortunately those critics cannot see that the Association has to work within the compass of the Pilotage Act. They may shout for this and that to be done, not realising that what they ask would constitute a breach of the law, or an amendment of an Act of Parliament which the Government are not likely to facilitate at the moment.

In our last issue we set in heavy type the concluding paragraph of the Secretary's report. The perversity of space compelled us to turn it into a page at the end of the magazine. In case it was overlooked and because it so cogently put the position we will recall it:—

"This Association has now a record of 60 years of which it has every reason to be proud. Its financial position is very strong and every local branch has the satisfaction of knowing that come what may it can always look for and receive the full support and financial backing of an organisation which exists for one purpose only and that is to look after the interests of pilots."

THE EDITOR

OCTOBER MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive Committee met at the Holborn Restaurant, London, on October 2nd, 1946. Mr. J. H. A. Smith presided and there was a full attendance. Messrs. Alexander A. Love, J. Stanley Ayre, J. J. Jones, M. M. Marshall, C. E. Mock, H. B. Eagle, F. R. E. Goldsmith, G. S. Ward, N. A. Line and J. H. Innes.

Mr. Bernard C. Webb, Honorary Treasurer also attended, and the General Secretary, Sir John H. Inskip.

AGENDA

1. To receive a financial report.
2. To discuss matters raised at Conference.
3. To receive a report from the President if available.
4. National Insurance.
5. Conference at Leith to discuss re-organisation of Firth of Forth service.
6. To receive reports on applications for rate increases at various ports.
7. To confirm or otherwise steps taken to protect the interests of a Preston pilot.

8. Any other business.

(Items 5 and 6 dealt with as separate articles).

FINANCIAL REPORT

In the course of a report on financial matters, the secretary mentioned that in the case of the Aberdeen cutter lost in collision with a naval vessel, the Admiralty as the result of representations made by the Association had agreed to pay £550 in excess of their strictly legal obligation. This was the result of protracted negotiations, although the circumstances of the case were such as should have led to a speedy recognition of the reasonableness of giving the pilots a complete indemnity.

PRESTON PILOT DEFENDED

In the same report, Sir John dealt with the Preston case which is No. 7 on the agenda. All the Preston pilots (10) are members of the Association. A steamer bound for Preston arrived late in the estuary and anchored.

She did not respond to signals from the pilot cutter and the pilot went aboard. In a conversation with the master, he was led to believe that the speed of the vessel would enable him to get her up in time. She lost time, however, and grounded, suffering some damage. A local inquiry was held and a series of complaints were made against the pilot by the owners and agents. He was in some jeopardy and appealed to the Association to help him. This was done at short notice and the pilot was completely cleared. The Preston pilots were well satisfied with what was done, but it was a somewhat expensive matter. The total cost including counsel's fees was £50. 16. 0, which the Association was asked to meet.

The Executive agreed with Sir John that this was money well spent and on the motion of Mr. Ayre, the secretary's action was confirmed, and payment authorised.

Replying to Mr. Mock, Sir John said there was no means of recovering these expenses; as Mr. Ayre put it the pilot's contribution to the Association was his insurance.

THE PRESIDENT

The Secretary reported that the President, Lord Mountevans had been abroad since the Conference and there was no report from him at present.

NATIONAL INSURANCE

The Secretary said it was quite clear as he indicated at the Conference that if pilots came under National Insurance as "self-employed persons" they would not get any unemployment benefit. As a result of the Conference decision they would therefore go in as "employed persons." At the forthcoming Conference which the Ministry would be having with the various Pilotage Authorities they would discuss how to find an employer of the pilot for the purposes of the Act. The conference might be held before the next meeting of the Executive and he would attend, the conference which would presumably be a joint one of the Ministries of Transport and Insurance. But he had heard nothing from the Ministry for some time.

Mr. Ayre mentioned that the Pilotage Authorities were having a conference to prepare themselves for the conference at the Ministry. They wanted to see what the joint opinion of the Authorities in the country was, because they would be asked if they would accept the position of employers of the pilots. Mr. Ayre added that he would be attending that conference. The pilots wanted the Authority to be saddled with the employers' contributions, but in the end the pilots would probably have to pay it themselves.

Mr. Mock mentioned the Bristol Channel Pilotage Authorities Association which had come into existence to pool ideas for the betterment of all Bristol Channel pilots.

The total cost of the employers part of the contribution for the Tyne pilots was estimated by Mr. Ayre to be about £1,300 a year which was the equivalent of the pensions for about six men. Sir John said that at the conference

the point would be made that whoever became the employer the pilots did not agree to the money being found out of their earnings or treated as an administration expense.

