

# The Pilot

(OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM PILOTS' ASSOCIATION)

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## PORT GROUPING SCHEME

WHEN the Executive Committee met in September they devoted a day and a half to the consideration of the letters received from ports in response to the invitation to state their claims to any variation of groups under the Port Grouping Scheme. The letters came from Barrow, Barry, Belfast, Boston, Grangemouth, Dartmouth, Falmouth, Fowey, Goole, Ipswich, King's Lynn, Portsmouth, Poole, Preston, St. Ives, Seaham, Shoreham, Tyne, Sunderland, Whitehaven and Yarmouth.

It was agreed that the ports should have the opportunity of sending representatives to meet members of the sub-committee which prepared the scheme at various centres and present their cases. In accordance with that decision Mr. Innes went to Preston and on October 18th, in addition to the local men, met the pilots from Barrow, Belfast, Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport. On October 20th, Mr. Griffiths was at Southampton and discussed the position with men from Goole, Portsmouth and Southampton. In the same week Mr. Spencer went to Peterborough, which was the centre for Boston, Goole, Ipswich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

Mr. Tate attended all three meetings.

These meetings were welcomed by the pilots and in the majority of instances misunderstandings regarding the scheme were entirely removed and alterations made to meet objections. There are, however, a certain number of outstanding cases which will have to receive further consideration. An opportunity will be accorded representatives of other ports to meet the committee at a date and place to be fixed later on.

At the September meeting the Executive also considered a request which had been received from a number of ports for the formation of a further group, but as the sub-committee was authorised to reconsider the level of earnings in the various ports, it was felt that such a course became unnecessary.

The next ordinary meeting of the Executive was fixed for Wednesday, December 15th.

## LONDON PILOTS' RETURN TO THEIR ORIGINAL CLAIM

THE position in the London District was referred to by Mr. Griffiths in the resume of events at the ports which he gave to the Executive Committee at the meeting on September 22nd. He reported that Trinity House convened a special meeting of the London Pilotage Committee which took place on August 16th, to consider the pilots' application for a substantial increase in dues throughout the district.

The Chamber of Shipping also were invited to attend, and they sent a strong delegation headed by Sir Gibson Graham, Chairman of the Pilotage Committee of the Chamber, and assisted by Mr. L. J. H. Horner, Assistant General Manager of the Chamber, and several shipowner members. He attended on behalf of the pilots to present their case, and was supported by Messrs. Marshall (Cinque Ports), Norie (River), Page (Channel), Sanders (North Channel) and Taylor (Medway).

The object of the meeting was to enable the Pilotage Committee to hear the views of both sides, and as it was known beforehand that there were substantial differences, principally on the question of earnings, it was hoped that advantage would be taken to discuss these differences in a reasonable spirit of give and take and possibly arrive at an acceptable figure.

The pilots, in preliminary negotiations with the House, and in the interests of meeting the objections which had been made, had already agreed to very substantial concessions in their original demands, hoping thereby to induce a similar approach from the shipowners. They, however, adopted a completely uncompromising attitude and expressed the view that £1,200 was a reasonable level for London pilots, and on

inquiry as to how the figure was arrived at, admitted that it represented the average emoluments of masters and first officers of the average size vessel using the London Pilotage Service. In other words, they had returned to the once discarded basis of half-way between master and mate, which had long ago been rejected by the Association and was understood to have been recognised by the Chamber as a wholly unacceptable basis for negotiation. The shipowners did agree, however, not to oppose bye-laws to bring about an immediate increase in earnings up to the sum of £1,200 in the case of those stations who at present were below that figure, and for such number of pilots as the Trinity House sought proper to licence.

In the subsequent discussion on this point, it was made clear, Mr. Griffiths said, that acceptance of this offer by the pilots concerned was to be regarded as an interim measure of relief only, and was in no way to prejudice or delay the promotion of bye-laws for the far more substantial increase which was sought throughout the District. Upon that assurance being given, and after the two bodies of pilots concerned had satisfied themselves that the other members of the London Pilots' Council had no objection to their taking such a course, that offer was accepted and the bye-laws have now been confirmed by the Minister.

It appeared at the meeting of the Executive that considerable misunderstanding had arisen from the report of this action which the pilots of the Isle of Wight District had subsequently received, and an entirely false impression had got abroad that the London pilots were prepared to accept £1,200. This, of course, never was and never will be the case. It was nothing more than accepting "something on account" in a disputed claim which may take a long time to settle.

