# SOUTH WHARF RECEIVING STATION ROTHERHITHE 1883 – 1940

## A year-by-year account of events at South Wharf in the form of summaries and excerpts from the original records of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, London County Council, etc



*River Ambulance Service staff and crew on the Geneva Cross, c. 1902. The man at the far right of the top row is Frederick Showell, and the man in the centre of the bottom row is thought to be Captain George Livett. Photo courtesy of Francine Payne – www.dartfordhospitalhistories.org.uk*

**Compiled in 2017 as part of *Piecing Together Our Past,* a project run by Surrey Docks Farm (current occupier of South Wharf) and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund**

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# What this document is for, and what is included:

This document was compiled by staff and volunteers of Surrey Docks Farm to provide us with the full chronological history of South Wharf Receiving Station, from the original sources. Its purpose is for reference, for ourselves and other researchers, in particular about the development of South Wharf, the running of the River Ambulance Service, and the staff and their working lives.

We have mainly included information which is specific to South Wharf, but have also included some additional details about the running of the M.A.B., smallpox cases etc, where it provides interesting background context.

We have included all mentions of staff working at South Wharf, as this may be useful for family history researchers. All staff names have been highlighted in bold, to make them easier to locate in the text.

***If you have information about any of the staff who worked at South Wharf, we'd be interested to hear from you. Contact: heritage@surreydocksfarm.org.uk***

# How to use this document:

- Most of the information has been summarised; some passages have been transcribed verbatim, and these are shown enclosed within quotation marks. (The subheadings in bold before each paragraph are our own wording, and have been added to help find information when visually scanning the text.) If you need the full details of any summarised or edited information, please refer to the original documents - their full titles, library reference numbers or shelfmarks, page numbers or report dates, are all provided.
- We recommend that you refer to the notes on the following pages 3-6 about the different source documents, as these notes describe what these documents contain, and what we have and haven't included from each.
- To find information on a particular person or subject, we recommend that you view this document in electronic form, as the search function in PDF readers will allow you to search by surname or keyword. See www.surreydocksfarm.org.uk for a PDF of this document - look under Farm Site History or use the search box.
- Please note that all reports included refer to South Wharf unless otherwise stated.

# Abbreviations:

**M.A.B.**: Metropolitan Asylums Board
**M.A.D.**: Metropolitan Asylums District
**R.A.S.**: River Ambulance Service
**L.C.C.**: London County Council
**P.L.A**.: Port of London Authority

**inst**: date of the current month, e.g. 15th inst. = the 15th of that month.
**ult**: date of the previous month, e.g. 15th ult. = the 15th of last month

# Notes on the source documents used:

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Annual Reports

***Where to find them**: these are available at both the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London (in the Metropolitan Asylums Board collection) and at the Wellcome Library, London.*

These are only available from 1887 onwards; the final volume is for 1929-30, when the M.A.B. was disbanded. The format of these reports changes regularly over the years, so information about the R.A.S. is found in different sections in different years. We have included most references to South Wharf except for general maintenance and repairs, the case studies of smallpox patients and detailed information on smallpox statistics, and the figures for the annual usage/mileage of the ambulance steamers.

## Metropolitan Asylums District / Board - Minutes

***Where to find them**: these are available on the open shelves in the Information Area at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London.*

These minute books are indexed, but the indexing system is inconsistent and changes regularly over the years, so references to South Wharf can take some searching for.

What we **have** included:

- mentions of specific staff
- building work and development of the site
- any information about the running of the R.A.S.
- any incidents at South Wharf

What we **have <u>not</u>** included:

- most mentions of the ambulance steamers, as most of these are about routine maintenance, and are easy to find in the index under 'Steamers'
- routine maintenance, and annual contracts such as painting, roadworks, the ash barge etc.
- lists of items purchased, and suppliers and contractors
- names of principal staff and their salary payments
- the returns for each fortnight or month, which include the number of patients admitted, and sometimes also the number of staff of different occupations employed by the R.A.S.
- dates have not always been included, unless relevant.

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings

***Where to find them**: on the open shelves in the information area at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London.*

We have included these minute books from 1930 onwards, when the L.C.C. took over the running of all of the M.A.B.'s institutions. However, there are limited references to South Wharf, and often none at all. These minute books are indexed.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Books
## - Chief Officer's Report Books
## - Engineer-Surveyor's Report Book

***Where to find them**: at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London; part of the Joyce Green Hospital Collection.*

These are handwritten report books, covering the full period from 1885-1933. They were written at South Wharf by the man in charge of the River Ambulance Service, whose job title was initially Superintendent, then Chief Officer, and then Engineer-Surveyor, hence the different titles of what are essentially the same report books. There are 11 report books:

- the first 5, covering 1885-1904, are by Superintendent **Charles Thomson**
- the other 6, covering 1904-33, are by his successor, Chief Officer/Engineer-Surveyor **Clement Sullivan**.

Mr Thomson, and his successor Mr Sullivan, were in charge of the day-to-day running of the R.A.S. at South Wharf (as well as the smaller North and West Wharves), especially the steamers and their crews, but not the medical aspects. The reports are usually fortnightly, but from 1915 become monthly, usually with a gap of 1-2 months in the summer. These reports were originally presented to the relevant management committee; the earlier books have notes in the margins showing the decisions taken. The earlier books are also indexed at the beginning. Unfortunately the letters, plans etc referred to in the reports, are not enclosed with the report books and their whereabouts is currently unknown. Please also note that many of the issues mentioned in these report books are proposals or recommendations, and weren't necessarily carried out, however the decisions can often be found in the Minute Books of the relevant management committee.

**Dates**: the dates given in bold at the beginning of each report, are the dates of the report, not of the actual events listed underneath. We have included the dates of specific events where possible, but not always; especially not for staff appointments/sicknesses/resignations etc – please see the original report books if you need these. Please note also that there is usually **no report in the summer months**, i.e. August (and sometimes not even in September), so the September or October reports include all news and figures since the previous report in July.

**What we have included from these reports:**
Each report is usually several pages long; we have not included all of the reports, nor all the issues mentioned, but have selected from them the following:

- all mentions of South Wharf staff. Please note spellings of names are often inconsistent, e.g. Kelly / Kelley, Milmoth/Millmoth, Gardner/Gardener and are sometimes illegible, so if searching for a name, please try different variations. We have not always included temporary or contract staff, or staff who probably worked at North or West wharves only.
- all references to the running/operations of the R.A.S.
- all mentions of development of the site, such as new buildings, facilities or vessels.
- any events and interesting incidents, whether special visitors, collisions on the river, staff incidents, or wider events that affected South Wharf.
- the numbers of patients conveyed, returned etc since the previous report. We have included most of these, as a sample of how busy the service was at that time, but not all, so please refer to the original documents if you need the full patient figures for any period.

**What we have <u>not</u> included:**

- general repairs and maintenance to the site and to the ambulance steamers
- mentions of North or West Wharves, except for interesting incidents, or reports that tell us how these wharves were used.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Medical Officer's Report Book

***Where to find it**: at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London; part of the Joyce Green Hospital Collection.*

This is a handwritten report book, and only one volume exists, covering 3 Nov 1902 - 31 Mar 1905. Reports are by **Dr Wanklyn, Dr Frederic Thomson,** and **Dr Ricketts** respectively. Dr Wanklyn's reports are clear and beautifully written; Dr Thomson's reports are very brief and his handwriting is barely legible – hence few of his reports have been included. Dr Ricketts's reports are fairly detailed and adequately clear, but cover only about 4 months.

From this report book we have included only selected reports about staff, issues, and workings of the R.A.S. Each report also includes smallpox admissions, and staff changes - we have only included staff changes in this document when the person's name is specified.

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Books

***Where to find them**: at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London; part of the Joyce Green Hospital Collection.*

These report books cover 1894 – 1954, and were written by the Medical Superintendent, originally of the hospital ships, and then later of Joyce Green Hospital. There are regular mentions of South Wharf, but in this document we have used only the volumes covering 1925-1940, especially to fill in the gap between 1933-40 when there are no report books from South Wharf itself. The earlier report books are certainly worth looking at for an additional source of information on South Wharf.

The earlier volumes are handwritten; later ones are typewritten and are very clear and readable. There are many mentions of staff, especially nursing and domestic staff, many of whom also worked at South Wharf. Many of the report books also state the numbers of patients admitted at South Wharf, as well as some background to the sources of these cases.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service Sub-Committee Minute Book 1904-05

***Where to find it**: at the London Metropolitan Archives, City of London; part of the Metropolitan Asylums Board collection.*

There is only one volume of this, covering less than a year – from July 7 1904 to May 26 1905. This is the committee that the Superintendent/Chief Officer, Nursing Superintendent and Medical Officer would report to fortnightly. Most of the contents of this are already covered in the other report books, so we have included only those items not already mentioned. However, this book is a very clear and detailed guide to all events over this period, contains some useful further detail, and confirms the decisions made on these issues.

## Medical and other reports

Various other reports have been included, such as parish medical reports; most of these are available to view online on the Wellcome Library website: https://wellcomelibrary.org/search-the-catalogues/

## Censuses and 1939 Register

The censuses for 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921 and the 1939 Register are currently available for South Wharf and are transcribed here. (Censuses include anyone who was present at the properties on the date the census was taken, so this includes staff, patients and visitors).

## Electoral Registers

Electoral registers which include South Wharf properties have been found for most, but not all, of these years. Please note that the South Wharf addresses changed: the original staff accommodation was at no's 313 - 319 Rotherhithe St; these were demolished and from 1902 replaced by South Wharf Cottages for the married male staff. The other staff lived in accommodation within the wharf, and are listed simply under 'South Wharf'. The electoral registers are inconsistent as to which addresses are included, so shouldn't be taken as reliable evidence as to whether someone was living on the site or not.

## Other relevant documents at the London Metropolitan Archives:

*The following have not been included within this document, however, they are all recommended as useful sources of further information about South Wharf:*

**Joyce Green Hospital Matron's Report Books**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/C/03/001, H48/C/03/002, H48/C/03/003, H48/C/03/004, H48/C/03/005, Joyce Green Hospital collection)
These cover 1915-1933 and detail all the nursing and domestic staff based at/administered from Joyce Green Hospital, including those who worked at South Wharf. These books are the recommended source for further information on these staff, as it gives their full names, dates of joining, details of leave, incidents etc.

**Minute Books of M.A.B. Committees**
(See the London Metropolitan Archives catalogue, esp. the Metropolitan Asylums Board collection)
To find further information on the issues reported in the Superintendent's / Chief Officer's / Engineer-Surveyor's / Medical Officer's / Matron's report books, and the decisions made, we recommend referring to the minute books of the relevant committee to which they reported at the time.

**M.A.B. Ambulance Committee: Committee papers 1872-1894**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/0186)
A box of miscellaneous documents used at the committee meetings. Unfortunately it doesn't contain much from South Wharf, but there's a few items of relevance: a list of daily cleaning duties to be carried out, and who by, from 1888; plans and specifications for some of the river ambulances; documents and maps related to the Lammas Rights at West Wharf; and a document referring to the hiring only of licensed watermen for the ambulance steamers.

**General Survey of Establishments Transferred from the Poor Law Authorities, 1930 – Survey Report and Block Plan on Each Establishment - Vol 7 River Hospitals, River Ambulance Stations and Tuberculosis Sanatoria Transferred from M.A.B**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref LCC/CL/ESTAB/02/09, London County Council collection)
This includes the definitive site plan of South Wharf in 1930, and a detailed accompanying document describing the site, all the buildings and the steamers.

**Smallpox Receiving Stations**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: LCC/PH/HOSP/02/039, London County Council collection)
This is a large file of correspondence dating between 1933-1943 about (unrealised) proposals to relocate the smallpox receiving station elsewhere and use South Wharf for the fire service or housing instead.

**Letter books from the Hospital Ships and Joyce Green Hospital**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/08/001 - 003, Joyce Green Hospital collection)
Carbon copies of letters sent by the medical superintendent between 1895-1914; a few are sent from South Wharf.

**Contracts – River Ambulance Service 1884-87**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1854, Metropolitan Asylums Board collection)
This file has the contracts for construction work in the first years of the R.A.S. The main document of interest is the full specification for the pier at Acorn Wharf (South Wharf), though the plans themselves are missing. There is also a detailed specification from 1886 re the houses at 313-319 Rotherhithe Street and other south Wharf buildings.
Also in this file are the full specifications for buildings at Managers Street, Poplar (North Wharf) and the pier and buildings at West Wharf, Fulham.

**M.A.D. Wages Book – River Ambulance Service**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/2245, Metropolitan Asylums Board collection)
This appears to be the only such remaining R.A.S. wages book; the LMA's own notes state that only a few wage books from the M.A.B. were retained, as samples. This one covers Nov 1884 to Sept 1885, and includes all staff and crews, including those at Potters Ferry and the other wharves. There are weekly or fortnightly entries listing all names and job titles and the amount of wages paid, with signatures of each of the staff to confirm receipt.

**South Wharf, Rotherhithe Street [ Folder of architectural plans ]**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: GLC/AR/PL/01/02/102, Greater London Council collection)
This is a large folder of original architectural plans from the receiving station, as last used by the GLC architect's department. The plans start from the beginning of the receiving station and include all the additions over the following decades such as the patient shelters, the staff cottages and female staff block, the pontoon dolphins (but not the whole pier), etc. Also in the folder are copies of the detailed LCC site plan, and the GLC's own (unrealised?) plan of 1967 to convert the site to a scrap vehicle depot. (There is also a similar folder of plans covering North Wharf – ref: GLC/AR/PL/01/02/057)

# Timeline:

**1883** The M.A.B. sets up the River Ambulance Service and purchases Acorn Wharf in Rotherhithe, despite strong local objection**.**

**1884** First year of operation of Acorn Wharf and the River Ambulance Service; pier constructed; smallpox epidemic.

**1885** Acorn Wharf renamed South Wharf; Superintendent Charles Thomson starts; epidemic eases by the end of the year.

**1886** Smallpox under control; West Wharf opens; *Benmore* installed as mooring hulk; vessels *Swallow* and *Marguerite* purchased.

**1887** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1888** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1889** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1890** Minimal smallpox cases; clerk absconds with money.

**1891** Minimal smallpox cases; another clerk leaves in bad circumstances.

**1892** New outbreak of smallpox; new staff changing rooms completed; Dr Ricketts appointed.

**1893** Smallpox epidemic; isolation shelters built.

**1894** Smallpox epidemic continues; new ambulance steamer *Geneva Cross* starts service.

**1895** Smallpox epidemic continues; river freezes for 2 weeks; construction begins on female staff block; piers are roofed over.

**1896** Smallpox under control; female staff block completed; new steamer *White Cross* being built.

**1897** Minimal smallpox cases; staff numbers reduced; *White Cross* starts service.

**1898** Minimal smallpox cases; new patient detention shelter built; *Red Cross* sold; another clerk absconds with money.

**1899** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1900** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1901** New smallpox epidemic; Rotherhithe Street houses demolished, work on new staff cottages begins.

**1902** Busiest year ever at South Wharf: smallpox epidemic and highest ever number of patients; major building works completed including Receiving Rooms, patient shelters, staff cottages and other accommodation; the new *Red Cross* starts in service; *Conservator* bought; *Benmore* sold.

**1903** Smallpox back under control; Dr Wanklyn left.

**1904** Moderate number of smallpox cases; hospital ships sold; Superintendent Charles Thomson retires, replaced by Chief Officer Clement Sullivan.

**1905** Minimal smallpox cases; new boat shed and workshops built.

**1906** Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year except for two staff deaths.

**1907** Minimal smallpox cases but increase in fever – North Wharf temporarily opened for Scarlet Fever; Master George Livett retires; change in accommodation arrangements.

**1908** Only one smallpox case all year; new wage scale, conditions and accommodation arrangements for staff.

**1909** Minimal smallpox cases; mud accumulation around the pier becoming a problem for the steamers.

**1910** Minimal smallpox cases; new staff changing and bathing accommodation.

**1911** Brief increase in smallpox – otherwise minimal; mud accumulation becomes an increasing problem.

**1912** Minimal smallpox cases; all M.A.B. road ambulances now motorised.

**1913** River Ambulance Service starts conveying fever patients;
North Wharf used for Scarlet Fever Service; only one case of smallpox.

**1914** River Ambulance Service used for scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough and smallpox;
South Wharf converted to fever receiving station;
North Wharf changed from Scarlet Fever to smallpox receiving station;
West Wharf brought into use for fever service;
some staff leave for military service in WWI.

**1915** South and North Wharves used alternately for fever and smallpox;
many staff leave to join the forces; heavy dredging carried out.

**1916** Mainly diphtheria and scarlet fever patients conveyed; more staff leave for war.

**1917** South Wharf used for fever; no smallpox cases; *Red Cross* is requisitioned for Woolwich Arsenal.

**1918** Smallpox returns briefly - South Wharf takes smallpox patients again, then back to fever;
staff shortages filled by soldiers.

**1919** South and North Wharves used alternately for smallpox and fever cases;
staff return from war, and the *Red Cross* is returned from Woolwich Arsenal.

**1920** South Wharf used alternately for smallpox and fever cases.

**1921** Scarlet fever outbreak, but minimal smallpox - South Wharf used alternately for smallpox and scarlet fever; mud accumulation causing problems for the steamers and their schedule.

**1922** South Wharf used alternately for fever and smallpox patients; substantial dredging carried out;
Master William Kelly retires.

**1923** South Wharf back to conveying (minimal) smallpox patients; quiet year.

**1924** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1925** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1926** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1927** Minimal smallpox cases; quiet year.

**1928** Increase in smallpox - road transport used temporarily; Thames Flood.

**1929** New epidemic of mild form of smallpox; road transport used instead of river.

**1930** M.A.B. abolished and all their sites transferred to the London County Council; epidemic continues;
ambulance steamers brought back into use for the final time.

**1931** Epidemic slowly easing; ambulance steamers not used, and the *Albert Victor* is sold.

**1932** Decision taken to discontinue the River Ambulance Service; moderate number of smallpox cases;
Engineer-Surveyor Mr Sullivan retires.

**1933** Ambulance steamers sold; R.A.S. staff made redundant or redeployed;
moderate number of smallpox cases.

**1934** Decline in number of smallpox patients - final case seen in June.

**1935** No smallpox cases.

**1936** No smallpox cases; pier repaired.

**1937** No smallpox cases.

**1938** No smallpox cases.

**1939** No smallpox cases; South Wharf being considered for closure**.**

**1940** South Wharf largely destroyed on the first night of the Blitz, all staff rescued.

# 1883

***The M.A.B. sets up the River Ambulance Service and purchases Acorn Wharf in Rotherhithe, despite strong local objection.***

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1883-84 Vol. XVII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1883-84)

Index pages xxv-xxviii

- **Castalia**: 4 pages of references to the purchase and fitting out of the Castalia hospital ship.

Page 615

- **Recommendation and reasons to purchase Acorn Wharf,** Rotherhithe, at the sum of £13,000: '...your Committee recommend that … the freehold premises (about 2 acres 1 rood) and the buildings there on, known as Acorn Wharf, Trinity Street, Rotherhithe, be purchased from the trustees of the late Peter Rolt at a sum not exceeding £13,000...'
  '...careful and repeated inspections of the various wharves offered for sale on the south side of the Thames have led them to the conclusion that the wharf that the Managers are now recommended to purchase is in all respects the most suitable for the purpose, since it not only possesses spacious and open river frontage and a foreshore sufficiently shelving to admit of the construction of a floating pier which shall not interfere with the navigation of the river - an objection which would be fatal to the acquisition of other apparently equally favourable sites - but is also easily approachable on the land side by thoroughfares sufficiently broad to obviate any possibility of the ambulance conveying patients being delayed during the journey by congestion of traffic...' [from Report of the Committee for General Purposes - 29 September 1883]

Pages 665-6

- **Objection from Vestry of the Parish of St. Mary, Rotherhithe**
  Extract from their letter of 3 October 1883: 'The Vestry of this Parish having learnt through the public journals that it is the intention of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to purchase for the sum of £13,000 … freehold premises known as Acorn Wharf, Trinity Street, Rotherhithe, as a depot for the purpose of conveying fever patients from the Metropolis to Floating Hospitals at Long Reach, passed a resolution at their meeting held last evening to the effect that in their opinion the site selected is totally unfitted for the purpose, as well as on account of its situation as the difficulties of access, and for other good reasons; and a deputation consisting of the chairman and 4 of the members was appointed to wait upon the President of the Local Government Board to express to him the view of the Vestry upon the subject....'
  Reply agreed by M.A.D. Managers: '...That in reply the Local Government Board be informed that the reasons which influenced the Managers in their selection of Acorn Wharf at Rotherhithe were - (a) its proximity to the large and populous district in the South of London in which smallpox, in the event of an epidemic occurring, might be expected to be especially prevalent; (b) the excellence of its approaches on the land side; (c) the convenience of its situation on the river so far as the Thames Conservators are concerned; and (d) the difficulty of acquiring a suitable site elsewhere..' [from minutes dated 13 October 1883]

Pages 706-7

- **Objection from Surrey Commercial Dock Company**
  Extract of letter dated 17 October 1883:
  'THE MEMORIAL OF THE SURREY COMMERCIAL DOCK COMPANY
  Sheweth: That your Memorialists are the owners of an extensive system of docks and warehouses, comprising in all about 369 acres, situate in the parishes of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, and Deptford, the larger part being in Rotherhithe... The premises in question are in close proximity to the docks of your Memorialists, which are frequented by a large number of vessels, amounting in the year 1882 to 2,874, with an aggregate tonnage of 1,043,874. In addition to their crews, a very large number of

persons are employed on the docking, undocking and discharging of these vessels, and in the various operations connected with the reception and distribution of their cargoes. Some of the leading officers of the Company reside upon the dock premises, and many of the Company's employes [sic] live in the neighbourhood of Acorn Wharf. Your Memorialists are therefore greatly interested in the preservation of the health of this district, and regard with alarm the proposed establishment of a fever depot so close to their property. Your Memorialists would venture to point out that in their view the site selected is totally unfit for the purpose contemplated, the streets leading to it being narrow, and the traffic being subject to interruption throughout the day and night, at intervals governed by the state of the tides, in consequence of the necessary opening of the lock bridges, which must be crossed in approaching the wharf. Your Memorialists being of the opinion that this wharf is unsuitable for a depot for persons suffering from infectious diseases, and that its use for such purposes will be prejudicial to the interests of your Memorialists, inimical to the health of their servants, to persons frequenting the Docks, and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood generally, respectfully urge your Board not to give their sanction to this project of the Metropolitan Asylums Board...' [from minutes of 27 October 1883]

Page 765

- **Further objections, and alternative suggestions for sites:**

Extract of letter from the Vestry of the Parish of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, dated 1 November 1883:
'PROPOSED PURCHASE OF ACORN WHARF BY METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD
I am direct by the Vestry to enclose copy of a letter addressed to them by Mr. Higgs, offering to sell a freehold site known as Norway Wharf, situate in Thames Street, between Deptford and Greenwich, for the sum of £9,000, which the Vestry beg to submit as an alternative site, being in their opinion better suited for the purpose required, its situation being lower down the river than Acorn Wharf, and therefore nearer the Hospital Ships, though not much further from the 'Red Lion' public-house; and the ambulance would not be liable to be delayed on account of any lock bridges...'