THE FORTH CONFERENCE

Mr. Love reported on the Firth of Forth Conference which at short notice he was asked to attend. He has written on the subject in another page.

During a brief discussion the Chairman expressed the Executive's thanks to Mr. Love for his services in the matter.

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

The decisions of the Conference in July were reviewed by the Executive.

On the resolution regarding the qualifications of pilots (see *The Pilot*, August, 1946 pp. 11-13) the secretary said that qualifications must vary at different ports. He did not think any action was necessary at present, but when any discussion of qualifications arose they should ask that in no case should the standard be lower and in some it should be higher than at present. The local pilots would be consulted.

With regard to the resolution which Conference adopted unanimously that the Government should be asked whether the Association would be granted facilities for promoting in Parliament a measure of general compulsory pilotage (page 13 of the Conference number of *The Pilot*) Sir John said he was waiting to hear from the President.

The "equal representation" resolution (page 13) was next considered and Mr. Ayre described as "grossly unfair" the way shipowners were able to get extra representation by nomination in some other capacity. The secretary reminded the Committee that this matter could only be dealt with under Pilotage Order. The Association had often raised it.

Attention was drawn to the Middlesborough resolution moved by Mr. Tate and headed "The Basis of a Salary." During the Conference discussion the word "only" was inserted in the agenda resolution, which as adopted should have read:

"That in the event of pilots being placed on a salary this Association shall oppose any suggestion of average earnings being taken as the only base for the fixing of this salary, but rather that the merits of each port shall be considered individually."

With regard to any attempt to reduce the number of pilots at a port (Isle of Wight resolution page 15), Sir John said it could be taken for granted that if any port came to them and said "we cannot afford to have a reduction in our numbers," the Association would fight it. Some ports would not wish to resist a reduction.

COMPULSORY RETIREMENT

Under any other business, Mr. Ayre mentioned the age of compulsory retirement.

Continued on page 6

RATE APPLICATIONS

Criticism of the Transport Ministry's 1936-8 Formula

Applications for increased rates at the following ports were reported on by the Secretary at the October Executive meeting: **Swansea.** The application was before the Ministry and when the time came, the Ministry and meanwhile the Association had taken the matter up and paved the way for a favourable consideration of the case.

Tees. The earnings were in excess of the Ministry formula at the moment but he was pressing the matter and the decision of the Ministry had not been accepted as final.

Hartlepool. An increase of 40 per cent. had just been given.

Aberdeen. An application was about to be made.

Newhaven. 100 per cent. increase applied for.

Boston. 100 per cent. increase applied for.

Goole. Increase to 60 per cent. approved by the Authority and awaiting decision of the Ministry.

Gloucester. Application for increase which should be granted without question because earnings at present were below £300.

Falmouth. The pilots wanted to make an application for an increase. He was considering the matter.

During the discussion on this subject, Mr. Goldsmith suggested that this was the time when the Ministry's award might be assailed on the ground that it did not cover the increased cost of living.

Mr. Love said the Clyde pilots also felt strongly on this point. They were below the figure and their Authority was making an application to bring them up to it.

It was suggested that in the civil service the allowance had been increased and Mr. Love's comment was "we have not had it yet and it is time we did."

Mr. Webb maintained that it was time they had the basis of gross tonnage in all ports. Then they would be able to combat the civil service rate.

Mr. Ayre mentioned that on the Tyne 18 new pilots had been made bringing the number up to pre-war strength. He asked whether they would be entitled in a few months to go to their Authority and say "you have to put our rate up to keep these men."

Sir John: You certainly are, more especially if the number of ships piloted bears comparison with pre-war. You then have the strongest possible case because, presumably, the Authority appointed these men in order to be able to run the port efficiently and they have got to see that the earnings are up to the formula at least.

Mr. Ayre also referred to the difficulty he understood some ports were experiencing in getting back to pre-war staff strength.

Sir John said that on the other hand he had been approached by some ports to prevent another pilot being licensed.

That led to another question, this time from Mr. Marshall, who asked whether a pilot could be discharged from service.

"No" replied Sir John. "That is the protection you enjoy with your licence."

Swansea's strong objection to the 1936-8 formula adopted by the Ministry of War Transport was once more emphasised by Mr. Mlock. In reply to Sir John who asked if they would like to put forward a ten years' average he said they would be very pleased to get that, but 20 years would be fairer. Any period would be better than 1936-8 when the port suffered a slump. Sir John said this matter was under discussion.

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He said that on the Tyne their bye-laws, some of which were out of date, were undergoing revision. One of the things they were embodying was a reduction in the age limit from 70 to 65, or voluntary retirement after 35 years' service. This suggestion from the pilots had the strongest possible resistance from the shipowners. The bye-law retaining the age limit of 70 was carried at the sub-committee, but at the full meeting of the Authority it was altered.