In view of the attitude of the shipowners, the pilots are returning to their original claim for £1,900 and have now withdrawn their compromise proposals unless a more conciliatory approach to the problem is made by the Chamber.

It is known that the Trinity House do not consider the shipowners' figure to be reasonable, and are themselves of opinion that earnings in the region of £1,650 per annum throughout the district are far more appropriate.

Mr. Griffiths pointed out that by reason of domestic arrangement on the Thames, and the operation of choice pilotage, it could work out that with the licensing of additional pilots the choice men would benefit appreciably from an increase in rates, and the turn pilot would not benefit at all, or get even less than he received to-day. Because Trinity House were prepared to promote bye-laws to produce £1,200 a year for 125 pilots, it by no means followed that no pilot would get less than that figure, and that was an aspect of the matter which he was asking Trinity House, when calculating the appropriate increases, to bear carefully in mind in the hope that it might be avoided.

## NEW "PATHFINDER" LAUNCHED

A new Trinity House pilot vessel of modern design was launched from the Noss Shipyard of Messrs. Philip & Son, Ltd. of Dartmouth on September 13th. The naming ceremony was performed by Lady Curteis, wife of Captain Sir Gerald Curteis, K.C.V.O., Deputy Master of the Corporation of Trinity House, London, and was attended by several of the Elder Brethren and senior officials of the Corporation.

The vessel was named *Pathfinder*, and is the second Trinity House pilot vessel to bear this name. She is the largest and most powerful pilot vessel ever built for the Cor-

poration, having an overall length of 175 feet and 30 feet beam. She will be fitted with radar, echo sounding equipment and R/T and V.H.F. R/T sets. The propelling machinery is being provided by Messrs. British Polar Engines Ltd. of Glasgow and consists of two type M461 500 B.H.P. Diesel motors. The vessel has been built to Trinity House design.

It is expected that the Corporation will take delivery of *Pathfinder* in January of next year. She will be based on Dover and normally employed as a London District pilot vessel on the Dungeness and Sunk pilot stations.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOTES

At the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE on SEPTEMBER 22 and 23, 1954, there were present:—Messrs. D. H. Tate (in the chair), H. J. Wynn, H. B. Eagle, M. M. Marshall, W. E. Spencer, D. Grainger, L. R. Slade, J. H. Innes, J. P. Bennett, J. T. Watson, D. Main, Bernard C. Webb (Honorary Treasurer) and C. D. Griffiths (General Secretary and Solicitor).

Mr. Webb reported on the financial position and in reply to a question said that there had been no substantial change in the membership.

The report was adopted.

### EXECUTIVE EXPENSES

There was a discussion on the expenses allowance for attendance at meetings of the Executive Committee, the general feeling being that the amount laid down by rule 14 was inadequate to meet the cost of hotel accommodation, meals and considerable travelling which has arisen considerably in recent years.

Conference sanction is necessary for any variation. A number of suggested recommendations to Conference came from members of the Committee, and their bearing on the finances of the Association was explained by Mr. Webb.

In the end it was agreed to let the matter lie on the table until the next meeting.

### CHAMBER OF SHIPPING DINNER

The Chairman reported that the President and he had received invitations to the annual dinner of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom to be held at Grosvenor House on October 14th.

The invitations were welcomed by the Committee who felt that everything should be done to encourage more frequent personal contacts of this nature.

It is understood that the President and Mr. Tate who enjoyed a most hospitable evening thoroughly endorse this view.

### PILOTAGE BY MASTERS OF NON-COMPULSORY SHIPS

A resolution which the Poole pilots wanted to bring before Conference without giving the requisite notice provided by the rules was not accepted by the Executive Committee, but Mr. Griffiths promised that he would bring the matter before them at this meeting.

Poole's exemption up to 1,500 tons covers practically any ship using the port and most of the pilots' money comes from voluntary pilotage. It is suspected that masters are being offered a half or two-thirds of the rates to do their own pilotage. Other Trinity House ports also want to get their exemption limit

reduced, as although compulsory districts on paper, almost every ship using the pilotage service was under the exempt tonnage limit and if proceeding without a pilot could constitute a serious danger to other shipping.

It was eventually agreed that Mr. Griffiths should ask the Poole pilots if there were a specific instance on which they would like action to be taken.

This decision followed a long discussion which revealed that the position of which Poole complained was of long standing. At that port there was practically no foreign trade, all the ships were coastwise, but as Mr. Webb pointed out, while enjoying all the privileges of the pilotage service, they took a pilot only when the weather was not favourable enough to do without one.