'Gwydyr House, Brixton Rise, S.W. 30 October 1883
To the Chairman of the Rotherhithe Vestry

Sir,
Having noticed in the papers a report of an interview with Sir Charles Dilke, respecting the proposal of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to acquire Acorn Wharf, Rotherhithe Street, as a landing stage for the shipment of patients to Smallpox Hospital Ships,
We beg most respectfully to bring before your notice a freehold site in our possession, well adapted, we think, for such requirements, viz., Norway Wharf, situate in Thames Street, S.E., between Deptford and Greenwich, having a frontage to the river of about 150 feet by a depth of 260 feet. Price for freehold, £9,000.
… William Higgs For self and Co., Executors of Wm. Higgs, deceased.'

'Read further letter, dated 7th instant, from the Vestry of the Parish of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, suggesting, in addition to the alternative site offered by Mr. Higgs at Norway Wharf, the public right of way known as St. George's Stairs, London Street, as an eligible site for the Managers' requirements.
Also read letters, dated 30th ultimo and 2nd instant, from Mr. A.F. Payne, enclosing copy resolutions passed at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Rotherhithe, and requesting the Managers to receive a deputation at their next meeting in regard to the proposed purchase of Acorn Wharf …
The deputation then attended before the Board, and was introduced by Sir Edmund H. Currie.
The following memorial having been read:-

*To the Metropolitan Asylums Board*
*We, the undersigned, appointed representatives of the working-men and members of the Friendly Societies of the district of Rotherhithe, request that the site proposed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board to be used as an embarkation stage for fever and other patients at Acorn Wharf, Rotherhithe, be not purchased or used for that purpose, as we believe that such a site as the one proposed, being in or near a thickly populated neighbourhood, would be a source of great distress to the working people of the district, by bringing contagious diseases into their midst, and would also injure by the same means the sick and funeral*

*funds of the various Friendly Societies which are supported by the thriftiness of the members, who consist of the respectable working classes.'* [ from minutes of 10 Nov 1883]

Page 767

- **Estimates for work at Acorn Wharf:** The Local Government Board asked for an estimate of the costs of preparing Acorn Wharf for service. They estimated that the pier etc. would cost about £4,000 and 'a recessed entrance with paved roadway to the pier' would be an additional £500.

## Twenty-eighth General Report of the Vestry of the Parish of Rotherhithe, Surrey, for the year ending 25th March 1884

(Wellcome Library online, ref: .b19955716)

Pages 22-3

- **Objection to M.A.B.'s purchase of Acorn Wharf:** 'On the 2nd October, 1883, the attention of the Vestry was called to the action taken by the Metropolitan Asylums Board for the purchase of "Acorn Wharf", Rotherhithe Street, as a depot for the purpose of conveying Fever and Small-pox Patients from the Metropolis to Floating Hospitals on the River Thames at Long Reach, and it was *Resolved*, that in the opinion of this Vestry, the site selected is totally unfitted for the purpose, as well on account of its situation as of the difficulties of access, and for other good reasons, and a Deputation, consisting of the Chairman and four Members of the Vestry, be appointed to wait upon the President of the Local Government Board, to express to him the views of the Vestry on the subject, with the view of inducing the Local Government Board to refuse their sanction to the proposed purchase, and that the Members for the Borough of Southwark be invited to accompany such Deputation…
  The Joint Deputation of the Members of this meeting and of the Guardians of St Olave's Union waited upon Sir Charles Dilke, the President of the Local Government Board, on 24th October, 1883, and urged that the Board would refuse their sanction to the proposal of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to acquire Acorn Wharf, Rotherhithe Street, for a landing stage for the shipment of patients to the Hospital Ships at Long Reach. The Deputation was introduced to Sir Charles Dilke by Mr. Arthur Cohen, the Member for the Borough of Southwark, and the Deputation having been heard and a Memorial, signed by a large number of residents in the parish, against the scheme having been presented,
  SIR CHARLES DILKE, in his reply, pointed out the difficulties there were in procuring a site for the purpose, and that no alternative site for the landing stage had been suggested by the Deputation; but that the matter would have his attention, and he would inform the Deputation of the decision of the Local Government Board thereon.
  The Vestry suggested to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and to the Local Government Board, as alternative sites for the proposed Landing Stage, St. George's Stairs, London Street, on the boundary between Rotherhithe and Deptford, and Norway Wharf, Thames Street, between Deptford and Greenwich.
  Ultimately, in November, 1883, the Vestry received a letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Local Government Board, stating the Board, after a full consideration of all the circumstances of the case, had not deemed it desirable to withhold their assent from the proposal of the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District to purchase Acorn Wharf, Rotherhithe, to be used in connection with the transfer and shipment of Patients from the Metropolis to the proposed Hospitals for Convalescent Patients at Darenth, and the Floating Hospitals at Long Reach.'

## The Annual Report on the Health, Sanitary Condition &c &c of the Parish of St Mary Abbotts, Kensington, for the year 1883 [published 1884]

(Wellcome Library online, ref: .b19824257)

Pages 35-6

- **Ambulance steamers**: 'The "Red Cross", specially constructed for the conveyance of small-pox patients to the ship hospitals, and to the camp, is now in use, and a second and larger vessel is in process of construction. A river steamer has been purchased for temporary use, and will probably

be made available ultimately, for conveying recovered patients from the hospitals on the home journey.'

- **Setting up of River Ambulance Service and Wharves:** 'By Section 6 of the Diseases Prevention (Metropolis) Act 1883, the Managers were empowered to obtain land, with approaches &c., for three wharves or landing places within the metropolis and one beyond the metropolis, to facilitate the conveyance of the sick to land or ship hospitals down the river. Effect has been given to this enactment by the purchase of land as follows:- A site at Rotherhithe ("Acorn Wharf"), for the service of the southern districts of the metropolis, and a site at Blackwall ("Brown's Wharf") for the service of the north-east district. Negotiations are in progress for the purchase of a site near Wandsworth Bridge, to serve as a transfer depot for the use of the Western districts, including Kensington. The land at Long Reach, off which the hospital ships are moored, is the fourth or extra metropolitan site. At each wharf a pier has been, or will be, erected, from alongside which patients will be taken from the land ambulances to the steamers, and at which convalescents will disembark on their return home from the ship hospitals or camp. Under the arrangements matured by the Managers, the treatment of a small-pox patient may be said to commence at the moment of removal, for he is taken charge of at the bedside by a skilled nurse, who attends upon him in the ambulance and in the steamer...'

## 1883 Electoral register: not found

# 1884

***First year of operation of Acorn Wharf and River Ambulance Service; pier constructed; smallpox epidemic***

No M.A.B. Annual Report available, but table in later volumes shows the following figures for 1884:

- **Number of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 5,592
- Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 4,267

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1884-85 Vol. XVIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1884-85)

Index page vii

- **Ambulance steamers Albert Victor** and **Maltese Cross**: numerous references to the purchase and fitting out of the Albert Victor and the planning and progress of the Maltese Cross.

Index page xxxi

- **Castalia**: numerous references to furnishing and preparation works on the Castalia hospital ship.

Pages 169-171

- **Accommodation for steamer crew:** crew of the Red Cross ambulance steamer were instructed to take up residence at Acorn Wharf 'so that they may be more under control, and their services more readily available. They will be allowed to live rent free, and in the cases of the single men, they have been provided with furnished bedrooms.'
- '**Telephonic communication'** being set up between the chief offices and the wharf; a female clerk was appointed to operate it at the wharf.
- **Construction of pier**: brief report by Adam Miller, Naval Architect (of 2 Riches Court, 50 Lime St) on construction progress of pier – piling nearly finished: 'we have had in this pier to add four piles'. [letter dated 23 April 1884]

Page 186

- **Medical Officer Dr Philip**: engaged as Medical Officer of the Ambulance Steamer (at salary of £20 per month, with board and lodging). 'His duties will be, to receive and treat, whilst on board the Steamer, and deliver at the Hospital Ships, all acute cases of smallpox placed in his charge, and generally see to the reception, comfort, and delivery of all other patients conveyed by the Steamer.'

Page 492

- **Medical officers: Dr Bingham** engaged as Medical Officer on the Ambulance Steamers. Arrangements made for Medical Officer **Dr Phillip** to reside at Acorn Wharf.

Page 493

- **Builders of pier**: mention of a cheque to be drawn for S. Chafen for erection of pier at Acorn Wharf.

Page 1115

- **Steamer schedule**: alteration to timings of last ambulance steamer from London- changed to 8pm instead of 6pm – 'will have the effect of considerably reducing the number of "mild cases" left in their own homes for the night, in consequence of the Board's officers not being able to remove them in time to meet the Steamer before starting on its last journey of the day.'

## The Annual Report on the Health, Sanitary Condition &c &c of the Parish of St Mary Abbotts, Kensington, for the year 1884 [published 1885]

(Wellcome Library online, ref: .b19824269)

Page 40

- **Pier at West Wharf:** ‘In the course of time an Embarkation Pier will be provided at the "West Wharf", near Wandsworth Bridge, and then patients will be removed at an earlier stage than is now possible. The distance from the hospital to the "South Wharf" (at Rotherhithe) makes it unsafe to transfer patients at present, so soon as could be desired.’

Pages 86-87

- **Opposition to M.A.B. wharves**: ‘It goes without saying that the Managers have been hampered, more or less, at every stage of their proceedings, through local opposition, based generally on fears that hospitals, ambulance-stations, and wharves, alike, must needs depreciate the value of adjacent property and injuriously affect the health of the inhabitants. Subject to proper precautions being adopted, I do not think the latter danger is likely to arise and the first-named fear will probably turn out to be ill-founded.’

## 1884 Electoral register: not found

# 1885

***Acorn Wharf renamed South Wharf; Superintendent Charles Thomson starts; epidemic eases by end of year.***

No M.A.B. Annual Report available, but table in later volumes shows the following figures for 1885:
**Number of patients conveyed** to Long Reach = 5,468
Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 5,809

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1885-86 Vol. XIX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1885-86)

Page 38

- **Dr Bingham redundant**: due to the decline in smallpox cases, Dr Bingham, one of the Medical Officers of the Ambulance Steamers, was given a month's notice. [Report dated March 28, 1885]

Page 244

- **Dr McKinnon** appointed as Assistant Medical Officer to Dr Philip, the Medical Superintendent.
- **Renaming of wharves** recommended:
  'Brown's Wharf to be called the "North Wharf", Managers' Road, Blackwall
  Acorn Wharf to be called the "South Wharf", Rotherhithe St, Trinity St
  And Sullivan's Wharf to be called the "West Wharf", near Wandsworth Bridge.'
  [from minutes of 23 May 1885]

Page 320

- **Mr Charles Thomson appointed as Superintendent of the River Ambulance Service**, with allowance for accommodation etc 'until such time as he can conveniently be accommodated at the South Wharf … Mr Thomson is 42 years of age, has been an engineer in H.M. Navy for 18 years, for the last 10 of which he served as engineer officer …' [Report dated June 6, 1885]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Chairman and Committee, R.A.S:**

**October 2, 1885**

- **Dr Philip**: mention of him having left.
- **Nurses and domestic staff redundant**: 'As the services of the nurses will cease on the 31st inst. I have given **Mrs Percival** notice that her services as cleaner and attendant will not be required after that date.'
- **Sitting room for nurses:** Dr Birdwood, Medical Superintendent of the Hospital Ships, enquired about a sitting room for the assistant nurses while the steamers were at South Wharf.
- **Visitors to ill patients at hospital ships**: proposal that in the case of fog or other circumstances, they should be given the fare to go by train to Dartford.
- **Returning work clothes**: proposal of staff being charged if they didn't return all items of their allocated work clothes.
- **Lemonade surplus**: 'I desire to bring to the notice of the Committee that there are 7½ gross of lemonade in stock at the South Wharf and the rate of consumption at the present time is not more than 2 dozen per month. As this lemonade is not in glass stoppered bottles, I consider it would be advisable that this should be taken over by one of the hospitals having a larger consumption, as

there is necessarily great leakage through the corks. Several of the bottles now being not more than half full, and if allowed to remain long unused will be of no use whatever.'
- **Nurse Holland** requested her original testimonials.

**November 10, 1885**
- **Legal action against barge owners**: of barge Alma which collided with Maltese Cross on 3rd July.
- **Unpaid parcels of clothing for patients:** parcels of clothing are frequently brought to the wharves for patients who are about to be discharged from the hospital ships – suggestions on how to deal with this and whether he can pay for them to be forwarded.

**December 8, 1885**
- **Clerk evicted from lodgings:** '**Mr T. Weir** the clerk at South Wharf, having complained to me about being obliged to leave his lodgings owing to his being at a smallpox wharf, he has desired me to bring his case before the Committee for their consideration – I enclose herewith a letter from him on the subject'. [Full name is Thomas Weir]
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South Wharf and North Wharf for fortnight ending 7th December 1885 – 24 total, 11 from South Wharf and 13 from North Wharf.

**December 22, 1885**
- **Forge:** details of tenders, including that for forge and anvil at South Wharf.
- **Fog causes delays**: 'On the 11th inst. the fog was so thick that it was not safe for the Maltese Cross which was timed to leave South Wharf at 8.45pm to proceed. At 11.15pm the fog lifted sufficiently to allow her to proceed. She arrived at the hospital ships at 1.15am with one patient on board.'
- **Further delays caused by fog**: 17th Dec - 'On the same date the Albert Victor on the last journey down was at 10.10pm … [?] of fog obliged to anchor in Erith Roads and did not reach the hospital ships till 2.30. And on the 18th the same steamer on the 13th inst. at exactly the same time viz. 10.10pm was obliged to bring up in Halfway Reach and was unable to proceed till 6.30am the next day. She arrived at the hospital ships 7am. On the 13th there were no patients on board but on the 17th there were 4 patients'.
- **Evicted clerk – accommodation at wharf**: 'Referring to my report of the 5th inst. in which Mr **Weir** the Clerk at South Wharf desires to be allowed to reside at the Wharf – when the Committee instructed me to find out what amount Mr Weir was willing to pay for the accommodation, he informs me he is willing to pay 4/6 for the accommodation with attendance'.
- **Watermen coming through fence**: 'As watermen have been in the habit of coming through the fence at South Wharf and securing their boats to the Wharf as this if continuously permitted may generate into a right - I would suggest that the fence be put in such a condition as to prevent their coming through and that noticeboards be erected warning them off'.
- **Notices to prohibit mooring:** 'Noticeboards should I think also be put up prohibiting any vessel or craft making fast to the piles or pontoons or to any part of the wharf or pier'.
- **Xmas day arrangements**: Unlikelihood of patients being sent to hospital ships on Xmas day; arrangements for boats to remain at South Wharf.
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight ending 21st December: 22 (all by evening boat).

# 1885 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Kelly**, William Alfred; **Livett**, George |

# 1886

***Smallpox under control; West Wharf opens;***
***Benmore installed as mooring hulk, and Swallow and Marguerite purchased.***

No M.A.B. Annual Report available, but table in later volumes shows the following figures for 1886:

**Number of patients conveyed** to Long Reach = 130
Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 145
Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 458
Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 3,929
(including workmen etc conveyed for building work etc on hospital ships).

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1886-87 Vol. XX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1886-87)

Page 350

- **Purchase of Benmore as mooring hulk**: The Ambulance Committee purchased the dismantled hull of the paddle steamer "Benmore" for £35. It consisted of the hull '...together with the rudder, windlass, 2 anchors, anchor chain, and one pair of boat davits. ...It is the intention of your Committee to convert this vessel into a mooring hulk, and to moor it at the South Wharf in order that the Ambulance Steamers when lying at that wharf may be made fast to the hulk, and kept afloat at all states of the tide. The vessels at present are either laid alongside the wharf - where they ground at low water - or they are made fast to the pier head, in which position they are much exposed to damage by passing craft, and from each other...' [from minutes of 19 June 1886]

Page 400

- **Rotherhithe Street houses**: No's 313, 315, 317 and 319 Rotherhithe Street, belonging to the wharf, are mentioned in the context of being in need of painting, papering etc.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Chairman and Committee, R.A.S:**

**January 5, 1886**

- **Fog delays, and nurse stuck at South Wharf on Xmas Day**: on 24 & 25 Dec the fog was so dense that the Maltese Cross wasn't able to leave until 8.55pm on the 25th, and then had to anchor at Barking Reach until the following morning. No patients on board, only one nurse – 'As the steamer was obliged to lay at South Wharf all night, **Mrs Percival** made up a bed for her in one of the late nurse's rooms on the 24th and entertained her on Xmas day.' On the 27th the fog was again so thick that the 8.30am steamer from Long Reach didn't leave till the afternoon.
- **Dismissal of neglectful stoker Mr G. Butler**: 'Having found G. Butler stoker neglecting his duties while the Red Cross is under survey and repair …. and that in my absence he absented himself from duty on 2 separate occasions in one week and that he does not perform his duty to my satisfaction, I on Saturday last … gave him notice that his services would not be required after Saturday next the 9th inst. I have had occasion to reprimand this man before.'
- **Pay docked from absent staff:** 'In my last report I omitted to inform the Committee that **Richard Fittock**, Carpenter, and **Chas Woodford**, Pierman at South Wharf were each absent one day from duty and that I deducted one day's pay from each for the time absent.'
- **Accommodating nurses at South Wharf when steamers delayed by fog etc:** he suggests using one of the previous nurses' bedrooms 'and that **Mrs Percival** attend to the same.'