Mr. Linc mentioned that in London they had been fighting the same point since before the war, and were still fighting it.

In reply to a question Mr. Ayre said that they qualified for their maximum pension after 35 years service.

HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Innes made the suggestion that the time was opportune for the history of the Association to be written. The editor of *The Pilot* was asked to prepare a memorandum on the subject for the next meeting of the Executive.

A TYNE APPOINTMENT

Mr. Ayre brought to the notice of the Executive the method of voting by the Tyne Pilotage Authority when a new Pilot Master was recently appointed. He said the method was unusual and asked how they could get the decision upset.

Sir John undertook to make inquiries on the subject.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee was arranged for Tuesday, December 17th, at Holborn Restaurant at 10.30 a.m.

Harbour Boards throughout Eire have been asked for their recommendations regarding the Pilotage Act of 1913 which the Transport and Marine Branch of the Eire Department of Industry and Commerce propose amending.

FIRTH OF FORTH CONFERENCE

By ALEX. A. LOVE

An important conference was held at Edinburgh on September 30th and October 1st under the chairmanship of Sir Robert Leitch, acting for the Ministry of Transport. Mr. Love represented the U.K.P.A. and reported on the conference at the Executive Committee meeting on October 2nd. He has prepared the following notes for "The Pilot."

THE Conference was called to consider the unification of the various pilotage services of the Firth of Forth.

Numerous matters of interest to pilots in general were raised and discussed including compulsory pilotage, tonnage basis for levying rates and interchangeability. Similar moves for re-organisation may be instituted by the Ministry in other parts of the country, and it may, therefore, be of interest to members of the Association to have a brief account of a few of the points raised. The views of the chairman are particularly interesting because they may possibly represent the official view of the Minister.

The agenda was a lengthy and comprehensive one, with items which could have easily become controversial, but so ably and impartially were the proceedings conducted by the Chairman that the minimum of contentious argument took place.

The first item on the agenda was "Should there be one single Authority for the whole of the Forth?" Without exception and without discussion the representatives of the various interested bodies—including the pilots—agreed that there should be. Thus the Conference got off to a very good start.

There is no point in going over all the items on the agenda, but here are some which should be specially mentioned:—

(1) **Representation of Interests on the new Authority.** It was emphasised that numbers should be kept down to a minimum, and it seemed that anybody not having a definite and direct interest in pilotage in the district would be excluded. Also, it was upheld that the numerical representation as between shipowners and pilots should be equal.

(2) **Compulsory or Non-compulsory Pilotage.** The Firth of Forth is non-compulsory, and the pilots represented that they considered compulsory pilotage should be introduced with the proposed changes. The usual arguments were put forward in support of this, but not I think with the same force which this Association would have used on so vital a subject.

As might be expected there was vigorous opposition to the proposal from the shipowners and others, and pilots in some districts will be very interested to know that the chairman gave two grounds on which, in his view, consideration might be given by the Ministry to this matter. They were:—

- The complexity of the navigation in the district, and
- That unless pilotage is compulsory an adequate and efficient service cannot be maintained.

The chairman did not think a case could

be made for the Forth on either of these points. The matter was not pursued by the pilots' representatives.

In giving these two points the Chairman did not indicate whether he referred to the general question of compulsory pilotage or only its application to the Firth of Forth. It might be that they would apply to all non-compulsory districts, and that the usual arguments in favour of compulsory pilotage do not "cut any ice" with the Ministry at the moment. It remains to be seen what view the Government takes of the question when our President succeeds in bringing it before Parliament.

(3) **Pilot Cutters.** It was agreed that all cutters should be owned and administered by the new pilotage authority.

(4) **Interchangeability.** Under this heading the question of pilots working all ports within the district was discussed. The pilots stated that they wished to continue to work only their own ports. The Chairman however did not uphold this and gave it as his opinion that, with one body of pilots under one authority, it would be expected that in the course of time pilots would take vessels to or from any port in the district as was done in other districts, on the Clyde, for instance. This would be a matter for the new authority to thrash out.

(5) **Number of Pilots.** The pilots agreed that the number of pilots could be reduced.

(6) **Pilotage Rates.** On this question there was general agreement that rates should be chargeable on gross tonnage, and also that rates for docking vessels in ports in the district where conditions are substantially alike, should be the same.

(7) **Pilotage Certificates.** The Chairman was of the opinion that where a master holds a pilotage certificate the owners should make a percentage contribution to the pilot fund, limited to an agreed maximum sum per annum.