Some of the principal ships using Poole are those of the British Electricity Authority and if, as the pilots desire, the exemption limit were reduced to 1,000 tons those vessels would no longer be exempt.

Mr. Tate was in favour of tackling the matter from the other end by fixing what each port should earn and leaving it to the shipowner to find the money, but Mr. Bennett regarded port grouping as a long term policy. He was the member who suggested asking Poole to give a specific case on which the Executive could act and try to get the exemption limit reduced. The same applied to other ports.

Mr. Grainger saw no objection to the Poole pilots taking the initiative and asking their Authority to reduce the limit to 1,000 tons.

Mr. Slade suggested that the only answer was general compulsory pilotage and reduced exemptions.

### BENEFIT FUNDS

The case of a Barrow pilot who left the service two or three years after becoming a pilot in order to take a job in the Persian Gulf and applied for the return of his contributions to the Benefit Fund, gave rise to considerable discussion.

Mr. Griffiths said that the bye-laws made it perfectly clear in this case that a man could not be reimbursed if he retired before he had served a certain time.

Mr. Eagle mentioned the case of a man who paid in several hundred pounds and got nothing back and Mr. Watson pointed out that under the new Trinity House bye-law if a pilot retired after five years his contributions could be returned or he could have a deferred pension.

The Chairman asked if the Committee wished to inquire into all pension funds but Mr. Slade thought they could not interfere with them as the funds were individually built up and administered. Mr. Innes also felt that the Association could not do anything about it on a national basis at this



juncture, and suggested that benefit funds might automatically follow the port grouping scheme.

Mr. Spencer said the five years proviso was brought in particularly to meet the situation which might arise of a man retiring after paying only three months' contributions and getting all the benefits for which he had not paid.

The matter was deferred to the next meeting of the Executive Committee and it was left for any port with a specific complaint to bring it to the notice of the Association.

### ROUND THE PORTS

Mr. Griffiths gave a resume of pending matters. Since the meeting there have been developments in some cases and the latest information is incorporated in the following notes.

He said that there were rating applications affecting practically a dozen ports. Barry was one of them. (Later in the meeting Mr. Bennett reported that the Barry Authority turned down the original application for a 25 per cent increase on last year's earnings and asked the pilots to reconsider their demand. They compromised on 12½ per cent provided they were allowed to reduce the number of pilots from 17 to 16, and that the retiring age now 70 was made optional at 65. The Authority agreed but the application had not yet been sent to the Ministry.)

On the Clyde the position was that the bye-laws had been submitted by the Authority and objections had been lodged by the Chamber of Shipping although the local ship-owners had previously agreed to them.

An informal meeting of the interested parties was arranged for October 27th to deal with the proposed increase in the rates. Later Mr. Griffiths received a letter from the Ministry saying that they had received draft bye-laws proposed to be made by the Clyde Pilotage Authority providing for an increase in the boarding and landing charges and that they considered it desirable that the meeting arranged for the 27th should be deferred until the observations of the interested parties were obtained on these bye-laws so that the two sets could be dealt with at the same time.

The date of the adjourned meeting has not yet been fixed.

The Dover Harbour Inquiry was adjourned for a compromise submitted by the pilots to be considered but it was not accepted. After consultation between Trinity House, the Dover Harbour Board and the Chamber of Shipping had taken place, Trinity House circulated to all pilots a ballot paper inviting them to indicate on it which of two schemes they would prefer, but no opportunity was offered them of voting in favour of their own scheme. Naturally the question arose as to how a pilot was to vote if he were not in favour of either scheme, and it is understood that no pilot returned his ballot paper. Since

then direct negotiations have been opened at Trinity House between the pilots and the Dover Harbour Board.

A bye-law amendment affecting certain boarding and landing changes was coming along at Cardiff. The pilots and the Authority were in agreement and the Association had not been asked for observations.

It is now understood that the Ministry has been advised that the proposed bye-laws are *ultra vires* and accordingly cannot be confirmed.

At Falmouth an interesting position had arisen. Just over a year ago a boarding and landing rate was introduced and there was no consequential adjustment in rates. It was estimated that this would leave the pilots with net earnings of £1,000 which they reluctantly agreed to accept. Earnings, however, dropped by about £150 a year and an application for an increase in rates was made, but Trinity House refused to sponsor it. The Falmouth pilots felt that the Association should take steps to get an immediate increase for them. Before the war they earned £750 and were now aiming at £1,400.