- **Inferior coal:** '…I have received several complaints from the Engineers of the Steamers as to the coal supplied, and from personal observation I have found the coal to be very small and very inferior in quality and in consequence there is great difficulty in keeping steam, causing an over amount [?] of labor and at the same time delaying the Steamers.'
- **No. of patients:** total number of patients forwarded from South and North wharves = 5

**January 19, 1886**

- **Fog delays**: on 8th Jan the 8.45pm Maltese Cross was delayed by fog and couldn't leave till 11am the next day. One member of female staff on board was accommodated in the nurses' quarters.
- **Dismissal of stoker George Butler, and hiring of William Connor**: George Butler (as mentioned in previous report) was discharged. '…William Connor 1st class Petty Officer (a Leading Stoker) who is a pensioner from the Royal Navy was engaged in his stead. I having received a most excellent character from the Chief Inspector of Machinery at Chatham for his steadiness and ability.'
- **Engineer loses top of finger**: 'On the 13th inst. shortly after the Albert Victor left South Wharf at 11.0am she returned to the wharf owing to **George Hambling** the Engineer having had the top of the index finger of the right hand cut off, by the guide brass of the radius rod of the …….[?] motion coming in contact with a spanner which he was using to tighten the air pump cover – the Engineer being in motion at the time – and on the 14th I temporarily engaged **Henry Hadley** in his stead.'
- **Coal supply:** 'Since my last report I have been obliged to condemn 2 separate barges of coal from Messrs Gauman Son & Carter [?] the same not being in accordance with the contract order and altogether unfit for the steamers … a representative of Messrs Gauman & Co called on me at South Wharf …. and in the course of conversation acknowledged that the coal was not what had been ordered (Viz Nixious Navigation) but that in future Nixious Navigation would be supplied, although Messrs Gauman would have to supply it at a loss. The four tons supplied on the 15th inst. and that taken from the barge which arrived on the 17th inst. are good steaming coals.'
- **Design of staff uniforms:** on being requested to supply a description of each article of uniform dress required by his officer - 'I have never previously made out such a specification but I append herewith that which I have drawn out admitting my inability in this respect, at the same time I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the desirability of doing away with expensive lace and badges as much as possible as in a number of cases they are in my opinion entirely out of place….I would suggest that the Masters in future have only ¼ inch lace and the mates and piermasters have none whatever, but that the words Mate or Piermaster be worked in yellow twist thread on the collar of the jacket. As to the capes, I think it advisable that the Masters should have a gold badge (but simply with a laurel and a red cross without the crown or some such simple device). The mates I would suggest a red cross in an oval worked in yellow thread, the same for Piermasters and Engineers – the crew and Pierman a simple cross or M.A.B.' [this was marked as approved]
- **Male Staff Changing Room: '**In order to prevent the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board raising any question as to the men's clothing on the steamers, I would suggest that a shed be built and fitted with cupboards close to the stables at the South Wharf in order that the men should shift the clothing on coming in and going out of the wharf. This would also prevent the uniform being destroyed by knocking about in the forecastles of the steamers.' [marked as adjourned]
- **Noticeboards**: 'With respect to obtaining a price for notice boards for South Wharf, the boards have been made by the carpenter and the Piermaster at South Wharf will write the notice.'
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight ending the 18th Jan = 12

**February 2, 1886**

- **Excess provisions**: enquires about how to dispose of excess provisions at South Wharf, incl. 3 jars of Liebig's [beef] extract and 3 tins of condensed milk.
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight ending the 1st Feb = 6

**February 16, 1886**

- **Coal suppliers**: enquires about changing coal contract due to problems with the coal delivered.
- **Fog delays**: on 9th Feb, the Albert Victor's evening sailing was delayed by fog and had to wait until morning; its return journey from Long Reach was also delayed until the next day. One patient was on board overnight and had to be removed to the S.E. Hospital 'as there appeared to be no chance of the fog lifting'. Two female staff of the hospital ships were also on board all night, and at daylight had to get to the hospital ships via Dartford. 'In such a case as this I would like instructions as to whether food should be provided for the staff. On this occasion **Mrs Percival** prior to the two

female staff proceeding to Dartford, provided them with breakfast, but not having any instructions, I have informed Mrs Percival that I am unable to pay for those two breakfasts.'

- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight ending 15th Feb = 2

**March 2, 1886**

- **Dormitory maid turns up drunk at North Wharf**: 'I have to report that on the 16th ult. at 5.45pm **Sarah Buckley** dormitory maid at the hospital ships presented herself at North Wharf for conveyance to Long Reach, being at the time in a state of intoxication. She was taken on board the steamer and placed in the After Hospital where she slept till the arrival of the steamer at Long Reach when her condition was reported to the medical office on boards. On her arrival at the Wharf she presented the pass of E. Bartley a nurse on board the hospital ships.'
- **Cover for sick captain: George Livett,** Captain of the Steamers was sick with cold and neuralgia and off work from 17th Feb till March 1st. To cover him, **Captain Harvey** ran the night journeys and **James Dixon** (mate) ran the day journeys, and nightwatchman **Henry Brown** was put on duty on the steamers, and temporarily **James Armsworth** covered him as nightwatchman.
- **Piermen resigned:** Pierman **Woodford** and Asst. Pierman **Meek** gave notice to leave on 6 March.
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight ending 2nd March = 9

**March 16, 1886**

- **Collision with Maltese Cross**: 'I have to report that on the 2nd inst. a steamer (the Oxfordshire) fouled the Maltese Cross in Woolwich Reach doing slight damage to the hull.' A statement was made by **James Dixon**, mate in charge.
- **Change of piermen**: on 6th March **Charles Woodford** and **Frederick Meek** left. **John Berry**, formerly 1st class Petty Officer in the Navy, and **Jas Thomas** 2nd class petty officer, 'were engaged in their stead', the former as Pierman and the latter as Asst. Pierman.
- **Cleaning of staff quarters**: 'On the 6th inst. having found that the stoker of the first crew was married and did not use the quarters provided for him by the Board, I gave **Mrs Stambling** notice that the payment of 2/6 per week for cleaning would be stopped till further notice – and on the 13th I gave notice to **Mrs Livett** that as one of the first crew was married and did not live in the quarters in future the payment of 2/6 per week on account of <u>that</u> man [?] would be stopped.
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight = 3

**March 30, 1886**

- **Collision of Maltese Cross when mooring at Long Reach**: 'On the 26th inst. at 10.30pm when the Maltese Cross was backing from the pier at Long Reach to the 'Castalia' in order to moor for the night a sudden squall from the S. West caught the steamer and forced her bodily on to the mooring chains of the Castalia, thereby necessitating the engines being stopped in order to avoid damage to the paddle wheel. Owing to this, the steamer dropped down on to the landing stage of the Castalia, doing damage to the stage and also to the sponson on the starboard side of the steamer. I have been in communication with the shipmaster of the Hospital Ships to know if there is any reason why the steamers should not secure at night alongside the pier at Long Reach instead of going to the 'Castalia'. He informs me that there is none, and I have requested they should in future be allowed to secure to the pier at night and so prevent any chance of recurrence of this.'
- **No. of patients** forwarded from South and North Wharves for the fortnight up to 29 March = 7

**April 12, 1886**

- **Request for linen store**: Matron of Hospital Ships visited and requested a heated room with shelves to keep spare linen and blankets in at South Wharf.
- **Slight damage to steamer**: when going alongside North Wharf pier, 'her quarter fell onto the two cross pieces between the upper piles...' causing slight damage; **Captain Livett** was in charge.
- **Finger-injured engineer returns to work: George Hambling** returned to work after having been off after injuring his finger. Notice given to **Henry Hadley** who had temporarily replaced him.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships between 30 March and 11 April = 5

**May 10, 1886**

- **Mooring vessel**: a vessel was needed as a mooring at the end of the pier - the Benmore was suggested, a tug belonging to Mr Swan at Millwall Iron Works.

- **Minor collision**: the schooner Londonderry of Sunderland was driven by an eddy between the dolphin at the end of pier and the Red Cross; caused slight damage to the rail of the Red Cross.
- **Inferior coal**: had to reject more barges of coal because they weren't the quality/type ordered.
- **Securing milk supplies on steamers**: 'On Easter day the Dairy Supply Company commenced sending churns of milk by the steamers to the Hospital Ships and as the lids of the churns are not secured in any way it is quite possible in case the right quantity should not be received at the Hospital Ships for the Crews of the steamers to be charged with abstracting the same. I am of opinion it would be better for these cans to be locked in order that there should be no mistake as to the actual quantity sent by the Dairy Company being received at the Hospital Ships.'
- **Fireman resigns: William Connor,** described as **'**fireman' offered his resignation.
- **No. of patients** sent to ships between 12 April and 9 May = 27.
  Recovered cases brought back = 7. Non-smallpox cases sent back = 1.

**May 24, 1886:**

- **Dr Phillips, Medical Superintendent, resigns**: left on 25th April; since then patients arriving at the wharves were under the care of the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital Ships.
- **Steamer collision**: Albert Victor, when leaving the pier, damaged the stern rail of the Red Cross; Captain **Livett** was in charge at the time.
- **Linen Store:** Matron of Hospital Ships came to South Wharf and arranged the fitting out of the room at 315 Rotherhithe St as a store for bedding of the 'Hospital Steamers'.
- **Damage to steamer:** the barge Ajax dragged her anchor and fouled the stern of the Albert Victor which was moored at the pier, causing some damage.
- **Late patient**: on the 19th an ambulance arrived with a patient at 9.15pm after the last sailing had gone, so was taken to South Eastern Hospital instead.
- **New stoker - Thomas New**: employed for Maltese Cross to replace **William Connor** who'd resigned. Thomas New was previously a 1st class Petty Officer (Leading Stoker) in the Navy.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 18. Recovered cases brought back = 7.

**June 7, 1886**

- **Pierman drunk at work: James Thomas,** Assistant Pierman was found drunk at work and unfit for duty. 'I directed the Piermaster to bring the man before me and seeing that he was not sober and was incapable of performing his duty, I immediately suspended him from duty...' Was dismissed, and replaced by **Samuel Morgan**.
- **Mysterious night-time prowler:** 'On the 1st inst. the Piermaster at South Wharf reported that during the night someone had obtained access to the Wharf and had taken the working suit of one of the Piermen out of the Piermen's Mess Room. On examining the premises I found that an entrance had been effected by climbing the fence of the next wharf. After climbing the fence the man had evidently fallen into the mud at the bottom of the old saw pit and had then crawled along the side wall to the Piermen's Quarters. After making enquiry I found on the 5th inst. that the Pierman's suit had been placed in the mess room for the workmen of the adjoining wharf, and that a suit belonging to one of the workmen had been taken. The Night Watchman on board the Albert Victor secured to the Wharf on being questioned, had not observed any one during the night - a deer stalker hat was picked up in the saw pit and a strange knife was picked up in the Piermen's Mess Room. The Pierman's working suit has since been handed over by the Manager of Barnard's Wharf.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 10. Recovered cases brought back = 19.

**June 21, 1886**

- **Mooring vessel Benmore**: was towed to South Wharf and specifications made for the work that was needed to fit her up as a mooring.
- **Absent carpenter dismissed:** Carpenter **Richard Fittock** was dismissed after being absent without leave for 2 days. Had been giving a warning for doing this previously.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships between 7 and 20 June = 10.
  Recovered cases brought back = 12. No non-smallpox cases.

**July 5, 1886**

- **New carpenter Charles Johnstone**: employed to replace Richard Fittock. Charles had been a ship's carpenter at sea for 10 years.

- **Unauthorised delivery of supplies**: 'Prior to my leaving the South Wharf this day to attend the Committee Meeting a van arrived containing….' – he lists quantities of vinegar, barley, currants, and pepper - refused to allow it to be landed at South Wharf for transfer to Long Reach by the steamers.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships in the previous fortnight = 3.
  Recovered cases brought back = 12. No non-smallpox cases.

**July 19, 1886**

- **Visit by Government inspector**: was taken from North Wharf to Long Reach, and was 'exceedingly pleased with the whole of the arrangements'.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships between 5 – 18 July = 6.
  Recovered cases brought back = 5. Non-smallpox cases returned = 1.

**August 2, 1886**

- **Defective knuckle fendoffs**: 1 dozen knuckle fendoffs were delivered, but not to the quality required, so were returned.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships between 19 July and 2 August = 3.
  Recovered cases brought back = 4. Non-smallpox cases returned = 0.

**September 13, 1886**

- **West Wharf is set up**: took charge of the wharf on 12th Aug, employed watchmen and piermen, and furnished apartments for them.
- **Preparation of Benmore**: 14 tons of stone removed from North Wharf and put in the Benmore as ballast; Benmore now ready to be moored to the pier.
- **Fog delays**: the steamers had to anchor in Barking Reach overnight on two occasions because of fog, though no patients aboard.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships in last fortnight = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 10. Non-smallpox cases returned = 2.

**September 27, 1886**

- **Staff reductions and de-motions**: [due to end of epidemic] a week's notice given to the following:
  **Captain Harvey**, **James Dixon** (Masters)
  **William Kelly, William Perkins** (mates)
  **Charles Wickham, Alfred Brown, George Adams** (deckhands)
  **Herbert Brown, Joseph Hemming** (night watchmen)
  **George Bailey** (Asst. Pierman, North Wharf)
  **William Lanyon** (Engineer/Engine Driver)

  The following staff were retained, having previously consented 'to accept the position 1 grade lower to that formerly held':
  **Henry Harvey** (as mate from the 3rd prox.)
  **James Dixon, William Kelly** (as deck hands)
  **Charles Wickham, William Perkins** (as night watchmen)
  **William Lanyon** (stoker)
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships in last fortnight = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 0. Non-smallpox cases returned = 0.

**October 11, 1886**

- **Steam Pinnace Swallow**: brought to South Wharf
- **Paddle Steamer Marguerite**: brought to South Wharf; report describes work that needed doing.
- **Benmore put onto moorings**: On 1st October the Benmore was secured to the moorings at South Wharf, after which the Red Cross, Marguerite and Swallow were moored alongside. Chains were fitted alongside to act as a bridle to keep drifting barges from bumping into them.
- **Benmore as accommodation for watchman**: 'I have allowed the watchman in charge of the steamers moored to the hulk to live in the After Cabin of the hulk, he being a single man, by this means his services are always available. I would ask that a small stove may be fitted to the cabin for the winter.'
- **Testimonial request received**: from a **C. L Cope,** formerly in the R.A.S., who he hadn't known.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Non-smallpox cases returned = 1.

**October 25, 1886**

- **Cleaning allowances**: owing to the discharge of George Adams and Herbert Brown [see 27 Sept report], cleaning allowance stopped to **Mrs Livett** and **Mrs Dixon** for cleaning their accommodation.
- **Bedding moved out of steamers**: due to the lack of patients, patient bedding was removed from the steamers to one of the rooms at 315 Rotherhithe St to prevent it getting damp.
- **'Nuisances' against fence at West Wharf:** 'Frequent reports having been made as to persons committing a nuisance against the wooden fence lately erected at the West Wharf, I have had a notice prohibiting the same printed at South Wharf and have secured the notice to the fence.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 3. Recovered cases brought back = 1

**November 8, 1886**

- **Intoxicated Pierman**: 'On the 2nd inst. Pierman **John Barry** having been reported to me by the Piermaster at South Wharf as being unfit for duty, I directed that the man should be brought before me – when I at once observed that he was under the influence of liquor. I immediately suspended him from duty, upon which he said he would not be suspended and wished to be discharged. I informed him that I had not the authority to discharge any man and that his conduct must be brought before the Managers…directly I left the South Wharf this man changed his clothes and although Mr **Weir** the clerk at the Wharf informed this man that it was my orders he was not to leave the Wharf, he persisted in going out and did not return till 8.45am the following day. Having cautioned this man on two previous occasions for the same offence I would recommend that he be discharged and that **Samuel Morgan** Assistant Pierman be made Pierman in his stead and that an Assistant Pierman be engaged in Morgan's place.' [Note in margin: Approved]
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**November 22, 1886**

- **Deckhand sick: William Kelly,** deckhand, off work due to acute tonsillitis from 10th-15th November.
- **New Pierman: George Fell** employed as Assistant Pierman; vaccination arranged.
- **Unauthorised wharf landings:** The Port Medical Officer attempted to land at North Wharf but was informed that no-one was to allowed to land at any of the wharves without permission of the managers due to infection risk; correspondence followed.
- **Sick stoker: J. Jones,** Stoker, off work with catarrh.
- **No. of patients** taken to or from Hospital Ships since previous report = 0. Non smallpox cases = 0.

**December 6, 1886**

- **Vaccination of workmen**: arrangements made for vaccination of 3 boiler cleaners employed for a few days, at some inconvenience and causing cost and delay; suggested that in future, vaccination staff should come to South Wharf to do this.
- **Fog delays:** Steamers delayed by fog on a couple of occasions.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 2.

**December 20, 1886**

- **Coal allowance for Master: George Livett,** Master of Steamers, had previously been given an allowance of coal in addition to accommodation – this allowance was to end.
- **Unauthorised deliveries**: query about what to do about charges for deliveries and cases being brought to South Wharf for conveyance to hospital ships when not from their regular contractors.
- **Official visit by Dr Reichter**, German Physician, for tour of R.A.S.
- **Problem of damp in the Store Houses** at South Wharf, in which wheeled litters and stretchers were stored; mildew forming on leather straps etc. Suggests installation of gas stoves as solution.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 2.
- **Pierman injured: George Fell,** Assistant Pierman, while working on the pier fell and badly fractured his kneecap in two places; taken to Guys Hospital.

# 1886 Electoral Register: see 1885 (electoral register is for 1885-86)

# 1887

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Annual Reports of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc] for the year 1887

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1887; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1577)

No specific mention of South Wharf or R.A.S., but 54 smallpox patients treated at the hospital ships.

Table in later volumes of the Annual Report shows the following figures for 1887:

**Number of patients conveyed** to Long Reach = 54
Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 45
Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 395
Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 478

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1887-88 Vol. XXI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1887-88)

Page 363

- **Laundry service:** reference to the laundry at Long Reach '…calculated to wash for about 500 people ... washing not only for the staff of the Ships but for the staff of the River Ambulance Service and for the servants of the Board at Gore Farm…'

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Chairman and Committee of the River Service / Ambulance Service / Ambulance Committee:**

**January 17, 1887**

- **New pierman Thomas Lanyon**: engaged temporarily as Assistant Pierman to replace **George Fell**. Formerly a boatswain's mate in the Royal Navy; vaccination arranged at S.E. Hospital.
- **Fire in roof:** Piermaster reported that smoke from fireplace in his room and the Pierman's quarters was coming out under the roof slates. A hole was cut into the ceiling to ascertain the cause, revealing a dense volume of smoke and smouldering rafters– the fire was extinguished. Caused by a defect in the chimney leading from the Store to the Piermaster's room and Pierman's quarters.
- **Drift ice on river** on 4th Jan, so ambulance steamer made its journey during daylight for safety.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**January 31, 1887**

- **Substandard uniform delivery**: new uniforms delivered, but material found not to be as good quality as the sample originally shown. Representative from the company Messrs Atkinson called at the Wharf, and 'upon comparing the uniforms with the samples at the Wharf, he acknowledged that the cloth supplied by Messrs Atkinson was not as good as the sample clothing.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 2. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**February 14, 1887**

- **Official visit** by the Local Government Board Inspector and a Dr Duncan 'attached to the Russian Government' to inspect the workings of the R.A.S. and wharves and hospital ships.
- **Wharf names to be painted on gates:** 'As many mistakes are made by the Carmen of Contractors and others in finding our wharves owing to their being formerly identified and known as 'Acorn Wharf', 'Browns Wharf' and 'Sullivan's Wharf', I would suggest that the names North Wharf, South Wharf and West Wharf be painted on the several gates with the letters M.A.B. in larger type above.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 0.

**February 28, 1887**

- **Old boats from Castalia used at South Wharf**: two old boats formerly belonging to the Castalia were brought to South Wharf for service between the mooring hulk and the pier.
- **New uniforms**: ''… I received the uniforms from Messrs Atkinson in accordance with sample in lieu of the uniform condemned by me as not being in accordance with sample.' [See 31 Jan 1887]
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 0.

**March 14, 1887**

- **Fog delay:** due to fog on 2nd March, there was no 4pm sailing to Long Reach.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**March 28, 1887**

- **Covering of bridges at North and South Wharves**: at their previous meeting when questioned about the necessity of covering the bridges, Charles Thomson stated that he considered the 'waterproof covering over the litter upon which the patient is carried' was sufficient. On further consideration, had changed his mind: '…as during wintry weather (which is invariably the period when most cases are taken down to the ships) should there be rain and then frost or should there be a heavy fall of snow, the bridges are in a dangerous condition for carrying patients – more especially at low water, for then the gradient of both bridges is very steep and difficult to walk down even when not carrying any heavy weight…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**April 25, 1887**

- **Old piling at South Wharf**: was informed by the Gate Porter who was formerly employed by the previous owner [ presumably Peter Rolt, owner of the former timber wharf ] there were (previous to the pier being built) 39 piles belonging to the wharf – 31 full-length and 8 broken piles. Of these, 16 full length piles and 2 broken piles were drawn, and 2 broken piles cut off flush with the riverbed by the contractor of the pier to allow the steamer to run alongside the wharf to take in patients while the bridge [pier] was being erected, and 8 full-length piles were drawn which came in the way of the pier. 7 full length piles and 4 broken piles were still standing on the upper part of the bridge [pier], which had originally been placed there for securing timber alongside, but which the M.A.B. were being charged for by the Conservancy.
- **Collision**: on 6th April during a gale, the sailing barge Portland collided with the Red Cross, damaging the starboard paddle box and breaking the paddle wheel.
- **Toilet cisterns at pier**: when the waiting rooms were erected at South Wharf, cisterns and pipes were fitted to the water closets at the pier, but no supply pipes to the cisterns, '… and the pans have hitherto been flushed by buckets of water...' Recommends supply pipes be fitted to cisterns.
- **Injured pierman returns, on light duties: George Fell** returned to work after his fractured kneecap accident, but was only able to carry out light duties, and was on half pay. Charles asks the Committee for advice on what to do with the Assistant Pierman not being able to carry out his full duties. **Thomas Lanyon**, temporary Assistant Pierman who'd been covering his job, resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 8. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**May 9, 1887**

- **Old piling at South Wharf:** has been informed by Thames Conservancy of the rental costs of the piling, specified as 'old piles, 80 years in the ground' and 'jetty & bridge piles at present'. Makes plans to draw the unnecessary old piles from ground. [see 25 April 1887]
- **Collision**: as the Red Cross was being taken out of dry dock after examination, 'the tide carried her athwart a barge damaging two of her plates'.

- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 2. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**May 23, 1887**
- **Unauthorised mooring**: had given notice to 'the persons whose property was made fast to the old piles at the South Wharf and the lashings for same have since been removed…'
- **Annual leave for staff:** Superintendent, Clerk, Captain and Piermasters given 14 days. All other staff given 10 days.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**June 6, 1887**
- **Bedding for steamers**: Matron of Hospital Ships came to South Wharf to 'go through the bedding … [?] of the steamers with me'.
- **Use of former stables**: 'In order to further utilise the stables at South Wharf I have erected a partition … across 2 of the stalls nearest to the oil store. By this means, I am enabled to keep metal [& rope?] under more sure protection.'
- **Resignation of Henry Harvey, Master of the Steamers**: (now working as mate) gave notice to leave – 'I must say that I regret his leaving as he is a thoroughly hard working man and a most reliable Master.' Replacement needed – current crew not suitable as they '… are not sufficiently experienced to take charge in dirty weather, or should anything out of the ordinary occur.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 2.

**June 17, 1887**
- **Drawing [removing] of old piles from South Wharf**: completed; the M.A.B. would no longer have to pay the Conservancy for their rental.
- **New Master**: **William George Punter** appointed; 6 years a mate and 10 years a master with the Steam Boat Company, well recommended. (To replace **Henry Harvey**)
- **Staff uniform**: reports that the uniform provided for Master of Steamer was unsuitable for summer.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**July 4, 1887**
- **New Master William George Punter:** commenced service as Master (though temporarily working as mate since 2nd master not currently needed).
- **Injured deckhand: James Dixon** accidentally fell down ventilator on the hulk, slightly injuring his groin – sent on his annual leave 'in order that he might lay up'.
- **Official visit by Dr Fritz Salzer**, Austrian Medical Officer – given tour of wharves and R.A.S.
- **No. of patients** taken to and from Hospital Ships = 0.

**August 1, 1887**
- **Coal delivery problems**: problems getting coal for the steamers delivered when required.
- **No. of patients** taken to and from Hospital Ships = 0.

**September 12, 1887**
- **Broken window**: 'During my absence on leave **Captain Livett** reported that one of the large squares of glass in the front window of his house had been broken – I append the correspondence between Mr **Weir** (Clerk of the River Service) and the father of the boy who broke the glass.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 5. Recovered cases brought back = 2.

**September 26, 1887**
- **Broken window**: 'With reference to your instructions directing me to obtain a summons against the boy who broke the pane of glass in the front of Captain Livett's house, after obtaining the evidence preparatory to taking out the summons, **Captain Livett** requested to be allowed to replace the glass at his own expense as his wife did not like attending the court to give evidence…' No further action taken therefore.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 1.

**October 10, 1887**
- **Stoker sick: William Parker,** stoker, off work with rheumatism.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 2. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**October 24, 1887**

- **Coal supply problems:** problems with the coal co. delivering the correct quality coal for steamers.
- **Pierman sneaks off work: George Fell,** Asst. Pierman, absent from duty for about 15 hours when sent to North Wharf to do duty as night watchman. When challenged, said he wanted to resign.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 3. Recovered cases brought back = 0.

**November 7, 1887**

- **Pierman transferred: Joseph Waller,** Asst. Pierman at West Wharf, was transferred to South Wharf to replace **George Fell.**
- **Collision:** a barge collided with the Albert Victor at North Wharf while the crew was busy disembarking patients and staff, damaging one of the plates on her port quarter.
- **Visit by Dr Bridges**, Local Government Board Inspector, to South Wharf.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 9. Recovered cases brought back = 3.

**November 21, 1887**

- **Late journey to Long Reach**: on 11th Nov, a patient arrived at South Wharf at 9.50pm, and a messenger was sent to get the crew from their homes as they had already been dismissed for the day. The vessel left at 11.30pm and returned at 2.45am next day. 'I wish to draw the attention of Committee to the fact that as the crew live in different parts of Deptford and Rotherhithe, when they are once dismissed for the night in a case of this description occurring again, a serious difficulty might arise. Great credit is due to the crew in getting the vessel away so smartly, and as they were on duty from 7am on the 11th till 3am on the 12th inst. and were again on duty at 7am the same day, I would recommend that they be paid ½ a day overtime for this instead of ¼ day.'
- **Difficulties of workmen and vaccination**: 'I desire also to draw the attention of Committee to the difficulty under which I labour with respect to the vaccination of workmen engaged under contract for work at the Wharves – Dr Birdwood cannot call at the Wharves as may be convenient and if I send the men down in a steamer when running a whole day's work is lost…' Gives examples, including his current problem of getting the pier painted as the contractor was unable to get men who could produce certificates of vaccination.
- **Fog delay**: on the 15th the Red Cross couldn't return from the hospital ships that night owing to fog.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 4. Recovered cases brought back = 2.

**December 5, 1887**

- **Description of wait for late patient**: one patient was on board the steamer ready to go, when they were notified by phone to hold the steamer to wait for a second patient on their way by ambulance. After waiting until evening and not having heard further, 'I gave orders for the steamer to start with the patient already on board and almost immediately heard the whistle of the ambulance driver – I at once stopped the steamer to take in the second patient…' The steamer arrived back at South Wharf at 2.50am. Asks the Committee about extra pay for staff in these cases. Was currently giving orders that if the steamer left South Wharf after 8pm, it was to stay at Long Reach for the night and return at 7am the next day 'in order to prevent the men being so long employed on any one day.'
- **Coal deliveries:** further problems with this.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 4. Recovered cases brought back = 7.

# 1887 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 311 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank; **Morgan**, Samuel |
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Kelly**, William Alfred; **Livett**, George |

# 1888

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Annual Reports of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc] for the year 1888

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1888; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1578)

Page 46

- **Smallpox diagnoses**: 65 patients admitted to hospital ships, 5 of which were found not to have smallpox.

Page 137

- **Conveyed 847 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  - Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 62
  - Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 63
  - Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 246
  - Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 476
- **Ambulance steamers listed**: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Swallow, Marguerite

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1888-89 Vol. XXII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1888-89)

No specific references to South Wharf found.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Service / Committee:**

**January 16, 1888**

- **Pier maintenance:** scraping and painting of pier completed
- **Coal delivery problems**: further problems in getting coal for steamers delivered at the right time.
- **Red Cross grounded**: as the Red Cross was returning from Long Reach, due to dense fog it grounded near Greenwich, but floated off in about half an hour thanks to the incoming tide.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 6. Recovered cases brought back = 9.

**January 1888** [no date of the month given – presumably end of the month]

- **Coal delivery problems** continuing.
- **Furnace refuse used for infill**: was offered 2 free barge loads of furnace refuse – used it to fill in 'the hollow space between the roadway to the Receiving Shed and the face of the wharf…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 5. Recovered cases brought back = 2.

**February 27 [?] 1888**

- **Collision**: the barge Arun of Pimlico was drifting along the river unmanned when it collided with the Marguerite at its mooring at South Wharf, causing moderate damage.
- **Coal delivery problems**: more problems with delayed coal deliveries, meaning steamers sometimes had insufficient coal to be able to make further journeys.

- **Nurse / Cleaner Ann Banks**: came from the Hospital Ships to clean the 'hospitals' of the steamers; was given the room at 315 Rotherhithe St formerly used by Asst. Nurse **Neighbour**; 'she making her own arrangement with **Mrs Percival** the wife of the Gate Porter at No. 315 as to cooking etc.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 4. Recovered cases brought back = 5

**April 9, 1888**

- **Planned work at South Wharf:** gives estimate for the cost of building a slipway, removing the sheds over the old saw pits, and shifting the crane at South Wharf.
- **Coal delivery problems:** another delayed coal delivery
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 12. Recovered cases brought back = 15

**April 23, 1888**

- **Obstructions on riverbed at moorings**: when sounding the riverbed alongside the mooring hulk, he found a large mooring shackle with chain cable attached – realised this was probably what had caused damage to the hull of the Maltese Cross. Had it hoisted out – a large granite block about 4 feet square was attached. Also found large flattish stones on the riverbed at the end of the pier – suggests the riverbed be further investigated by an 'under water Waterman' and any hard substances removed to avoid damage to the vessels at very low spring tides.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 12. Recovered cases brought back = [not stated]

**June 4, 1888**

- **Long-serving Gate Porter:** in mentioning the planning painting of the houses on Rotherhithe St, states 'I am informed by the Gate Porter [**Mr Percival**?] who has resided upon the premises for the last 50 years that it is now 9 years since this work was last painted.'
- **Pierman resigns: Joseph Waller**, Assistant Pierman gave notice of his resignation.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 13

**June 18, 1888**

- **Pierman transferred: William Foster** transferred from West Wharf to work as Assistant Pierman.
- **Collision**: on 9th June the barge Caroline collided with the Red Cross, causing some damage.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = 3

**July 16, 1888**

- **Grievance about surveying hospital ship boiler**: surveyed the Castalia's boiler at the Committee's request, but points out 'that surveying a boiler is not such a simple matter as the term may suggest, and is by no means an agreeable duty – I have on several occasions been called upon to perform different kinds of professional work for the Hospital Ships, and which is entirely outside the boundary of my appointment. I have always been very pleased to do anything which may be of service to the Managers, but I think that the remuneration should be something more than the responsibility attaching to that work.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 2. Recovered cases brought back = 1

**July 30, 1888**

- **Collision**: on 12th July the barge I*ndustry* 'fouled' the Marguerite and damaged the guard irons of the figure head.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1. Recovered cases brought back = 0

**August 27, 1888**

- **Threatened raid at West Wharf by Lammas Rights Association**: on 4th August the Piermaster at West Wharf reported it was expected that a raid would be made on West Wharf by the Lammas Rights Association. He (Charles) went to the wharf and waited till 6.30pm, and then was informed that it probably wouldn't take place till the 13th. 'Having on the 9th inst. obtained one of the hand bills in circulation by this Association, I immediately forwarded it to the Clerks of the Board requesting instructions… on the 13th inst. and for several subsequent days I attended at the time it was expected damage would be done and on the 18th inst. reported by letter what took place to the Clerks of the Board.' [No further info given]

- **Collision**: 'Joseph Ray of Newcastle on Tyne, being heavily laden with timber, broke away from her moorings in the slipway at Messrs Gabriels Wharf and drove on to the Red Cross' – severely damaged the bulwarks and hull.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 3. Recovered cases brought back = 2

**October 22, 1888**

- **Collision**: on 12th October, the barge Cod collided with the Maltese Cross at its mooring, and broke the bollard.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = [not stated]

**November 5, 1888**

- **Suggested timetable change**: with the current timetable, the steamers going to the Hospital Ships were obliged to remain alongside the ships with steam from 2 ½ - 2 ¾ hours doing nothing. To save coal and so that the crew could be at South Wharf for longer to work on the vessels, he suggests:
  - Current timetable: leaving South Wharf at 9.30am, leaving North Wharf at 10.30am, leaving hospital ships at 2.15pm.
  - Suggested new timetable:
    Saturdays: leave South Wharf 12 noon, leave North Wharf 12.30pm, leave hospital ships 2.15pm. Monday: leave South Wharf 10am, leave North Wharf 10.30am, leave Hospital Ships after discharging passengers.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = [not stated]

**November 19, 1888**

- **Damage to West Wharf**: at 3.30am on 3rd November a barge fouled the dummy at West Wharf, bending 4 iron stanchions and fracturing the flagstaff – 'the Assistant Pierman at the time was at the head of the Wharf and being foggy the barge got away.'
- **Collision**: on 9th November the barge Hope fouled the Red Cross and did some damage.
- **New steamer timetable**: on Nov 10th the new steamer timetable was adopted [see Nov 5 1888]
- **Two collisions with Red Cross on same day**: on 13th November at 8.20am a barge collided with the Red Cross moored to the pier causing some damage, and at 10.45am the same day the sailing barge Sisters also collided with the Red Cross, causing further damage.
- **Branding of M.A.B. tools**: 'I would suggest to Committee that in future the handles of all shovels, spades and other implements with wooden handles be properly branded with the letters M.A.B.'

**December 3 [?] 1888**

- **Collision**: on 22nd Nov the barge Magdalena fouled the Maltese Cross, causing slight damage.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0. Recovered cases brought back = [not stated]

**December 31, 1888**

- **Nightwatchman resigned: William Perkins,** Nightwatchman on the Steamers resigned.
- **Seasonal uniforms**: the current times laid down for inspection and issue of uniform clothing are Xmas and Midsummer each year – asks if this can be changed to 1st October and 1st April, 'as at present by the time the clothing is issued the season is very far advanced'.
- **Collision at South Wharf**: on 19th December he reports that as soon as the fog had lifted on the river all the steamers at the mouth of the river made for the docks 'and in doing so the steam ship 'River Derwent' of Glasgow, after as I am informed having sunk a vessel just below Blackwall Reach, fouled the hulk Benmore and the Maltese Cross secured alongside the hulk, doing slight damage to the Maltese Cross but the forward bitts of the hulk were torn away, the after bitts damaged and the deck of the hulk shook.' [See May 6 1889]

# 1888 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |

# 1889

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1889 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1889; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1579)

Page 46

- **5 smallpox patients admitted to the hospital ships**, all of whom had been infected abroad or by contact with people infected abroad. 3 of these were ships' firemen (from different ships).

Page 132

- **Ambulance steamers and vessels**: Steam-launch Marguerite sold. Remaining vessels: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, 'steam pinnace' Swallow.
- **Smallpox diagnoses**: 25 people 'certified to be suffering from smallpox' conveyed to hospital ships – no fewer than 20 of these were found not to have smallpox and returned home.

Page 134

- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £3,586 + maintenance of steamers £142

Page 137

- **Conveyed 505 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 5
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 4
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 51
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 445

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1889-90 Vol. XXIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1889-90)

No specific references to South Wharf found, other than routine painting work.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Service Committee:**

**January 14, 1889**

- **Nightwatchman resigned: William Perkins,** Nightwatchman on Steamers resigned but was persuaded to stay till the 21st as replacement hadn't been found.

**January 28, 1889**

- **New nightwatchman scared of catching smallpox**: **James Cooper** was engaged as night-watchman on the steamers; was a former leading seaman in the Royal Navy. 'On the 23rd inst. Cooper came to me and reported that he did not feel at all well and that he desired to relinquish his appointment – upon interrogating the man I found that he was afraid of catching small pox and in consequence I on the 24th inst. engaged **Henry Horton**, Able Seaman late Royal Navy who was discharged from the Service on the 12st inst. his period of service having expired – he is 28 years of

age, married and has one child – his character from the Service is marked 'Very Good' and ability as a Seaman also very good. Both these men have been vaccinated by the Medical Superintendent at the Hospital Ships.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1; no. of patients returned = [not stated]

**February 11, 1889**
- **Work accident**: 'On the 8th inst. while **William Punter** (mate of the steamers) was assisting in placing some pieces of old piles to rest some iron tanks upon, and where the last piece was being lowered into its place, being at the time about 6 feet from the ground, the sling carried away and in falling one end of the piece struck this man's shoulder and broke his collar bone and two of his ribs – I at once sent the man to Guy's Hospital where he is retained as an inpatient - under the circumstances I would ask we be allowed to pay this man's wages as usual and that I may be allowed to engage a deck hand in his place as occasion may be necessary.'

**March 11, 1889**
- **William Punter recovering from accident**: discharged from Guys Hospital [see 11 Feb 1889]
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1; no. of patients returned = 1

**April 8, 1889**
- **Disposal of wheeled litters and stretchers:** Dr Steele, Medical Superintendent of Guys Hospital visited to inspect the wheeled litters and stretchers that they were considering disposing of.
- **Engine failure**: On the 25th March as the Swallow was going to Long Reach the engine failed due to something falling into it – they continued to Long Reach using the tide only. The crew borrowed a boat from the Hospital Ships and used that to tow the Swallow back to South Wharf.
- **William Punter back to work after accident**: was assessed by Guys Hospital as being fit for light duty and was asked to return to work.
- **Medical and mayoral visitors**: on 6th April South Wharf was visited by Dr Montizambert of Montreal, Canada, the Mayor of Cardiff, the ex-mayor Mr Jones, Dr Walford Medical Officer of Health, and Mr Harpur; all were shown the method of transporting patients.
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1; no. of patients returned = 1

**May 6, 1889**
- **Collision**: On 10th April a sailing barge struck the Albert Victor with her rudder and indented 2 of the plates.
- **Dispute about repairs to steamers**: 'The Captain of the 'River Derwent' (Steam Ship) being of opinion that more work had been done to the Hulk 'Benmore' and the 'Maltese Cross' than had been damaged by his vessel on the 19th December last. On the 16th ult. the Captain and Mate of the SS River Derwent and apparently a surveyor called at South Wharf to inspect the work but as neither of them had been re-vaccinated I declined to allow them on board – but requested permission from the Clerk of the Board under the peculiar circumstances to allow these officers to inspect the work, which was granted.' A referee was appointed through the insurance company to decide the case. [ See Dec 31 1888]
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 0; no. of patients returned = 1

**May 20, 1889**
- **Nightwatchman resigns: Charles Wickham,** nightwatchman on steamers, gave notice to resign.

**June 3, 1889**
- **New nightwatchman: Robert Herd** engaged as nightwatchman on steamers – age 41, single, formerly a Chief Boatswain's Mate in the Royal Navy. Character exemplary and promoted for gallantry on the field.

**July 1, 1889**
- **Speeding vessel causes rope damage**: 'On the 16th ult., the 'Queen of the Orwell' belonging to the Victoria Steam Boat Association went past the vessels attached to the dummy and hulk at such a rate as to carry away the hawsers securing the 'Red Cross' and 'Albert Victor' of their moorings and also the stern rope of the 'Maltese Cross'. Insurance claim made for replacement of ropes.

**Sept 9, 1889**

- **Lammas Rights at West Wharf:** 'I have to report that on the 24th Aug a Mr Bull called at the West Wharf and asked the Piermaster to allow him to bring one of his horses to graze upon the Wharf under what he termed the Lammas Rights. On the Piermaster refusing to do so Mr Bull said if he (the Piermaster) did not open the gates he would be obliged to force an entrance by breaking down the fence. The Piermaster replied that should he attempt to do so he would call in the police and take his name and address – Mr Bull said he had no objection to giving his name and address – he then left, stating he would call again in the course of a week – he came again on the 31st ult. about 6.30pm and asked for his cattle to be allowed to graze upon the Wharf and was again refused – he then stated that he would come again very shortly to break down the fence but that he would give 24 hours notice before doing so – he has not been since that date.'
- **Deckhand ill, and how to assess whether staff are well enough to work: James Dixon,** Deckhand**,** off work with tonsillitis. Queries how to know whether a man is unwell enough to be off duty due to illness – suggests if anyone becoming ill goes to the nearest M.A.B. hospital for their assessment and care 'and that a deduction be made accordingly in his pay for his subsistence.'

**September 23, 1889**

- **Deckhand queries non-payment while ill:** mentions a letter from **James Dixon**, Deckhand, related to stoppage of pay for absence through illness.
- **West Wharf Lammas Rights**: 'Relative to the claim of the Lammas Rights Association at Fulham – a Mr Heasly [?] has obtained an interim injunction to restrain Mr Bull and others from doing further damage. The motion has been ordered to stand over till Wednesday next 25 inst. when it will be heard by Baron Pollock. Mr Bull and others have undertaken not to do further damage in the meantime.'

**October 21, 1889**

- **Nurse / cleaner resigns:** Assistant Nurse **Banks** '…who is employed as Cleaner of the Hospitals of the Steamers in addition to her duty as Asst. Nurse has given notice to resign….' [See 4 Nov 1889]

**November 4, 1889**

- **Arrest of bigamous nightwatchman who'd married Assistant Nurse**: 'On the same date [22nd Oct] at 9.0pm **Robert Herd** nightwatchman on the Hulk at South Wharf was arrested by the Plymouth Police for non-maintenance of his 3 children. He returned to the South Wharf on the 26th ult. – owing to his having been arrested and to the fact that he had only a few days previously contracted a marriage with the Asst. Nurse at the Wharf it being very doubtful whether his first wife was not alive. I suspended this man from duty pending the instruction of Committee. On the 30th ult. Robert Herd sent in his resignation stating that he was at work elsewhere. During this man's absence I temporarily engaged **Benjamin Ashdown** a Waterman aged 55 years … and ask to be allowed to retain this man till such time as a younger and more suitable man can be attained.'
- **Asst. Nurse Banks** having resigned, left on the 29th Oct. [See above report for likely reason].
- **Boat drifts onto Benmore**: steam boat Citizen broke down by Commercial Dock Pier (about 200 yards away) and drifted on to the hulk – no damage was done other than carrying away a rope.