Other matters such as pooling of earnings, re-organisation of pilotage stages, qualifications of pilots and benefit fund were discussed. Considerable attention was given to the matter of a Benefit Fund, and all interests considered it desirable that one be established for the whole district. The Chairman himself made proposals and suggestions.

Such progress was made at the Conference that the formation of a single authority for the Firth of Forth would appear to be almost a certainty in the near future, and a committee was formed to deal with all that is involved to bring it into being. Of course any changes

Continued on page 8

PROTEST TO TRANSPORT UNION

Mr. Deakin's Assurance to Sir John Inskip

While Sir John Inskip was on holiday, he received a letter from Middlesbrough stating that they had been approached by the Union to join them. This was the outcome of an application by the Tees pilots for increased rates which had been turned down. Sir John wrote to the Union stating that notwithstanding repeated denials this was yet another case of that organisation communicating with members of the U.K.P.A. and adding "it is surprising that you still think it necessary or right to persist in this conduct."

Mr. Deakin replied that he had no personal knowledge, and had to make inquiries. In a later letter he stated that the local secretary had been advised that the Association had no interest in the Tees pilots and was not acting for them. The letter also gave the information that the local secretary had now been advised not to make further contact with them.

In a further letter to Mr. Deakin, Sir John mentioned the ports where the whole or a majority of the pilots had joined the Union and said that in those cases the Association preferred to stand aside although this did not mean that it had no members at some of those ports as in fact it had. He had heard nothing further from Mr. Deakin.

These facts were put before the Executive meeting in October by Sir John who added that the policy of the Union appeared to be to approach any port where there was any suggestion of trouble, or where an application had been turned down, in the belief that there was then good ground for an approach. However, now that he had Mr. Deakin's

assurance they might assume that this would stop.

Replying to Mr. Mock, Sir John said that Middlesbrough's application was turned down because their earnings were already above the figure according to the Ministry's formula.

Messrs. Ayre and Marshall spoke of a meeting held at Newcastle and promises made to the pilots by a Union representative who took along with him one of the Blyth pilots. They did their best to counter the insidious propaganda by questions to the Union representative but they warned the executive that the promises made, whether they could be fulfilled or not, were apt to sway the pilots.

Sir John said that he had the pulse of the ports pretty well and was at the moment in direct communication with at least 30 on a variety of matters. There was absolutely no sign of the Union making further inroads. On the contrary there were signs of repentance in certain quarters.

Mr. Ward mentioned that an approach had been made to Goole, and Sir John pointed out that this was a port for which the Association had done a very great deal. The Goole pilots had enjoyed an unbroken increase in their rates throughout the war, and the Association was now handling an application for a further increase. Moreover, there was a proposal to increase the number of pilots by three to ease the pressure on them.

Mr. Line made the suggestion that members of the Executive could do something more than attend committee meetings about four times a year. He urged that they should go to ports in their neighbourhood and talk to the pilots. Some members of the Executive said that they were already doing so, and on the north-east coast a meeting of pilots is called after every Executive at which Messrs. Ayre and Marshall report.

Firth of Forth Conference—continued from p. 7
made will be within the scope of the Pilotage Act.

The foregoing will show that such a re-organisation as this gives the pilots the opportunity of putting their house in good order. What happens on the Forth may well have a direct influence on the terms of re-organisation in other districts, it is therefore of importance that the Association should keep in direct touch with all that takes place. This will be done.

The Forth Conference is the first indication of the shape of things to come, and is the first definite thing to emerge from the speculation of the last few years.

The Forth pilots are, with a few exceptions, members of the T. & G.W.U., and officials of that union acted as spokesmen for the pilots. I have no comment to make here on how well the Forth pilots were served by the union at this Conference. But I do know this, if old bye-laws were in the melting pot and new ones being made in my district, I should only be happy if I had at my disposal the skill and long experience in these matters which is commanded by the U.K.P.A.

TYNE'S NEW CUTTER

A "Tree" class naval trawler, H.M.S. *Elm* has become a pilot cutter for the Tyne and has been renamed *Helm*. She replaces the old cutter *Queen o' the May*, a former luxury yacht which entered the service at the end of the first great war. The *Helm* has a displacement of 530 tons, is 164 feet long and can steam 12½ knots. She is regarded as one of the best appointed cutters in the United Kingdom. After a break of seven years the Tyne Pilotage Authority in September resumed the annual survey and the *Helm* carried the official party.

Sunderland Pilotage Authority have also acquired a former Admiralty craft of 72 feet.

THREE GENERATIONS

Son of a Southampton pilot and father of another, Mr. Arthur E. Gadd, O.B.E., retired from the service in October. He joined the service in 1909 and was the first pilot under the new scheme for inward pilots. The following year he was transferred to the outward service. He was senior choice pilot of the Cunard White Star Line.