Mr. Griffiths has visited Falmouth and is at present awaiting the receipt of certain vital particulars in order to make the application, under Section 18 of the Pilotage Act, authorised by the Executive Committee, for an increase in the rates.

At the Executive meeting Mr. Watson said that they were doing more work and ought to go up to 100 per cent on 1938.

"Whatever you are going for, stick to the rates," said Mr. Spencer, "you know what you want on your rates to produce what you want."

Mr. Watson replied the tonnage was double but the rates were not, and they worked on draught not tonnage.

Mr. Griffiths, continuing his resume, mentioned that Fleetwood were applying for an increase and then dealt with the peculiar circumstances of Gloucester. They had one launch which was used for boarding and landing. The launch had been condemned and was therefore a danger. The waters, too, were highly dangerous. The Pilotage Authority refused to take over the boat saying they had no money and the pilots said they would not go out in an unseaworthy boat this winter. He had suggested that the Authority should take over the boats and provide any replacements required, if necessary by raising a loan which could be repaid out of a boarding and landing rate. Gloucester was a small port and the pilots' earnings were under £400 a year. They had had a bad time but were trying to earn a living and were members of the U.K.P.A. Mr. Griffiths added that he would like it to be felt that the Association was out to help the really lame dog; either a pilotage service was wanted for the port or it was not.

Mr. Bennett proposed and Mr. Watson seconded that the Association should give their full support to the Gloucester pilots.

In the case of the Humber, Mr. Griffiths said that the Executive authorised an application for the revision of the bye-laws, and Mr. Grainger and he had spent a lot of time on it. Considerable difficulties, however, had begun to arise with the Authority who said their interpretations of the bye-laws was different from that of the pilots. The matter was still under discussion.

Both Southampton and the Isle of Wight, particularly the Inward service, were anxious to have an increase in rates and both were considering the introduction of a tonnage rate.

### WATER DEPTHS

The resolution proposed by the Isle of Wight Outward service at Conference regarding the obligations of a dock or harbour authority or owners of private wharves to inform pilots of changes in depth of water throughout their areas, came up for consideration.

The view was expressed that it was a matter for local settlement, but Mr. Spencer suggested that the shipping people should be told that the pilots were not getting enough information about the berths their ships were being taken to.

Mr. Griffiths has advised the pilots that in his opinion there is no legal obligation to furnish this information, but it was a very common practice to do so.

### SON OF A MEDWAY PILOT

Mr. John Percy Taylor, editor of *Shipbuilding and Shipping Record* from its foundation in 1913 until his retirement last year, who died on August 8th at Sudbury, Suffolk, was the son of a Medway pilot, a former master in colliers trading between the North East coast and London. Mr. Taylor had a very wide knowledge of ships and shipping and was chairman of a press advisory committee of the movement for the preservation of the *Cutty Sark*.

### PILOTS' LOSS IN LONDON DOCK STRIKE

The recent dock strike in London inevitably had a serious effect on the earnings of the River Thames pilots. During the first week work fell off by about 20 per cent but as the strike spread and practically all overseas vessels were diverted, the pilots were left with little more than the collier trade to handle. This reduced the work to 40 per cent or less of the normal but in actual earnings the pilots suffered a reduction of at least 75 per cent—a loss they cannot recover. Fortunately the strike ended when it did or the pilots' position would have been very grave.

### THE ART OF SEAMANSHIP

In the "Teach Yourself" series of books there has now been published one on Seamanship by T. F. Wickham, Seamanship Instructor at the National Nautical School, Portishead. It may seem a little odd to send one to *The Pilot* whose readers we assume know or should know all there is to be known on the subject.

No previous knowledge is pre-supposed by the author and the work is mainly concerned to cover the Ministry of Transport's requirements for deckhands and first year apprentices. We can commend the clarity with which the information is presented and the inclusion, as an appendix, of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1948, which came into force at the beginning of this year, is a valuable feature. The publishers are English Universities Press Ltd. and the price 6s.

We have also received a copy of "THAMES TRIP FROM THE POOL TO THE NORE" by L. E. S. Leese. While it can tell pilots nothing new geographically they may not know all the history. It is full of interest, the story is well told and it is presented in novel style. Geo. Philip & Son Ltd., 2s. 6d.