**November 18, 1889**

- **New Asst. Nurse / Cleaner: Eliza Cheasley** employed as Asst. Nurse for service on the steamers as Nurse and Cleaner, to replace Nurse Banks.
- **New nightwatchman: James Smith** employed as Nightwatchman. Aged 23 years, single, a former Able Seaman in the Navy. 'Character and qualification very good … This man has had smallpox.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1

**December 16, 1889**

- **Collision while loading coal**: while the Red Cross was secured to a coal barge at Messrs Harrison's coal pier, a barge collided with it, doing minor damage.
- **Collision**: S.S. Lena when being towed up the river fouled the Albert Victor causing some damage.
- **Fog delay**: Maltese Cross prevented from going to Hospital Ships due to fog the previous Saturday.

## 1889 Electoral Register: No listing of any South Wharf addresses found.

# 1890

***Minimal smallpox cases; clerk absconds with money***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1890 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1890; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1580)

Pages 55, 151

- **Smallpox admissions**: 26 patients admitted during the year. Of the 49 sent to the hospitals, only 27 turned out to actually be smallpox.

Pages 155-156

- **Ambulance steamers listed**: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, 'steam pinnace' Swallow.
- **Fog, ice and accidents**: 'Notwithstanding the unusual prevalence of fog towards the end of the year, and the presence in the river of great quantities of ice, which were the cause of numerous accidents, all requisite service has been conducted with punctuality and safety, and in no instance have the Managers' steamers caused damage to any other vessel or craft. Several collisions have occurred between barges and other craft and the steamers while lying at their moorings at South Wharf.'
- **Conveyed 428 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 26
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 25
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 38
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 339
- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £3,515 + steamer maintenance £308

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1890-91 Vol. XXIV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1890-91)

No specific mention of South Wharf found.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1885-90

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/001)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Service / Committee:**

**January 13, 1890**

- **Staff off sick: William Foster,** Asst. Pierman - 'I received a letter from the person in whose house he was, stating that he was very ill in bed with cold and severe pains in his lower limbs – I sent the Piermaster to the address given and he found the man in bed and apparently very ill…'
  **Charles Johnstone,** Carpenter, also off work similarly sick. 'I have not paid either of these men for the time they were away ill and ask for instructions as to whether they are to be paid for the time they were away. Both are very good men and very hard working and I have no reason to doubt the fact their being too ill to work.'
- **Collision:** on 7th Jan a barge fouled the port bow of the Red Cross, damaging one of the plates.
- **Marguerite sold**: finally taken away by new owners.

**January 27, 1890**

- **Damage to pontoon WC**: on 18 Jan due to a strong gale, chafing plate became loose from pier and tore into woodwork of the WC on the pontoon and broke the pan and seating.
- **Two barges collide with Maltese Cross**: on 22nd Jan at 11.30pm 'it blowing very hard at the time – two barges the James and the Margaret … in drifting up the river, there being no-one on board either of them at the time drove on to the bow of the Maltese Cross and indented one plate and damaged 3 ports…'
- **Captain G. Livett ill:** Captain Livett, Master of the Steamers, taken ill with epidemic influenza. 'I have only paid his wages up to the date of his being taken ill and wait your instructions as to paying him for the time he is absent through illness…'

**February 10, 1890**

- **Collision:** on 9th Feb at 2am two unmanned barges, the Medway and the Kalendar, were drifting upriver; the Medway collided with the Albert Victor, damaging two of the plates on the port bow.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2

**March 24, 1890**

- **Court case**: against Victoria Steam Boat Association for carrying away mooring ropes of steamers in June. Judgement given against the Steam Boat Association.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 4; recovered cases brought back = 1

**April 21, 1890**

- **Change of piermen: William Foster**, Asst Pierman, resigned; replaced with **James Meal**, formerly an Ordinary Seaman in the Merchant Navy.
- **Dead body in river**: 'On the 16 inst. **James Smith** Nightwatchman at South Wharf picked up a dead body (male) floating close to the Albert Victor – the body was towed to the shore alongside the Commercial Dock Pier and was handed over to the custody of the Police.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 6; recovered cases brought back = 7

**May 19, 1890**

- **Mooring of timber from Gabriels Wharf**: adjacent timber wharf (Tho. Gabriel & Sons) asked to be allowed to moor timber in front of a portion of the wharf.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2; recovered cases brought back = 1

**June 16, 1890**

- **Fire hydrants**: requests fire hydrants at all wharves, especially at South Wharf.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2; recovered cases brought back = [not stated]

**June 30, 1890**

- **Stoker sick: Joseph Jones**, Stoker, off sick with hepatic congestion and gastric irritation.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = [none stated]; recovered cases brought back = 6

**July 14, 1890**

- **Clerk Mr Weir absconds with all the money**: 'On my arrival at the office at South Wharf on Thursday morning 10th inst. a few minutes before 10am I found that my clerk had not arrived. I waited till 10.30am and of finding him still absent, I directed the Piermaster to go to his residence and enquire the cause of his absence. The Piermaster returned about 11.30am and informed me that Mr Weir (Clerk of the River Service) after having his tea the previous evening left the house and up to the time of the Piermaster leaving he (the Clerk) had not returned. As about 5.30pm on Wednesday evening (9th inst.) I had asked my Clerk to get me 2 guineas out of the Cash Box to pay the Carpenter of the River Service prior to his going on his annual leave – it occurred to me to look at my cash box and count the money – when I discovered that the bag containing £39 in gold (sovereigns) had been abstracted - I do not believe it could have been taken at any other time for the safe had not been opened since the previous Saturday (5th inst.) when I paid the wages, and as is my usual custom placed a chit in the cash box showing the actual money (gold, silver & bronze) in the box at that time. I immediately reported the matter to the Clerk of the Board and then gave notice to the Criminal Department at Scotland Yard … The detective who has the case in hand called upon me the following morning and obtained all requisite information but I regret to say

nothing has as yet been heard of him – He has also taken the sum of 8/7 being the balance of 10/- advanced by me to the Clerk to pay for stamps and telegrams during the month – I have to ask to be allowed to engage a Clerk in his stead - ’

- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0; recovered cases brought back = 1

**July 28, 1890**

- **New clerk: Mr Henry Osbourne** appointed**;** formerly a ship’s steward in the Navy; 39 years old and in receipt of a pension of £36 per annum; ‘he has an exemplary discharge and appears in every way a very suitable man.’

**September 22, 1890**

- **Damage from speeding steamer**: the steamer Philomel, on going downriver at full speed, caused such an in-draught that the Maltese Cross collided with the dolphin of the pier and broke some planks on the dolphin.
- **New nightwatchman: Henry Bird** engaged as nightwatchman; formerly a quarter master in the Navy. This was to replace **J. Smith** who was discharged at his own request.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1; recovered cases brought back = 1

**October 20, 1890**

- **Dismissal of lazy stoker**: ‘I have to report that **Joseph Jones** stoker absented himself from duty from the evening of the 12th inst. to the morning of the 15th inst. On his return he informed me that on Sunday evening (12th inst.) he went to Grays to collect some money, that he missed the last train and the next day he got drunk and the 2 following days he was ill - I suspended him from duty and for the following reason recommend that he be discharged -
  During the last 12 months I have repeatedly reprimanded this man for the manner in which he has performed his work – on the last occasion (about 3 months since) he was missed from his work and was found asleep in the engine room of one of the steamers upon which no work was being done – and his work at that time was on the deck of another steamer.
  On the previous Monday 6th inst. this man did not come to work till 8.30am being 1 ½ hours over his time – the excuse then made that he had been to Grays and had missed his train -
  The Captain of the Steamers has repeatedly complained of this man not doing a proper amount of work – and says that this man requires more watching than all the others put together, and that unless he is well looked after little or no work is done - ’ [Note in margin: ‘suspension confirmed, & J. Jones dismissed’]

**November 3, 1890**

- **Mystery man and abandoned boat**: ‘About 12 months since on a foggy night a man was found landing at South Wharf from a boat – as the man was on the Wharf the watchman allowed the man to go out of the gate – the following morning I gave directions that when the man came for the boat he was to be brought to me. This boat has never since been claimed nor can any trace of the man be found.’ The boat was sent to West Wharf for their use there.
- **Missing trousers of Joseph Jones**: ‘On examining the clothing of Joseph Jones, stoker, who was dismissed the service recently, I found one pair of serge trousers missing – I wrote this man, that he would not get the balance of his pay till these trousers were found and that if not found more serious notice would be taken.’ Mentions that he received a reply from Joseph Jones, but doesn’t specify the contents. Suggests that in future some distinguishing mark be placed in the seam of all trousers so they can tell whether they are M.A.B. property or not.
- **Collision with Red Cross**: the barge Ellen, in going upriver heavily laden, collided with the bow of the Red Cross and caused some damage.

**November 17, 1890**

- **Another collision with Red Cross**: on 4th November the barge Fanny collided with the Red Cross and caused some damage.

**December 1, 1890**

- **Yet another collision with the Red Cross**: on 26 November the barge Dick collided with the Red Cross and caused yet more damage.

**December 14, 1890**

- **Forced entry at West Wharf**: 'On the 1st inst. a forcible entry was made into the grounds of the West Wharf … I submit cuttings from local papers as to same.'
- **Damp at 315 Rotherhithe St**: the house in which the engineer of the steamers lives; floorboards on the ground floor were very decayed, and ground underneath found to be very moist.

# 1890 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 311 Rotherhithe St (South Wharf) | **Foster,** William; **Gardner**, Frank; **Morgan**, Samuel |
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Kelly**, William Alfred; **Livett**, George |

# 1891

***Minimal smallpox cases; another clerk leaves in bad circumstances***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1891 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1891; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1581)

Page 57

- **63 patients admitted to hospital ships**; a large proportion being dock officials and labourers or their relatives.

Page 155

- **Smallpox admissions**: 90 patients conveyed to hospital ships, only 64 turned out to have smallpox.

Page 160

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed:** Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Swallow.
- **New staff changing rooms:** building containing 2 rooms and bathroom being constructed for staff to change clothing when coming and going from wharf.
- **Steamer crews - accommodation**: mention of steamer crews residing at South Wharf
- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £3774 + £245 steamer maintenance.

Page 163

- **Conveyed 774 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 63
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 53
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 155
  Staff etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 503

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1891-92 Vol. XXV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1891-92)

Page 159

- **Recommendation of raise for Superintendent Charles Thomson:** '...Your Committee recommends that the salary of Mr. Charles Thomson, the Superintendent of the River Service, be increased … from £200 to £300 per annum, with an allowance, as at present, of 20s per week in lieu of unfurnished house, coals, and gas. In 1885, when your Committee made their first selection for this appointment, they were to some extent ignorant of the scope of the duties which the holder would be called upon to perform, and fixed a salary which they cannot now regard as adequate. The duties of the Superintendent of the River Service can only be efficiently carried out by one who combines firm discipline with administrative capacity with the experience and technical knowledge of a fully qualified marine engineer. These qualifications Mr. Thomson possesses in a high degree. The value of his service may be estimated by the fact that the cost of repairs to the steamers has averaged during the past four years £736 per annum less than in the years prior to his appointment; and that the consumption of coal per mile per horse power is not more than two-thirds of what it was during the earlier period. This great reduction is mainly due to the introduction by Mr. Thomson of improvements in the machinery and boilers; and its effect upon the expenditure in a future epidemic will be appreciated when it is remembered that the distance from the West Wharf to the Hospital Ships and back is 58 miles...' [from minutes of 30 May 1891]

Page 323

- **Changing rooms for male staff**: plans made for addition of 2 rooms and bathroom for men to change their clothing when going on and off duty.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 12, 1891**

- **New stoker: Henry Littlefield** employed as stoker to replace **Joseph Jones.**
- **Collision**: barge Henry collided with Red Cross on 16th Dec damaging part of the paddle wheel.
- **Ice floes in river and risk of damage to steamer**: due to ice floes and the fact that the Maltese Cross 'just takes the ground at low water', there was a danger of it settling on ice and causing damage, so it was temporarily moved to Commercial Dock Basin.
- **Recommendation of piles to be added to piers**: he recommends 2 piles be driven at the end of the bridge nearest the dummy at each of the wharves, in case the dummys need to be removed due to ice or repair work, so that there would be something to take the weight of the end of the bridge that rests on the dummy.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1

**January 26, 1891**

- **Collision**: on 12th Jan the SS Walker collided with the Albert Victor while moored at South Wharf and caused some damage.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships: [not stated]. Recovered patients brought back = 1

**April 6, 1891**

- **Collision alongside hospital ships**: on 25th March, as the Red Cross was coming alongside the hospital ships, part of the paddle wheel was carried away; it was put in dry dock for repair.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 6.

**April 20, 1891**

- **Suggestion of flag to summon back steamers:** 'At present I have no means of recalling a steamer should she have left either of the wharves and be in sight. I have therefore requisitioned 3 blue pennants so that one may be hoisted at either wharf as a signal to recall the steamer, should she be required.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 9. Recovered patients brought back = 1

**May 4, 1891**

- **Stoker sick: William Parker**, stoker, off sick with acute rheumatism.
- **Changing room for male staff**: recommends a brick or corrugated iron building be erected for the crew of the steamer to change their clothing, as at present the only place for them to do this was a small cabin in the bow of the hulk, which they also used to warm their food and take their meals.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 12. Recovered patients brought back = 5

**May 30 [?] 1891**

- **New ward maid: Mary Ann Biggs** appointed as ward maid to assist the nurse at South Wharf in cleaning the hospitals and hospital store rooms [presumably hospital sections of the steamers?]. She was given a room at 315 Rotherhithe Street, where the nurse also lived.
- **Mate off sick: William Punter**, Mate of the Steamers, off sick with 'influenza epidemic'.
- **Washing out of road ambulances**: 'It has always been the practice to wash out the Ambulance which brings a patient to the wharves with carbolic soap and water, but as the nurse with her infected clothing and also the blankets in which the patient has been brought to the Wharf are taken away in the Ambulance directly after the carriage has been washed out, I would suggest that the washing out of the ambulances be discontinued – the Superintendent of the South Eastern

Ambulance Station has informed me that the ambulance carriages are always disinfected on their return to the yard.'

- **Damage to steamer at hospital ships**: on running alongside the stage on the side of the Atlas, the starboard curtain board was damaged slightly.
- **Dramatic showdown with clerk Henry Osbourne**: [Please note that the inconsistent speech marks in this report are as per the original.]
  'On the 29th ult. upon examining the fair specification for the Change Rooms and Bath Room which my Clerk had copied from the rough draft, I had occasion to correct some mistakes and one or two words spelt with capital instead of ordinary letters – while these mistakes were being corrected, the Gate Porter (**Percival**) came to me to report that 2 men had come to put the name boards on the Albert Victor – I remarked to my Clerk that the gate porter did not remain long enough for me to tell him what I wanted, when in a most excited manner, my Clerk rose from his chair and said "Yes and I don't damn well intend to stay any longer than I can help". I asked him what he meant by speaking to me in that manner when he said You are a low mean grasping scoundrel Sir – "You have made every man's life a misery to him and it's a good job you don't live in Rotherhithe or you would have been damn well killed before this and I wouldn't mind doing it - "
  I went to the office door and told the Gate Porter to send Captain **Livett** to me.
  When I returned into the office my Clerk closed the door and said You always close the door of your room when you have anybody to talk to, and I'll not have any eavesdropper to hear what I have to say, you can send for who you like. "I shall not say anything in front of them – I know better than that. Why don't you send for **Gardner** he'd suit you better – you keep a diary of all that occurs and so do I and I'll produce it. I'll write to Sir E. Galsworthy the Chairman and to Mr Scovell.
  I said Mr Osborne I suspend you from duty at once when Osborne replied Oh! Yes, but I'm not going yet.
  Captain Livett then came into the office and I said to him: Captain Livett, Mr Osborn has called me a low mean scoundrel and I desire you to take notice of what is said.
  Mr Osborne said "I did not say it. You have no witnesses and my word is as good as yours."
  I replied that I had heard of men doing this kind of thing but never expected to experience it – and I again said Did you not tell me to my face that I was a low mean grasping scoundrel and that if I lived about here I would be killed –
  Osborne then said, one man had run away with money – he was to be the second to go and he supposed I would get a third.
  I then said Mr Osborne I suspend you from duty, please leave the office at once – the Committee will meet at the Eastern Ambulance Station on Monday next at 3 o'clock and I desire you to be there – he desired to know if he would be paid for going and I said he would. He asked me to pay him his wages but I said I would not do so till the matter had been placed before Committee.
  Under the above circumstances I ask for this man to be dismissed – and permission to engage another in his stead.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 22. Recovered patients brought back = 18

**June 15, 1891**

- **Pierman sick: J. Meal,** Asst. Pierman**,** had been sent to cover staff at West Wharf but came down with 'epidemic influenza'.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 3. Recovered patients brought back = 19

**June 29, 1891**

- **New clerk Thomas Haley**: started work on 16th June; on the following day was vaccinated at South-Eastern Hospital.
- **Deck hand sick: James Dixon**, deck hand, off sick with tonsillitis.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0. Recovered patients brought back = 3

**July 13, 1891**

- **Ambulance steamer causes damage to boat**: On 29th June the Red Cross caused slight damage to a waterman's boat – 'owing to a dead lock with barges … when close to the Tower Bridge the "Red Cross" was obliged to stop her engines and the eddy caused by the buttresses of the bridge caused the vessel to swing, and in swinging she slightly damaged a waterman's boat …'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 3. Recovered patients brought back = 2

**July 27, 1891**

- **Visitor from America**: on 25th July 'Dr Woodnall of the United States of America' visited South Wharf, was shown the wharf and steamers and taken on the Red Cross to the hospital ships.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0. Recovered patients brought back = 2

**October 1891** [no specific date given, but report seen and signed by the chairman on 5 Oct]

- **Visits from the Hygiene and Demography Association**: on 14 Aug the Maltese Cross picked up 52 members of this association and took them to South Wharf, where they inspected the site and were shown the procedures, and were then taken to the hospital ships; on the following day did the same – with another [?] party from the same association. On 19th Aug Dr Beutzies [?] of Norway, from the same association, also came for a visit. [This association wrote an excellent article about the operations of the R.A.S. following these visits, within their publication *Transactions of the Seventh International Congress of Hygiene and Demography*, published in 1892 – a copy is held in the Surrey Docks Farm history archives, or can be accessed online in the Wellcome Library catalogue.]
- **Sudden death of Nurse / Cleaner R. Cheaseley**: [name previously given as Eliza Cheasley] 'On the 20th August – Assistant Nurse & Cleaner R. Cheaseley was taken ill and was unable to perform her duty. She was visited by a local practitioner and on the 25th was seen by Dr Birdwood Medical Supt. of the Hospital Ships who directed her removal to Guy's Hospital and I regret to have to report that on the 15th Sept. Nurse Cheasely died.'
- **Ward maid discharged: Mary Ann Biggs**, ward maid, left on 1st Sept, having been given a month's notice. Had been temporarily employed to clean the hospital sections of the steamers.
- **Pierman transferred: J. Meal**, Asst. Pierman, sent to West Wharf to cover for the Asst. Pierman there who'd sprained his ankle.
- **Dead body found in paddle wheel**: 'On 17th inst. [Sept?], Night Watchman **H. Horton** at South Wharf on going his rounds at 5.30am discovered the dead body of a man in the paddle wheel of the "Albert Victor" – he hailed the Water Police who were near at the time and delivered the body over to them.'
- **Request for a new Asst. Nurse and Cleaner** 'in lieu of R. Cheasely (deceased) or a good strong woman would do for the purpose of keeping the hospitals clean…'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships since last report in July = 0.
  Recovered patients brought back = 1

**November 2, 1891**

- **New changing rooms**: building work had commenced.

**November 16, 1891**

- **Collision**: on 11th Nov the barge Samuel on coming upriver early morning collided with the port bow of the Red Cross, causing some damage to it.
- **Jam journey**: on 14th Nov the Red Cross went to Grays with 5 Cwt of jam from the Hospital ships.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1.

**November 30, 1891**

- **New changing rooms**: building work 'progressing very favourably and the work is being well done.'

**December 14, 1891**

- **Moveable dam**: a notice from the solicitor to the L.C.C. and a copy of an order issued to Messrs Peter Rolt & Co in 1882 was left at South Wharf, the notice requiring 'the moveable dam at South Wharf to be always fixed and maintained in its place at all times … the only moveable dam is that in connection with one of the cranes – but since my appointment I have built up round this crane and made the wharf perfectly secure from flooding even should this dam be left out at any time.'

# 1891 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 311 Rotherhithe St (South Wharf) | **Morgan**, Samuel; **Meal**, James; |
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |

# 1891 Census

Transcription of census, taken on 5 April, 1891, for South Wharf properties:

| | Name; Relation to head of household; Mar. Status; Age; Occupation; Birthplace |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **James C Dixon**; Head; Widower; 38; Waterman and Lighterman; Lewisham<br>Florence S Dixon; Daughter; 13; Scholar; Lewisham<br>Eleanor E Dixon; Daughter; 12; Scholar; Lewisham<br>Amy A Dixon; Daughter; 9; Scholar; Lewisham<br>James N Dixon; Son; 8; Scholar; Lewisham<br>William A Dixon; Son; 3; Scholar; Rotherhithe<br>Louise M **Mahoney**; Housekeeper; Married; 30; Housekeeper; Rotherhithe |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Richard Percival**; Head; Married; 73; Gatekeeper; Sutton at Hone, Kent<br>Ellen Percival; Wife; Married; 57; Plymouth, Devon<br>Richard Percival; Son; Single; 22; Delivery Clerk; Rotherhithe<br>George Percival; Son; Single; 19; Clerk; Rotherhithe<br>May Percival; Daughter; Single; 17; Rotherhithe<br>Edie Percival [Percival crossed out and replaced with Perkins]; Granddaughter; 4; Rotherhithe<br>Lily [?] **Cheasley**; Nurse; Married; 29; Nurse; Oxford |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **George Hambling**; Head; Married; 49; Driver on River Boat; Ipswich, Suffolk<br>Rachel Hambling; Wife; Married; 49; Claydon, Suffolk<br>Jessie Hambling; Daughter; Single; 18; Woolwich<br>George E Hambling; Son; Single; 15; Office Boy; Woolwich<br>Walter Hambling; Visitor; Married; 52; Chief Steward S.Ship; Ipswich, Suffolk |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **George Livett**; Head; Married; 41; Waterman; Greenwich<br>Mary Ann Livett; Wife; Married; 38; Woolwich<br>George Livett; Son; Single; 19; Waterman Apprentice; Woolwich<br>William Livett; Son; Single; 17; Waterman Apprentice; Woolwich<br>James Livett; Son; Single; 13; Messenger Boy; Woolwich<br>Marion Livett; Daughter; 11; Scholar; Woolwich<br>Edith Livett; Daughter; 9; Scholar; Woolwich<br>Robert Livett; Son; 7; Scholar; Woolwich<br>Arthur Livett; Son; 5; Scholar; Rotherhithe<br>Reuben Livett; Son; 4; Scholar; Rotherhithe<br>Hilda Livett; Daughter; 3; Rotherhithe |
| Benmore* | **Henry Bird**; crew; single; 40; Waterman; Enfield, Middlesex<br>*this was the vessel used as a mooring off the pier; Henry Bird lived on it as a watchman. |

# 1892

***New outbreak of smallpox;***
***new staff changing rooms completed; Dr Ricketts appointed.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1892 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1892; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1582)

Page 67 (First report by **Dr T. F. Ricketts** as Medical Superintendent)

- **Start of new epidemic:** 343 patients admitted to hospital ships during year. Only 23 of these turned out not to have smallpox. 30 patients died – mortality of 9%. Epidemic started in January.

Page 174

- **Appointment of Medical Officer**: 'Seven years have passed since Smallpox was epidemic in London; but its tendency to invade and re-establish itself in the metropolis was clearly observable in the past year.'
  'At this time [May] all patients were being removed to the South-Eastern Hospital for examination, and they necessarily, in many instances, had to be conveyed considerable distances. In order, therefore to lessen the length of the journeys, and to prepare for a possible large increase in numbers, the Committee decided to employ temporarily a Medical Officer for the River Ambulance Service, whose principal duty should be to inspect patients brought direct to the Wharves, with a view to revising the diagnosis in each case.'
  'With the sanction of the Managers, **Dr P.H. MacKellar**, who for many years was Medical Superintendent of the South-western Hospital, was selected for the post and entered on his duties on the 17th May'. (He was dispensed with on 12th August due to reduction in need).

Page 181

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Swallow
- **Second steamer crew**: hired 2nd crew temporarily for the steamers during outbreak
- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £4,830 + steamer maintenance £535.

Page 185

- **Conveyed 1,389 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 298
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 235
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 121
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 735

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1892-93 Vol. XXVI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1892-93)

Page 299

- **Dr P H MacKellar**, Medical Officer of the River Service, given one month's notice due to decline in smallpox cases. [Report dated July 11, 1892]

Page 359

- **Fire**: report of a fire in the oil stores at South Wharf on 5th August – goods damaged/destroyed to value of £87. Cause of fire not ascertained.

Page 433

- **Mr T. F. Ricketts appointed as temporary Medical Superintendent** of the Hospital Ships from 21 September 1892 - had previously been the Assistant Medical Officer at Gore Farm Hospital and previous to that Assistant Medical Officer at the South-Eastern Hospital. (Took over from Dr Birdwood) [from minutes of 17 September 1892]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**Jan 11, 1892**

- **More piling installed**: 4 additional piles driven at South Wharf, to support brow of pier in case the pontoon needed to be removed for repairs etc.
- **Collision**: barge no. 480 collided with Red Cross when at its moorings and caused damage to the paddle wheel; the staff were able to fix it themselves.
- **Charles Thomson – sprained ankle**: was off work himself after spraining his ankle when going on board the hulk on 1st Jan. All letters were sent by messenger to his private residence and gave work directions from there.
- **Albert Victor damaged**: when leaving Harrison's Coal Pier, the Albert Victor fouled a barge at the pier, slightly damaging one of her own plates, though causing no damage to the barge.
- **Deck hand sick: James Dixon**, Deck Hand, had been off sick with influenza.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 4. Recovered patients brought back = 1

**March 7, 1892**

- **Staff on jury service: George Livett**, Master of the Steamers, and **Richard Percival**, Gate Porter, who lived at 315 and 319 Rotherhithe St, were summoned to serve as jurors at the Old Bailey. 'Percival being 75 years of age and being under private medical treatment has obtained a medical certificate to exempt him from serving. Captain Livett has been obliged to attend.'
- **Piling work at South Wharf**: on returning from leave, he found that the contractor had used marginally smaller piles than that specified (gives exact measurements) – calculates how much less he should have to pay.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 5. Recovered patients brought back = 2

**April 4, 1892**

- **Crane**: mentions using the crane at South Wharf to re-place the cylinders and pistons in the Red Cross, which was brought up against the river wall. (One of the crane bases is still at South Wharf).
- **Fog delays**: on 26th March the Red Cross set off for the hospital ships in the evening with one patient on board, but had to return because of fog; went down the following morning instead.
- **Two collisions in two days**: on 28 March the sailing barge Shorne of Rochester collided with the Red Cross when it was at its mooring and damaged the port paddle wheel. On 29 March the sailing barge Hilda of Crayford collided with the Albert Victor when moored at South Wharf and damaged the starboard curtain board.
- **New nurse**: on 31st March **Nurse Bennett** arrived at South Wharf from the Hospital Ships to take up duty on board the ambulance steamers.
- **New deck hands employed**: **Henry Harvey**, formerly Master of the one of the steamers, and **James Liddy** – age 42, single, 26 years on the river and 4 years mate of the Victoria Steam Boat Association Steamers.
- **More beds needed**: only had sufficient beds in store for the Maltese Cross and Red Cross - total of 46. Suggests that 34 bed ticks be supplied 'and when requisite filled with hay chaff – when finished with (if required) the chaff could be burned and the bed ticks put into store – blankets would also be required for these beds, also bolsters & pillows.' [A tick is a basic mattress - a linen or cotton bag filled with feathers, straw, wool etc]
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 33. Recovered patients brought back = 3

**May 2, 1892**

- **New staff changing rooms**: building work all completed.
- **Two additional deck hands employed**: **John H. Griffiths**, age 27 - for 12 years working in lighters and steamers on the Thames, and **William Livett**, age 21 – for 5 years working in lighters and steamers as deck hand, and son of Captain George Livett, Master of the Steamers, and living with him in one of the houses on Rotherhithe St.
- **Collisions**: on 19 April a sailing barge (its name couldn't be distinguished in the dark) – collided with the Albert Victor and did some damage. On 28th April the S S Cyrus on leaving Barnards Wharf (Gabriel & Sons) adjacent, collided with the hulk Benmore and Maltese Cross, damaging the bows of each vessel, requiring both of them to go into dry dock.
- **Soda Water for patients**: 'Occasionally soda water is required for patients going down to the Hospital Ships who are unable to drink milk.' Asks whether the Hospitals Ships can supply him with a dozen bottles, or he be allowed to purchase it as necessary.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 32. Recovered patients brought back = 26

**May 16, 1892**

- **Deckhand acts as witness: James (J.E.) Liddy**, deck hand, required to attend court as a witness. Given leave, but not paid for the 6 days he was off.
- **Accommodation for Medical Officer**: a sitting room and bedroom were prepared for the use of a Medical Officer (if one was needed) at 315 Rotherhithe St; more furniture would be required but for the moment he had borrowed some from the 'subordinate staff quarters'.
- **Collision**: on 8th May the ketch R. Passmore collided with the Red Cross and carried away the rigging and did other minor damage.
- **Captain sick: George Livett** off sick due to attack of gout.
- **Drifting vessel**: a vessel at Gabriel's Wharf adjacent carried away her hawsers and slid out of the slipway; they had to move some of the ambulance steamers out the way to avoid possible damage.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 35. Recovered patients brought back = 19

**May 30, 1892**

- **Medical Officer for South Wharf**: On 17 May **Dr MacKellar** took over the duties of Medical Officer for R.A.S. – was accommodated at 315 Rotherhithe St, and arrangements made for **Mrs Percival,** wife of the Gate Porter, to cook for him in addition to cooking for the nurse and ward servant.
- **West Wharf brought into use**: 'In view of the West Wharf being required to be used for the reception of patients I would suggest that the Piermaster & Pierman at West Wharf be now provided with the uniform of the Board.'
- **Clerk Thomas Haley discharged:** given notice that his services would no longer be required. (No explanation given – simply states 'as per with your [the Committee's] instructions'.)
- **New housemaid: Martha Bowler**, age 20, single, engaged as housemaid for **Dr MacKellar** and to clean the rooms at no's 315 and 319 Rotherhithe St.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 51. Recovered patients brought back = 27

**June 13, 1892**

- **Search for new clerk:** 'I have not as yet succeeded in getting another clerk' after discharging Thomas Haley.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 27. Recovered patients brought back = 37
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 7

**July 11, 1892**

- **Dead body found in river**: on July 3 around 1.30pm, **Henry Littlefield**, stoker on duty, found the dead body of a man against the paddle wheel of the Albert Victor – given into the custody of the River Police at 2pm. Littlefield, and **Thomas New**, the stoker, were requested to attend the inquest.
- **Drunken Deck Hand**: 'On 9th inst. **John Griffiths** (Deck Hand) was granted leave of absence from 11.30am to 4.00pm - this man returned to the Wharf at 3.45pm and the Gate Porter states that at that time he was sober – Griffiths was not seen by **Captain Livett** till 6.00pm, when he was under the influence of liquor to such an extent as to be unable to properly perform his duty – Griffiths was ordered to leave the South Wharf and has not since put in an appearance.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 8. Recovered patients brought back = 36
  No. of patients without smallpox returned to their homes = 6

**August 8, 1892**

- **Reductions in staff**: crew numbers reduced; **Martha Bowler** the ward servant also given notice.
- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On the 29th inst. [ult.?] the S.S. Philomel owned by the General Steam Navigation Co. proceeded down the river at such a rate that the in-draught caused the Maltese Cross to collide with the piles of the dolphin at the lower end of the pier at South Wharf and also caused the pontoon to oscillate to such an extent as to damage the roof and framing of same over the pontoon.'
- **Engineer George Hambling fired**: On examining the machinery of the Albert Victor, he found the sight feed lubricator broken and repaired - 'Upon enquiring, I found it had been broken by G. Hambling Engineer, this damage had not been reported to me, nor had any mention been made of the repair in the Engineer's work book for this steamer. This is the third time to my knowledge that this man has done damage. …. [describes other incidents] …. On the reduction of the staff this month I gave this man the option of remaining on as Stoker which he accepted - On the 1st [?] inst. he was sent on annual leave and on the 3rd he came to my office the worse for liquor and sat down on a chair. I saw that the man was not sober and told him so and directed him to leave my office – when he replied "You are a S…..y" [?] in a very maudlin manner and on my again ordering him to leave the office he said he "would go when he pleased" - I went to the entrance to the office and told the Gate Porter to send the Piermaster and a man to me - Hambling then came out walked about 8 or 10 paces towards the storehouses, then turned round and walked out of the gate – I have once before reprimanded this man for being under the influence of liquor – under these circumstances I ask Committee to discharge him - '
- **Fire in oil store**: 'On 5th inst. on my arrival at the South Wharf at 9.30am I found that a fire had occurred in the oil store at the South Wharf – it was discovered at 5.45am by the Gate Porter – who at once obtained assistance and after getting several buckets filled with water the door of the oil store was opened and the water was thrown on to where the body of the fire appeared to be. After about 30 buckets of water were thrown the fire was put out. The cupboard in the Storehouse and a quantity of stores are damaged and destroyed by heat and smoke.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 4. Recovered patients brought back = 4

**August 22, 1892**

- **Engineer George Hambling leaves**: sent in his resignation, left on the 15th Aug. [see Aug 8 1892]
- **Fire damage**: assessed the cost of damage and loss due to the fire as £87 [see Aug 8 1892]
- **Lammas Rights at West Wharf**: 'On the 12th inst. the grounds at Fulham were perambulated under the Lammas Rights by Messrs W. J. Bull and W.B. Gingell of the London County Council and 2 constables – no demand was made to enter the West Wharf.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 4. Recovered patients brought back = 2

**September 5, 1892**

- **Nurse leaves**: the nurse who had been appointed to South Wharf from the Hospital Ships (**Nurse Bennett** – see April 4 1892) returned to service at the Hospital Ships. A nurse from the S.E. Hospital would now go down to the hospital ships with any patients sent to the wharves, as was the procedure previous to the recent outbreak.
- **Collision**: on 27th Aug, the sailing barge Henry of Rochester collided with the Red Cross when secured to the pontoon, causing slight damage.
- **Ward Servant discharged: Martha Bowler** discharged on 29th Aug.
- **New stoker**: engaged **Charles George Littlefield**, age 28, single, 'character very good', had been an engine driver and stoker with a wagon contractor for the Midland Railway in Kentish Town for 5 years, and an assistant to engine fitters for 2 years.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0. Recovered patients brought back = 4

**September 19, 1892**

- **Resignation of negligent pierman James Meal**: 'On the 17th inst. (while on my annual leave) I received a letter from the Clerk of the River Service informing me that the Asst. Pierman at South Wharf had been reported for sleeping away from the Wharf when it was his duty to remain at the Wharf. I consequently returned to South Wharf this morning when the Asst. Pierman acknowledged that the charge was correct. He has sent in his resignation which I herewith submit.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0. Recovered patients brought back = 1

**October 3, 1892**

- **New Asst. Pierman**: **Robert John Alfred Banham**, age 20, formerly worked at a leatherworks, and then as an ordinary seaman in S.S. Hilaria, then as a labourer in Surrey Commercial Docks.
- **Collision**: on 27th Sept the barge Alice collided with the Maltese Cross, damaging a plate.
- **Change of piermen: Samuel Morgan**, Pierman, gave a week's notice to resign. Replaced with **John W. Thomas**, who had been working as Asst. Pierman at North Wharf.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 2. Recovered patients brought back = 4

**October 17, 1892**

- **Collision**: on 4th Oct the sailing barge Kate collided with the Albert Victor and damaged the port curtain board.
- **Sickness of Ward Servant Elizabeth Hall**: on 6th Oct Elizabeth Hall, Ward Servant at South Wharf was taken ill with rheumatic fever; admitted to St Bartholomew's Hospital. 'I am informed that she is progressing as well as can be expected, but it being necessary to have someone to do the Ward Servant's work, I have temporarily engaged **Annie Brown**, age 27, single and for the last 4 years general servant with a Mr Schultz at Clapham, testimonial very good, pending Elizabeth Hall's return to duty – I ask to be allowed to pay Elizabeth Hall's wages during her illness – her allowance for board I have stopped -'
- **Recommends reducing number of deck hands**: 'I also recommend that the quarters now occupied by **J. Dixon** deck hand be allotted to Piermaster **F. Gardner** ...'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1

**October 31, 1892**

- **Sickness of Elizabeth Hall**, **Ward Servant**: he went to St Barts Hospital to check on her progress – 'I was informed by the Nursing Sister that she was convalescent - (in fact I saw her serving food to a patient.)' Didn't manage to see the physician, so left a note asking to be informed if she was fit to return to duty. [Says he received a reply, but this isn't included in the report].
- **Minor steamer collision**: on 21st Oct the Albert Victor caused slight damage to the Red Cross due to the very strong tide 'and the engines not getting away quickly'.
- **Deck hand William Livett made redundant:** was given notice, due to the need to reduce staff – William requested to leave straightaway so he could immediately take another job.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 2. Recovered patients brought back = 1

**November 14, 1892**

- **Staff problems at West Wharf**: 'On the 3rd inst. I received a report from the Piermaster at West Wharf that on three different occasions he had found **D. Birmingham** Asst. Pierman asleep on duty as night watchman. On the last occasion he was asleep in the waiting room with one gas jet alight and one turned on but not alight and the room strongly impregnated with gas, fortunately the ventilators were wide open. I went to West Wharf and interviewed the Asst. Pierman when he informed me that he found it impossible to keep awake during the night…' Tendered his resignation. Was temporarily replaced with **Henry Thomas Watson** as Asst. Pierman; there is mention of a report received by the Piermaster but this is not explained, however he continues: 'On asking Watson in what way he was made uncomfortable he told me he was harassed about, and when I asked him in what way he was harassed, he said he thought he was watched too much – As I was of opinion he was an undesirable man to retain I dispensed of his services Saturday last.'
- **Collision**: on the 7th Nov the barge Atlas collided with the Red Cross and damaged the bulwarks.
- **Delay caused by fog**: on 7th Nov the Maltese Cross, on returning from the hospital ships, had to anchor in Erith Reach for the night due to dense fog.
- **Collision with Benmore**: on 8th Nov the unmanned barge Raven collided with the Benmore and damaged the bulwarks; the barge was taken to the Customs House Pound.
- **Ward Servant Elizabeth Hall recovered**: returned to duty as Ward Servant 'and appears to be as well as ever.' Her temporary replacement was given notice to leave.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1. Recovered patients brought back = 2

**November 28, 1892**

- **Delay caused by fog**: the Albert Victor left South Wharf at 5.40pm with a patient on board; due to thick fog coming down had to anchor at Woolwich and continue the following morning.

- **Annie Brown discharged**: discharged as temporary Ward Servant, now that Elizabeth Hall back.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15. Recovered patients brought back = 0

**December 12, 1892**

- **Stranded nurse**: on 3rd Dec, 2 patients were taken to the hospital ships accompanied by a nurse from the S.E. Hospital – the ambulance was directed to return to South Wharf at 9.30pm for the nurse 'in the usual way' – the ambulance didn't arrive so she was accommodated overnight in the Piermaster's house.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 22. Recovered patients brought back = 8

# 1892 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 311 Rotherhithe St (South Wharf) | **Morgan**, Samuel; **Meal**, James |
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |

# 1893

***Smallpox epidemic; isolation shelters built.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1893 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1893; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1583)

Page 123

- **Smallpox admissions**: 2441 patients admitted to hospital ships during the year; 2360 of which were actually smallpox, of which deaths were 176, giving a mortality rate of 7.58% (lowest recorded mortality to date). A further 14 contracted smallpox at the hospital.

Page 153

- **Need for isolation shelters at South Wharf**: Report by **Dr T B Brooke**, Medical Officer of the R.A.S. Dr Brooke started his service on the 27th Jan 1893, at which time he recognized the need for an isolation hospital at the Wharf – doubtful cases were being sent to the South-eastern Hospital where it wasn't possible to isolate them effectively. Shelters were built at South Wharf for cases 'presenting doubtful symptoms' – 2 blocks were built, one of 2 wards with a kitchen, one of 4 wards with a kitchen, and a store room for each block. Each ward contained 1 bed, with lavatory.

Page 155

- **South Wharf admissions:** 1,688 patients admitted to South Wharf
- **Smallpox cases - vagrants:** 'In the first three months no fewer than 336 males were admitted and only 152 females. The males were principally those of the vagrant class, and came chiefly from common lodging houses and Salvation Army shelters.' (Page 248 mentions that the vagrants 'entered London from places in the provinces where the disease was prevalent.')
- **Night reception boat:** to avoid sending cases arriving late at night to the South-eastern Hospital, it was arranged from 5th June for a boat to lie alongside South Wharf all night for arriving patients.

Page 247

- **Isolation shelters**: 'The Committee came to the conclusion that it was highly desirable that the Board's Fever Hospitals should, as far as possible, be kept free from contact with smallpox, and that the isolation accommodation necessary for doubtful cases of smallpox should be provided at the South Wharf instead of, as heretofore, at the South-eastern Hospital… They consist of two detached corrugated iron buildings lined with wood – one, containing 4 separate rooms with a nurses' duty room; and the other, two separate rooms and a nurses' duty room ….'