## Local Secretaries :

|                       |                       |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Aberdeen              | R. G. Hall            | Aberdeen Harbour Pilots, North Pier, Aberdeen              |
| Ardrossan             | A. Knox               | Pilot Office, The Harbour, Ardrossan                       |
| Barrow-in-Furness     | S. Green              | 63, Furness Park Road, Barrow-in-Furness                   |
| Barry                 | F. W. Llanfear        | 6, Clement Place, Barry, Glam.                             |
| Belfast               | G. D. Clelland        | Twelve Trees, Galway Park, Dundonald, Co. Down             |
| Berwick-upon-Tweed    | T. N. Richardson      | Pier House, Berwick-upon-Tweed                             |
| Boston, Lincs.        | A. V. Howard          | 25, Main Ridge, Boston, Lincs.                             |
| Brixham               | E. J. Mardon          | Ridley, Berry Head Road, Brixham                           |
| Cardiff               | S. L. Duggan          | 5, Bettws-y-Coed Road, Cyncoed, Cardiff                    |
| Clyde (Gourock)       | D. M. Main            | Ashtower, 22, Victoria Road, Gourock                       |
| Cinque Ports          | Alister Crombie       | 3, Victoria Park, Dover                                    |
| Dartmouth             | R. R. Gatzias         | 24, Lower Street, Dartmouth                                |
| Falmouth              | E. Carlyon            | Pilot Boat Association, 14, Arwenak Street, Falmouth       |
| Fleetwood             | A. Wright             | 12, Arthur Street, Fleetwood                               |
| Fowey                 | M. Hingeston-Randolph | Lamorna, Fore Street, Polruan-by-Fowey, Cornwall           |
| Glasgow               | J. H. Innes           | 20, Elie Street, Glasgow, W.2.                             |
| Gloucester            | L. C. Taylor          | Pilotage Office, Sharpness, Glos.                          |
| Goole                 | W. H. Perry           | 48, Silverdale Road, Hull                                  |
| Grangemouth           | A. McArthur           | Pilot Office, The Docks, Grangemouth                       |
| Gravesend (Sea)       | G. L. Baker           | 38, Whitehill Lane, Gravesend                              |
| Hartlepool            | J. R. Hastings        | 25, Lansdowne Road, West Hartlepool                        |
| Harwich               | K. C. Davis           | 9, Queen's Road, Dovercourt                                |
| Hull                  | D. Grainger           | Humber Pilots' Society, 50, Queen Street, Hull             |
| Ipswich               | J. T. Montgomery      | 45, Clapgate Lane, Ipswich                                 |
| Isle of Wight (Inw'd) | S. H. Eagle           | 25, Union Street, Ryde                                     |
| King's Lynn           | N. D. Smith           | 141, Wotton Road, King's Lynn                              |
| Leith                 | G. Duncan             | 1, Bangholm Villas, Edinburgh                              |
| London (River)        | J. H. Fife            | Saga, 28, Northbridge Road, Gravesend                      |
| Middlesbrough         | W. E. Guy             | 27, Barker Road, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough                  |
| Newhaven              | W. Cross              | 62, Hill Crest, Newhaven, Sussex                           |
| Penzance              | A. de Rauffignac      | Pilots' Lookout, South Pier, Newlyn                        |
| Plymouth              | E. Rogers             | Pilot Office, 2, The Barbican, Plymouth                    |
| Poole                 | A. W. James           | 15, Harbour Hill Crescent, Poole, Dorset                   |
| Portsmouth            | W. F. N. Quinton      | Trinity House Pilots, Victoria Pier, Portsmouth            |
| Port Talbot           | W. D. Reed            | 26, Rice Street, Port Talbot                               |
| Preston               | H. Halsall            | Pilotage Office, The Docks, Preston, Lancs.                |
| St. Ives              | R. J. Martin          | Trewyn, Higher Syr, St. Ives                               |
| Seaham                | R. Hudson             | 36, Dene House Road, Seaham                                |
| Sheerness             | P. J. Hannan          | 113, Minster Road, Sheerness                               |
| Shoreham              | A. J. Blaker          | Braeside, Old Rectory Gardens, Southwick, Sussex           |
| Southampton           | H. B. Eagle           | Pilot Office, 18, Queen's Terrace, Southampton             |
| South Shields         | R. Marshall           | Pilot Office, South Shields                                |
| Sunderland            | S. Hall               | Pilot Office, Old North Pier, Harbour Entrance, Sunderland |
| Trent                 | R. Acaster            | 30, Cranbrook Avenue, Cottingham Road, Hull                |
| Whitehaven            | J. R. Tennant         | Brooklyn, Crow Park, Whitehaven, Cumberland                |
| Yarmouth              | C. Bewley             | 35, Sussex Road, Gorleston-on-Sea, Yarmouth                |