Page 253 - 255

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Swallow.
- **New steamer ordered:** need for additional river ambulance identified; a new vessel was ordered and was in the process of being built.
- **Staff accommodation in Rotherhithe Street houses**: 'One (No. 315) of the four houses in Rotherhithe Street which adjoin this wharf and belong to the Managers, together with one room in No. 313, two rooms in No. 317, and one room in No. 319, have been set apart for the accommodation of the Medical Officer and the nurses and servants employed in connection with the Hospital Wards of the steamboats and the shelters for doubtful cases on the wharf. This arrangement is, however, in some respects unsatisfactory, and we have under consideration a proposal for the erection of special buildings for the accommodation of the Hospital staff.'
- **Third steamer crew** employed during busy period.
- **Cost of keeping night reception boat and need for small ward:** 'The cost of the staff is considerably increased by the existing necessity for keeping a boat alongside the South Wharf all night for the reception and accommodation of patients who may arrive too late in the evening for

transport to Long Reach. We think it would be more economical to construct for this purpose a small ward on shore.'

- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £7,483 + £819 steamer maintenance + £201 other maintenance

Page 259

- **Conveyed 10,652 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 2,364
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 2,053
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 2,195
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 4,040

## Metropolitan Asylums District - Board Minutes 1893-94 Vol. XXVII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAD 1893-94)

Pages 8, 11, 27

- **New patient shelter**: plans for observation shelter at South Wharf for cases of doubtful diagnosis.

Page 275

- **Medical Officer Dr D S Long** transferred from hospital ships and appointed temporarily as another medical officer to the River Service.

Page 490

- **Dr Thomas Frank Ricketts** recommended to be appointed as the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital Ships, a post he had held on a temporary basis since Sept 1892.

Page 752

- **Mr T. B. Brooke** appointed Medical Officer for the River Service in January 1893

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 9, 1893**

- **Collision**: on 15th Dec [?] the barge Maria collided with the Red Cross causing slight damage.
- **Delays caused by fog**: on 21st and 27th Dec the Maltese Cross was detained overnight at North Wharf due to dense fog; both times with 1-2 patients on board.
- **New deckhands employed: William Brown,** age 29, 'who for the last 10 years during the season has worked for the Steam Boat Association', and **William James Keep**, age 33, 'who from a boy has worked during the seasons for the same company … Both single men and very good workers.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 26 Recovered patients brought back = 17

**January 23, 1893**

- **New deck hand**: a further deck hand was employed, to form a second crew: **Charles Coppin**, age 23, single, formerly a deck hand in the Victoria Steam Boat Association.
- **Second crew** for steamers was formed, comprising:
  **William Punter,** Mate – as Captain **Henry Littlefield,** Stoker – as Engineer
  **Henry Harvey,** Deck Hand – as Mate **James Dixon & Charles Coppin** – as Deck Hands
- **New Ward Servant** employed**: Alice Plowman**, age 25, single, previously a General Servant.
- **Visit by Dr MacCombie**: on 18th Jan visited South Wharf 're isolation wards'.
- **Resignation of Clerk Mr H. Prestoe**: 'I submit herewith letter to me from Mr H. Prestoe Clerk of the River Service and in doing so I wish to state that Mr Prestoe is very correct in all his work and is of very great assistance to me and I should be very sorry to lose his services - '
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 47. Recovered patients brought back = 14

**February 6, 1893**

- **More nurses**: two nurses arrived from the Hospital Ships, to be based at South Wharf.
- **Death of baby on steamer**: on 30th Jan a 3 month-old baby, Emily Jane Field, from East Greenwich, was received into the Albert Victor and died a few hours later.
- **Dr Brooke sick**: on 1st Feb Dr Brooke was unable to perform his duties due to illness – examined at S.E. Hospital prior to being taken on board the steamers.
- **Recommendation of wage rise for Elizabeth Hall**: 'I strongly recommend that the wages of Elizabeth Hall Ward Servant be made the same as that of the Ward Servants at the Hospital Ships – she has always performed her duty in a most satisfactory manner and is very deserving of the increase ….' [Note in margin: 'wages raised to £20']
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 56. Recovered patients brought back = 23

**February 29, 1893**

- **Official visitor**: On 26 Feb, Dr Campbell, representative of Dr Duff of the Royal Commission on Vaccination 'took passage in the Maltese Cross to the Hospital Ships.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 69 Recovered patients brought back = 21
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2

**March ? 1893** (No date given, but probably just after March 4)

- **Steamer crews - application for overtime pay**: detailed report on the crews' claims for increased overtime pay, including the numbers of occasions they are detained to work later in the evening.
- **Parcels for patients**: 'Parcels are frequently sent to South Wharf for patients without the carriage being paid …' Suggests the delivery co. be requested not to accept unpaid parcels for South Wharf.
- **Problem of Gate Porter's sons living in**: 'I also desire to bring before the notice of Committee that **Richard Percival** (Gate Porter at South Wharf) who has quarters in No. 315 Rotherhithe Street and in which house the Medical Officer and the servants who are engaged on the steamers and wharf reside and in which there is also a Mess Room used by the female staff (including nurses) has two sons one about 19 years the other about 21. The apartments set aside for the Gate Porter are a sitting room, two bedrooms and a kitchen, the kitchen at times also used by the staff - To get to the bedroom used by these two sons they must frequently come into contact with the Nurses and Ward Servant and the servant who cleans the Nurses and Doctors room. The Gate Porters' 2 sons are not in the service of the Managers but are engaged in the Commercial Docks.'
- **Patient returned in prison garb**: 'On the 1st inst. a recovered patient named John Norton was brought from the Hospital Ships by the steamer and was landed at North Wharf dressed in prison garb … I gave instructions for this man to be brought to South Wharf – on the following day on the receipt of some clothing from the Hospital Ships at 3.50 this man was discharged.'
- **Additional deck hand and stoker** employed: because the two crews were frequently absent from South Wharf at the same time, extra staff were needed temporarily to attend to the other steamer, including **Chas Denny** - age 29, married, employed as stoker.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 98. Recovered patients brought back = 41
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3

**March 20, 1893**

- **Gate Porter resigns after being told his sons couldn't live with him in M.A.B. property**: 'In accordance with your instructions I on the 6th inst. informed the Gate Porter at South Wharf [ Mr Percival ] that his 2 grown-up sons could no longer be allowed to reside with him in the house belonging to the Managers. On the 17th inst. I received notice from the Gate Porter that he wished to resign his appointment on the 27th inst. – I therefore ask for a Gate Porter to be appointed.'
- **Wife of Gate Porter to do cooking**: 'It has been customary for the wife of the Gate Porter to act as Cook for the staff living in No. 315 … it will be necessary for provision to be made engaging a Gate Porter for his wife to do such cooking for the staff as may be required.'
- **New Deck Hand**: re-employed **William Livett**, son of Captain Livett, as a deck hand (who had done the job previously, and was still living with his father in one of the Rotherhithe St houses).
- **Visit by inspector**: on 15th March **Dr A H Downes**, Local Government Board Inspector, visited to inspect the buildings, steamers etc
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 101. Recovered patients brought back = 67
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3

**April 17, 1893**

- **Arrival of staff from Hospital Ships**: rooms at 315 Rotherhithe St prepared for the reception of a cook and a Superintendent Nurse, to be based at South Wharf.
- **Piermaster Gardner's claims about hours and workload, and false records**: he responds to a letter from the Piermaster, refuting some of his claims of overtime and responsibilities. The Piermaster claims he is on duty every day from 7.30am until 8.00pm including Sundays, and that he is also performing the duties of Storekeeper. Charles refutes this with a breakdown of his actual work times, and states that storekeeping is part of his job. 'The responsibility of the Piermaster as such at South Wharf is not very great for there is nearly always a steamer at South Wharf and the Pier and Pontoon are looked after and guarded by the crews of the Steamers…'
  'While reporting upon this matter a circumstance has occurred which I consider should be brought to your notice – The Asst. Pierman at South Wharf finding on a vacancy occurring as Pierman that he was not promoted and that it was due to the Piermaster not being able to recommend him for that appointment, proffered certain charges against the Piermaster as to not coming in at 7.30am and going in and out of the Wharf when it was his Sunday on duty without entering the time. On enquiring into these statements I found they were not properly substantiated at the time, but I subsequently found that entries had recently been made in the Gate Book on days in January, February and March last which the Piermaster acknowledged had been recently entered by him – '
  [Note in margin: 'Gardner to explain']
- **New Deck Hand: Albert Henry Oliver**, age 23, single; replacing **William Brown** who'd resigned.
- **Requests an additional Pierman** 'so as to assist at the telephone as well as other work and so that the Pierman and Gate Keeper may not have to remain on duty so often till 8.00pm from 7.00am.'
- **Third crew needed**: 'In view of the numbers of patients being taken down necessitating 2 steamers being kept going I ask to be allowed to engage a 3rd crew.'
- **Ward servant Elizabeth Hall leaves:** having resigned, she left the service on 15 April.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 337. Recovered patients brought back = 141
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 15

**May 1, 1893**

- **Pierman sick: Robert Banham**, Asst. Pierman at South Wharf, off sick with tonsillitis.
- **New deckhands**: having difficulty finding deck hands for 3rd crew, so appointed **Alfred Russell** as Nightwatchman and **Henry Horton**, the Nightwatchman, employed as Deck Hand. Also employed **Thomas Charles Milmoth**, formerly in the Victoria Steam Boat Association, as a Deck Hand.
- **Proposed 3rd crew**: the following staff were promoted to form a 3rd crew -
  **Henry Harvey** (now Mate) as Master **James Dixon** – from Deck Hand to Mate
  **William Keys** - from Deck Hand to Mate **William Parker** –from Stoker to Engineer
- **Construction of new shelters**: on 19th April work began on the foundations of the shelters.
- **Additional Pierman employed: Richard Banner**, to assist at the telephone and other duties.
- **Piermaster Gardner's irregular entries**: 'I furnished Piermaster Gardner with a statement regarding the irregular entries made by him in the Gate Book and directed him to make an explanation in writing … which I herewith submit…' [Document not included. See 17 April 1893]
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 183. Recovered patients brought back = 112
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 8

**May 15, 1893**

- **Staff additions and changes: Robert Thomas Hunt**, age 28, engaged as stoker, in place of William Parker, who was promoted to Engineer. And **Charles Digby**, as Deck Hand, in place of William Keys who was promoted to Mate. **Alfred Jeffrey**, age 41 formerly Able Seaman in the Navy, employed as Assistant Pierman to replace **S. Scarborough** who'd resigned. **John Thomas**, Night Watchman on the Steamers, resigned.
- **Recommendation of a Gate Porter's Lodge**: 'Now that the quarters formerly occupied by the Gate Porter and his wife have been taken for the accommodation of the female staff engaged at South Wharf and upon the River Service steamers and the staff now regularly go in and out of the main gates on duty and leave up to 10.00pm, it is in my opinion advisable that a lodge should be erected for the accommodation of a Gate Porter and his wife so as to prevent the possibility of any irregularity owing to the present necessity of the Gate Porter being relieved by Piermen.'

- **Recommendation of additional steamer**: points out the need for this – when two steamers are running, and the other under survey or maintenance, and if one of the other steamers is damaged, they would be left with only one steamer running.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 252. Recovered patients brought back = 145
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6

**May 29, 1893**

- **Nurse accommodation**: 'In order to provide accommodation for the requisite nurses etc from the Steamers and Shelters at South Wharf, I have connected the bedrooms of the upper floors of no. 313 and 319 with those of no. 315 in which the female staff now reside.'
- **Plans for steamer to receive patients at night**: details the arrangements required for a steamer to lie alongside South Wharf for the night reception of patients and what that would necessitate.
- **Additional Pierman**: **Richard Banner**, the current Pierman, was engaged as Stores Porter, and **Henry Seymour**, age 45, single, was employed as Pierman to take Banner's place; was given lodging allowance rather than accommodation at the Wharf.
- **Change of nightwatchman: John Thomas**, Night Watchman, resigned; replaced with **David Quinlan**, a Master at Arms in the Navy.
- **Death of patient on steamer**: on 24th May, patient Benjamin New, aged 37, died on board the Albert Victor very shortly after being taken on board. Body taken to the S.E. Hospital.
- **Pierman resigns: Robert Banham**, Asst. Pierman, resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships: = 206 Recovered patients brought back = 191
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 16

**June 12, 1893**

- **New Staff: George Grinstead** engaged as Deck Hand, replacing Charles Coppin who'd been promoted. **George Spencer** employed as engineer for night duty in the steamers - 'This man has a good character and has been for 16 years Engineer in the Victoria Steam Boat Association'. **William Anderson,** a former Petty Officer in the Navy employed as Night Pierman; **David Mitchell,** formerly a 1st class Petty Officer in the Navy, employed to replace Asst. Pierman Robert Banham.
- **Night reception steamer and staff**: on 5th June the steamers were first placed alongside the pontoon, to take patients on board during the night. The following staff were appointed for the night service: **William Kelly**, previously Mate of the 1st crew, appointed Mate for Night Duty. (**Charles Coppin**, Deck Hand, promoted to replace him as Mate of 1st crew). **James Foster**, who had been a Pierman in the R.A.S. since 1884, appointed Piermaster for Night Duty. **William Percival Austin**, formerly a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Marine Artillery, engaged as Night Gate Porter.
- **Piermaster's wife's laundry**: 'As there is no yard or any place in connection with 313 Rotherhithe Street in which the Piermaster at South Wharf resides where his wife can hang out washed linen etc, I ask if it would be possible for the soiled linen from this house to be washed at the laundry at the Hospital Ships.'
- **Death of patient on steamer**: patient Louisa Rafferty died while on passage to the Hospital Ships.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 159. Recovered patients brought back = 206
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 20

**June 26, 1893**

- **Wheeled litters and stretchers for cholera**: stored at South Wharf for use in case of cholera – suggests these be stored at West Wharf, to free up storage space at South Wharf for stores and bedding; previously the bedding when not in use was stored in rooms now occupied by female staff.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 151. Recovered patients brought back = 199
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 26

**July 1893** (exact date not given)

- **Inspector's visit:** Local Govt Board Inspector Dr Downes visited North & South Wharves on 1 July.
- **Sick list**: **Charles Coppin**, Deck Hand / Mate, off sick with Sub-acute Enteritis
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 135. Recovered patients brought back = 130

**July 24, 1893**

- **Problems with coal supply** from Messrs Waddell & Co, Coal Contractors.
- **New Shelters**: completed; used for first time for a patient on 17th July.

- **Smallpox decline and cut in steamer schedule**: 'As the number of patients being taken to the Hospital Ships is gradually decreasing and as the Steamer which is timed to leave South Wharf at 2.00pm frequently goes down to Long Reach without any patients I would suggest that the 2 o'clock steamer be discontinued.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 94. Recovered patients brought back = 131
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 13

**August 1893** (no exact date given – probably around 6th Aug)

- **Further problems with coal delivery**: coal barge moored so badly that it wasn't possible to load the coal, and the coal porters refused to do so. The following morning the steamers were completely without coal, and one of them had to go to Harrisons Coal Pier. 'About 11.20am Mr Waddell the Contractor came to the Wharf with 3 men he had picked up outside the gates. I asked these men if they had been vaccinated since they were children and they replied in the negative. I informed the Contractor that it would be necessary for these men to be re-vaccinated – which was done and the men returned to the South Wharf at 3.00pm and coaled the Maltese Cross.'
- **Collision**: on 1st August the barge No. 144 of King and Queen Granaries collided with the Maltese Cross and broke a bollard on the sponson.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 59. Recovered patients brought back = 130
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 11 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**August 28, 1893**

- **Change of Pierman:** Pierman **John Dough** [?] resigned. Asst. Pierman **David Mitchell** appointed to replace him as Pierman, and **Joseph Waller** transferred from North Wharf to fill his role.
- **Deck Hand sick: Albert Oliver**, Deck Hand, off sick with sore throat.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 59. Recovered patients brought back = 105
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**September 4, 1893**

- **Redundancies due to decrease in cases**: suggests one crew be given a week's notice.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 10. Recovered patients brought back = 37
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**September 16, 1893**

- **Drunken staff**: 'On the 10th inst. **R. Banner** Stores Porter and **David Mitchell** Pierman both at South Wharf remained away from the Wharf after 10.30pm (the time given for them to return - ) On the following day R. Banner Stores Porter came to the South Wharf twice in a drunken condition and was refused admission. David Mitchell Pierman returned at 6.00pm sober - R. Banner was suspended from duty and on my return to the Wharf on Friday 15th inst. I discharged him. I severely reprimanded D. Mitchell for being absent – and cautioned him that should he again commit himself I would recommend his discharge.'

**October 16, 1893**

- **Disputes over coal supply** and cost from Waddells; disputed cost and tonnage and refused to pay.
- **Drunken Pierman at North Wharf**: found 'to be under the influence of liquor' and resigned.
- **Sick staff: Charles Digby**, Deck Hand, and **Charles Coppin**, both off sick.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 29. Recovered patients brought back = 15
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**October 30, 1893**

- **Deck Hand off sick: Charles Digby**, Deck Hand, off sick, on and off during the month.
- **Rotherhithe Street houses**: recommendation of layout changes / building work.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 37. Recovered patients brought back = 30
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**November 13, 1893**

- **Collision**: on 6th Nov the barge Edward collided with the Red Cross, causing some damage.
- **Charles Coppin caught drunk**: 'On the 8th inst. on going on board the Red Cross at South Wharf I found Chas Coppin Deck Hand to be under the influence of liquor. I ordered this man to leave the

Wharf and to see me the following morning – this being Coppin's first offence, on the following day I cautioned him and stopped his pay for the day he was away - '
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 78. Recovered patients brought back = 14
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**November 27, 1893**
- **Scarlet fever amongst children of staff**: 'On the 27th ult. Hilda Livett aged 6 daughter of **Captain G. Livett**, Master of Ambulance Steamers, was removed from No. 319 Rotherhithe St., one of the houses belonging to the Managers to the S.E. Hospital suffering from Scarlet Fever and on the 14th inst. another daughter aged 14 was removed for the same cause, and on the 15th inst. the daughter of the Piermaster at North Wharf was also removed to the Eastern Hospital with Scarlet Fever.'
- **Deck Hand sick: William Livett**, Deck Hand, off sick with tonsillitis
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 35. Recovered patients brought back = 44
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**December 11, 1893**
- **Improvement to Nurses' Room**: new doorway with fanlight fitted to Nurses' Room at 319 Rotherhithe St – room now very light and well ventilated.
- **Death of baby on steamer**: on 7th Dec, Albert Ginger, a 3 month-old baby, died on board the Maltese Cross when at South Wharf; body taken to the Hospital Ships the following day.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 46. Recovered patients brought back = 56
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 7

## The Annual Report on the Health, Sanitary Condition etc etc of the Parish of St Mary Abbotts, Kensington, for the year 1893 [published 1894]

(Wellcome Library online, ref: .b17998797)

P. 110
- **Medical Officer and isolation shelters**: 'The Committee refer to the appointment of a Medical Officer for the River Service, rendered necessary by the outbreak of smallpox which commenced at the end of 1892. All patients are now inspected at the Wharves before embarkation. Persons found to be not suffering from smallpox are sent home again (after being vaccinated) and "Shelters" have been provided, at the South Wharf, for the isolation of doubtful cases pending the clearing up of the diagnosis. The Committee did, and are doing, good service by disseminating among Medical Officers of Health, and others, information bearing on the spread of small-pox, in the form of histories of individual cases, obtained by the Medical Officer, at the South Wharf …'

# 1893 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 311 Rotherhithe St (South Wharf) | **Morgan**, Samuel; **Meal**, James |
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Dixon**, James Cowell |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Percival**, Richard |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Hambling**, George |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |

# 1894

***Smallpox epidemic continues; new ambulance steamer Geneva Cross***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1894 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1894; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1584)

Page 111

- **Smallpox admissions**: 1,133 admissions to hospital ships during the year, of which 1109 turned out to be smallpox; 98 of these died, giving a gross mortality 8.45%.

Pages 126 - 128

- **Smallpox cases to wharf and in shelters**: 1,264 cases sent to the wharves, and 1,056 sent direct to hospital ships. 147 cases admitted to the Shelters at South Wharf – 43 of these subsequently sent to hospital ships, 7 treated in the shelters for smallpox, 1 of whom died. Of the 97 remaining cases admitted to the Shelters, 4 were transferred to fever hospitals, 3 died of other illnesses, and 91 were sent home after varying periods of detention.
- **Dr Priestley appointed** Assistant Medical Officer to the R.A.S.

Page 204 - 207

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Swallow.
- **Swallow:** was originally built for the Royal Navy in 1878; its timbers were now rotting – it was made good for another 12 months, but had to start thinking about replacing it.
- **Geneva Cross:** New steamer; came into service July 30th. Detailed description given of its facilities. Has space for 52 recumbent patients: Upper Hospital with space for 16 patients, and Lower Hospital with space for 36, both divided into separate compartments for males and females, plus separate cabin for visitors. To accommodate this at the moorings, new mooring dolphins were erected to replace the hulk Benmore.
- **Staff accommodation**: 'Plans have been approved … for the erection of new quarters for the medical and nursing staff at South Wharf …'
- **Cost of running R.A.S.**: £7,657 + steamer maintenance £935 + new dolphins at South Wharf £655 + further costs at North and Souh Wharves.

Page 210

- **Conveyed 7,614 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 1,101
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 1,009
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,762
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 3,742

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1894-95 Vol. XXVIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1894-95)

Pages 180-81

- **Need for further accommodation for patients and staff at South Wharf, and new front wall:** 'It not infrequently happens that one or more patients arrive at the Wharf after the last Ambulance Steamboat has started for Long Reach. To provide for such cases another steamboat remains moored alongside the Wharf every night, an arrangement which necessitates holding some of the crew in readiness all night to shift the vessel in case of danger of collision by passing vessels.

With a view to saving the considerable expenditure involved in the employment of these men and for other reasons, we are of opinion that it is desirable to erect on the Wharf, in close contiguity to the existing examination room, a shed in which smallpox patients may remain for a few hours until they can be conveyed to the Hospital Ships.
The Medical Officer whose duty it is to examine patients on their arrival at the Wharf and the nurses engaged in the Ambulance Service and in the nursing of doubtful cases detained in the shelters recently erected, together with the necessary staff of domestic servants, are at present housed in portions of the four old houses which formed part of the property when originally purchased by the Managers. The rooms thus occupied are difficult of approach and quite remote both from the shelters and the Wharf; they are ill adapted for their purpose, and are for the most part small and inconvenient. Moreover, these houses would be much more beneficially used for the accommodation of members of the transport service, some of whom are inadequately quartered at the Wharf, while others reside off the premises and receive lodging allowances.
A lodge for a resident gatekeeper is also urgently needed, and the present old wooden boundary fence, which, owing to its defective condition, must shortly be removed, should be replaced by a suitable brick wall.' Recommendation made for an architect to prepare plans etc for the following:
'1. A shed for the accommodation of smallpox patients who may arrive too late for immediate transport to Long Reach.
2. Quarters for a Medical Officer or Officers.
3. Quarters for nurses and the necessary domestic servants.
4. A gate-porter's lodge.
5. A boundary wall in lieu of the existing wooden fence.'

Page 265

- **Plans submitted** by architect Mr Aldwinckle for no's 1-3 of the above work.
- **New mooring dolphins**: 'Owing to the addition to the number of the Board's ambulance steamboats, it has become necessary to provide increased mooring accommodation at South Wharf. Any extension of the existing moorings has been found impracticable. We, therefore, have obtained the permission of the Thames Conservators to drive piles and construct new dolphins at a point a short distance below the South Wharf Pier …' Mr Samuel Chafen, of 21a Trundleys Road, Deptford, appointed to execute the work of the new moorings.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 8, 1894**

- **Collision between ambulance steamers**: during a gale the Maltese Cross, in coming alongside the Red Cross at South Wharf, damaged part of the paddle wheel.
- **Deck Hand Charles Coppin off sick again**: with erysipelas [a skin infection] for several weeks. '… this is the third occasion this man has been absent through illness since his appointment in January last, viz 1 week in July – 2 weeks in October – and now since 23rd ult. and taking into consideration that in November last this man was suspended for being the worse for liquor – I recommend that on his return his services be dispensed with and that he receives a week's notice - '
- **Nightwatchman sick: Alfred Russell**, Night Watchman on the steamers, off sick with Pleurisy. Temporarily replaced by **Thomas Millmoth**, formerly a Deck Hand in the R.A.S.
- **Change of Piermen:** Night Pierman **Robert Anderson** resigned. Asst. Pierman **Joseph Waller** replaced him. **Robert Leighton**, 29, single, previously a stoker, appointed as Asst. Pierman.
- **Rotherhithe Street house front door**: 'Now that there is a Gate Porter at South Wharf during the day and night and the female staff go in and out the Main Gate, I would suggest that the door to the street in No. 315 Rotherhithe Street in which the Hospital Ships staff reside be secured and if necessary a small trap be made in same to take in any parcels – this street door is frequently open for different purposes – and remarks are made by the people living in the neighbourhood - '
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 39. Recovered patients brought back = 54
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**January 22, 1894**

- **Charles Coppin discharged:** given one week's notice and discharged [see Jan 8 1894]
- **Steamer collision**: while trying to avoid a barge when coming alongside South Wharf, the Red Cross collided with the Albert Victor and damaged the port paddle box.
- **Pierman disappears**: '**Robert Leighton** Asst. Pierman at South Wharf who had only been engaged on the 3 January went on leave on the 13th inst. and has not returned.' Was replaced by **James Blackwell**, age 39, single, formerly Able Seaman in the Navy.
- **More coal supply problems**: coal contractor didn't deliver on time, so had to go to Harrison's coal wharf again. When the coal barge arrived the next day, 'owing to the coal not being properly protected from the weather it was found to be completely saturated and in addition I found it to be a mixed coal – I therefore condemned the quantity in the barge.' Representative from the coal contractor claimed the coal must have got mixed 'owing to the fall of snow' and assured him that in future the coal would be properly protected - '… but a fresh barge came on Saturday last without any protection and if the rain continues this coal will unless covered also be fit to be condemned… I am sorry to say that I have had some difficulty in keeping this firm up to the terms of the contract.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 18 Recovered patients brought back = 29
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**February 5, 1894**

- **Thomas Charles Milmoth re-employed**: was previously discharged due to the reduction in staff, but taken on again as a Deck Hand to replace Charles Coppin.
- **Stoker sick: Charles Denny**, Stoker, off sick
- **Inspection visit**: on 1st Feb the Chief Sanitary Inspector visited and inspected the buildings.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 25 Recovered patients brought back = 31
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**February 19, 1894**

- **Drunken Deck Hands:** 'On the 12th inst. **William Keys** and **Thomas Charles Milmoth**, Deck Hands, came to the South Wharf for duty at 8.45am instead of 7.30am and were in a state of intoxication – the Gate Porter would not admit them and on my arrival they were suspended.' Replaced temporarily by **George Livett** [a son of Captain George Livett] 'formerly a mate in the steam tug Benbow' and **Joseph William Hall**, formerly a lighterman. Recommends that William Keys and Thomas Milmoth be discharged and that the two new Deck Hands be confirmed to replace them.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 19 Recovered patients brought back = 25
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**March 5, 1894**

- **Change of Piermen**: **David Mitchell,** Pierman, resigned. Was replaced with **W. Hunt**, who was transferred from North Wharf.
- **Collision**: on 20 Feb the Albert Victor was slightly damaged by the barge James.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 25 Recovered patients brought back = 17
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

**March 19, 1894**

- **Sheds at South Wharf**: used as iron store and Lamp Room – in very decayed condition and leaking badly; proposes to get the staff to do the repairs.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 25 Recovered patients brought back = 22
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 9

**April 2, 1894**

- **Visit by Medical Officers from Essex**: 10 medical officers visited North Wharf, South Wharf and the hospital ships.
- **Damage to Red Cross**: when coming alongside the pier, slightly damaged the port paddle box.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 20 Recovered patients brought back = 26
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**April 16, 1894**

- **Children coming with visitors**: describes recent incident in which visitors came to North Wharf to visit a dangerously ill patient via steamer to Long Reach, but brought 2 children with them, aged about 7 and 12/13. Queries whether young children should be allowed to visit, and what age limit; had always been under the impression that only adult visitors were allowed.
- **Plan for new moorings**: 'I also submit plans for new moorings at South Wharf at the lower end of the river…'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 45 Recovered patients brought back = 20
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

**April 30, 1894**

- **New lighting for Examining Rooms**: ordered new lighting for the examining room at North Wharf; mentions also the examining room at South Wharf and that there is only one small gas bracket and a paraffin lamp there - recommends a new lamp for there too.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 92 Recovered patients brought back = 33
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**May 28, 1894**

- **Visit from the Small Pox Hospitals Committee**: visited both North and South Wharves, and went to the hospital ships in the Maltese Cross.
- **Contractors and vaccinations**: difficulties in arranging workmen to do a job at North Wharf; one of the companies say they can't get their men to agree to revaccination. Charles comments: 'There is I may say very great difficulty in getting men to be re-vaccinated for a small job.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships (over 4 weeks) = 234 Recovered cases brought back = 117
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 12 Cases admitted to the shelters = 16

**June 11, 1894**

- **Gate porter off sick: William Austin**, Night Gate Porter, off sick with 'acute eczema'.
- **Change of Piermen: Joseph Blackwell**, Asst. Pierman, sent to work at North Wharf to replace the Pierman there. New Asst. Pierman employed at South Wharf - **Joseph King**, age 35, single.
- **Change of Clerk**: **H. Prestoe** resigns [again? See 23 Jan 1893]
- **Collision**: on 1st June the sailing barge Henry and Sydney of Rochester collided with the Albert Victor at her moorings and damaged the stern.
- **New staff for Geneva Cross: Charles Russell** employed as Electric Attendant.
- **Death of patient in shelters**: on 10 June, Walter Coles, age 21, died from inflammation of the lungs following measles. Had been in the shelters since 6th June. Body taken to the S.E. Hospital.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 85 Recovered patients brought back = 89
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 12

**June 25, 1894**

- **Preparations for new steamer Geneva Cross**: undergoing trials under steam. Hasn't yet employed new deck hands and stoker for it, as 'there is a difficulty at the present time in getting good deck hands owing to its being the summer season for steamers…'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 45 Recovered patients brought back = 101
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**July 9, 1894**

- **New staff for Geneva Cross: John Wilson**, age 27, employed as Deck Hand.
- **Intoxicated Engineer: Matthew Forster**, Engineer of Geneva Cross, found to be 'slightly under the influence of liquor'. Was later found to be worse, and was ordered out of the engine room. Afterwards he sent in his resignation.
- **Replacement engineer: Mr E Atherton,** with good recommendations from the Senior Engineer Surveyors to the Board of Trade.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 35 Recovered patients brought back = 80
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 8 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

**July 23, 1894**

- **New dolphins being erected at South Wharf**. Recommends that **Frank Walker**, Clerk of Works on the Geneva Cross, be appointed as Clerk of Works for erecting the dolphins – 'he is a very steady man and carries out the work entrusted to him in a most satisfactory manner.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 21 Recovered patients brought back = 37 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**September 3, 1894**

- **New steamer Geneva Cross arrives and starts work**: on 30 July took ownership from the contractors Messrs J. Stewart & Son, 'and this vessel is now running with patients…'
- **New stoker**: engaged **Charles Tucker**, age 29, as stoker for the Geneva Cross.
- **Visit from British Institute of Public Health**: were taken by Geneva Cross from North Wharf to the hospital ships.
- **Construction of new dolphins**: describes the work being done by Mr Chafen.
- **Death of patient in shelters**: on 28th August Mary Ann Nuttey [?] age 20, died from hemorrhagic smallpox; body taken to S.E. Hospital.
- **Claim of damage to barge**: went to Battersea following claim by owner of barge Crane that it had been damaged by the speed of the Geneva Cross; thought it unlikely that damage was due to this.
- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: the Royal Sovereign steamer 'proceeded down the river at low water at such a rate that the indraught caused the Maltese Cross to collide with the dolphin at South Wharf and damaged the stern rail and bulwark'.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships (over 6 weeks) = 289 Recovered cases brought back = 177 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 37 Cases admitted to the shelters = 37

**September 17, 1894**

- **New dolphins**: work continuing; difficulty in driving piles due to hard ground. Piles being driven for lower dolphin and upper dolphin. Contractor insisted on hulk Benmore being removed – Charles came back specially from holiday to arrange this and have steamers moored elsewhere temporarily.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 27 Recovered patients brought back = 65 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**October 15, 1894**

- **Reduced patients/journeys**: Due to the lower number of patients, suggests sending a steamer once a day rather than twice, to save coal. To check with Hospitals Ships if this convenient to them.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 12 Recovered patients brought back = 32 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 9 Cases admitted to the shelters = 8

**October 29, 1894**

- **Piermen's Pay: James Foster,** Night Piermaster, applied for a raise in salary to the full scale. Charles outlines the current rates for the three wharves; for Day Piermaster at South Wharf, the rate is 35/- per week + 5/- per week for storekeeper duties, in addition to unfurnished quarters with coal and gas. Outlines James Foster's work history: joined the R.A.S. as Pierman at Potters Ferry on 28 June 1884, at 25/- per week and furnished quarters. Transferred to North Wharf in 1885 until 5 June 1893 when appointed Night Piermaster at South Wharf at 30/- per week and 5/- in lieu of quarters.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 16 Recovered patients brought back = 27 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5
- **Staff redundancies**: due to the decrease in cases, recommends losing some staff – an Engineer and an Assistant Pierman.

**November 12, 1894**

- **Pierman discharged: Henry Seymour,** Pierman, given notice and discharged.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15 Recovered patients brought back = 12 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 7

**December 10, 1894**

- **Clerk sick**: mention of Clerk, **Mr C. Richardson**, being off sick for 3 days.
- **New dolphins at South Wharf complete**; Geneva Cross moored between them 'and rides very easily with the tides.'

- **Piermen changes**: **Joseph Waller**, Night Pierman, was appointed Day Pierman, to replace **Walter Hunt** who was dismissed. **William Bennett** was transferred from West Wharf to work as Night Pierman at South Wharf.
- **Stoker resigned: Charles Tucker**, Stoker on Geneva Cross, resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 14 Recovered patients brought back = 22
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 11 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

## 1894 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Lanyon**, William |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |

(No other listings found for South Wharf addresses, but James Cowell **Dixon** noted as living nearby at 35 Trinity Rd).

# 1895

***Smallpox epidemic continues; river freezes for 2 weeks; construction begins on female staff block; piers roofed over***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Reports for the Year 1895 of the Statistical Committee and the Medical Superintendents of the Infectious Hospitals and Imbecile Asylums [etc]

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1895; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1585)

Pages 156-8

- **Smallpox admissions**: 1,045 cases sent to the wharves during the year. 905 sent direct to hospital ships, 21 more sent after detention. 2 died in shelter from smallpox and 1 died in shelter from typhoid fever, 3 died on the steamers from smallpox. 112 were sent home or transferred not suffering from smallpox.
- **Freezing over of river:** 'From February 8th to February 22nd inclusive, the ambulance steamers were unable to proceed to the hospital ships owing to the great accumulation of ice in the river. During this period the patients were received and detained on board the "Geneva Cross" and, taking into consideration the various difficulties with which we had to contend, the patients, I may venture to say, were fairly comfortable and did remarkably well. One death occurred, an unvaccinated infant three months old. Owing to the lack of accommodation at the wharf the extra staff of nurses, which was required owing to the number (34) of patients, had to be accommodated at the South-Eastern Ambulance Station, an ambulance bringing two nurses for duty at night and taking back the two nurses who had been on duty during the day...'
- **Female staff block**: the new quarters for the female staff were begun in June.
- **Roofing over of piers:** 'The covering in of the piers at North and South Wharves was also commenced, and was completed in August. That they should be covered in was, I think, very necessary, for in winter and frosty or even wet weather they are very dangerous, particularly at low water. Several of the staff had on various occasions had heavy and dangerous falls, frequently when carrying patients.'
- **Dr Priestley transferred:** (Assistant Medical Officer for R.A.S), transferred to another hospital.
- **Need for patient shelters**: 'I would urge the advisability of having some accommodation on shore for patients who arrive at night, and so obviate the necessity of using one of the steamers for their reception. I do not think that the steamers (with the exception of the "Geneva Cross") afford the necessary or suitable accommodation for their detention for so many hours. The motion of the steamer is felt very much in rough weather, and frequently causes the patients great discomfort, particularly in the case of females; and there is, I understand, no small risk of accident by collision, & co., from craft breaking away from their moorings, or steamers or other vessels running into the ambulance steamers in foggy weather, and both nurse and patients are too far away from the main staff quarters should either require assistance, medical or otherwise. The steamers should, in my opinion, be used for transport and transport only.'
- **Cases in smallpox shelters**: number of smallpox cases treated in the Shelters = 4;
  Deaths in the Shelters = 3 (two from Haemorrhagic Smallpox and one from Typhoid Fever).

Page 231

- **Freezing over of river:** 'Early in February very severe weather set in, and by the 9th of the month the ice floes had increased in number and size to such an extent as to make it extremely difficult, and in some cases quite impossible, for craft to get alongside the wharves. The Managers' steamers were kept running until February 10th, by which day the 'Albert Victor' got as far as Bugsby's Reach (just below Blackwell), when it was found impossible for her to force her way through the ice. There was very great danger of the iron plates of the vessel being pierced by the ice floes, and it was considered advisable to take her back to South Wharf, the tide then being in her favour. By 13th of the month the Thames as far down as Woolwich was, with the exception of a very small portion in the middle, entirely frozen over, and all traffic stopped. Fortunately smallpox

was not very prevalent at the time, and such cases as occurred were conveniently accommodated on board the ambulance steamboat 'Geneva Cross' until February 23, when, milder weather having set in and the ice floes begun to disappear, she was able to proceed to the hospital ships.'

- **Roofing over of piers**: 'The bridges leading to the pontoons of the piers at North and South Wharves have been roofed over, at a cost of £258 10s. This will not only secure greater comfort for patients in wet and stormy weather, but will also prevent the risk of accident to persons traversing the bridges in snow and frost.'
- **Female staff block:** 'A contract has been entered into for the erection at South Wharf of commodious quarters for the nursing and domestic staff employed in connection with the hospital wards of the steamboats and the shelters on shore; and the buildings are rapidly approaching completion.'

Page 232

- **Cost of running river service** £7,893 + steamer maintenance £922

Page 235

- **Conveyed 4951 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 925
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 792
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 862
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 2372
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed:**
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, Red Cross, Swallow

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1895-96 Vol. XXIX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1895-96)

Page 37

- **Additional shelter**: Local Government Board ask for further information before sanctioning the erection of an additional shelter at South Wharf [from minutes of 27 April 1895]

Page 79

- **Plans submitted for roofing the bridges of the piers** at South and North Wharf with corrugated iron. The bridge at South Wharf is 293 ft in length. "...The object of this outlay [of a total of £315] is to render the gangways safer than at present for persons using them in wet or frosty weather..."

Pages 119-20

- **Re-thinking plans for staff accommodation**: list of tenders received for the erection of quarters for the medical and nursing staff employed at South Wharf. The lowest tender is £1,617 in excess of the architect's estimate (although the estimate included £500 for a detention shed for smallpox patients not yet authorised by the Local Government Board) '...In explanation of the difference between the estimate and the lowest tender, we desire to point out that, owing to the character of the soil at South Wharf, it has been found absolutely necessary to arrange that the foundations of the proposed buildings shall be carried some 18 feet below the surface, and it is estimated that this will cost about £2,000.
  In these circumstances we reconsidered the question of the accommodation to be provided, and came to the conclusion that it would be possible to dispense with the proposed new residence for the medical staff, and to continue to provide accommodation for one or more Medical Officers, as heretofore, in one of the existing houses adjoining the Wharf...' [from minutes of 11 May 1895]

Page 239

- **Protest against planned buildings**: St Olave's Board of Guardians forward a resolution protesting against the erection at South Wharf of any buildings for the reception of Smallpox patients, and 'stating that they will be pleased to receive the assurance … that the new buildings at South Wharf will be for staff quarters only, and not for any infectious cases.' [from minutes of 6 July 1895]

Page 264

- **Protest against planned buildings**: the Local Government Board forward a letter from Dr Perry of 'St Olive's Union on this Board', who asks them to withhold their assent to the erection of the proposed shelter at South Wharf until his Board or the Sanitary Authority of Rotherhithe has entered a petition to them on the subject. [from minutes of 20 July 1895]

Pages 617-8

- **Management of medical, nursing and domestic staff, and need for Nursing Superintendent:** Report of the Ambulance Committee:
  '...We have to report that in accordance with the arrangements made between the Smallpox Hospitals Committee and ourselves, the control of the medical, nursing, and domestic staffs employed at South Wharf in connection with the river transport of smallpox patients will, at the close of the year, be transferred to us. After careful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that it is very desirable a Nursing Superintendent (who must be a trained nurse) should be appointed to act as Superintendent of the nursing and domestic staffs, and to perform such duties of both housekeeper and steward as may be requisite...' [from minutes of 7 December 1895]

Page 662

- **Need for replacement of Swallow**: '...The steam pinnace "Swallow", which was obtained from the Admiralty for use in connection with the Hospital Ships in 1881, has been reported by Mr. C. Thomson … to be quite unfit for further service. In replacing this vessel we think it will be economical to obtain one not only capable for conveying staff and visitors to and from the Hospital Ships, but also affording recumbent accommodation for a limited number of patients, thus obviating the employment of a large steamboat at times when the cases of smallpox are few....'
- **Discharge of Mate James C. Dixon**: '...The Medical Officer of the River Service having reported that James C. Dixon, a mate in the ambulance steamboats, was suffering from Melancholia and Neurasthenia, and that he could not safely continue in that employment, we have been compelled to discharge Dixon therefrom'. Due to his 12 years service, recommendation was made for a superannuation allowance for one year. [from minutes of 4 January 1896]

Page 728

- **New front wall**: The Ambulance Committee '...submit plans for the replacing of the old wooden boundary fence at South Wharf with a new brick wall. The plans also provide for the substitution of a brick wall, 6 feet high, in place of the dwarf wall and iron railing which it was proposed to erect in front of the new staff quarters, and for the erection of new gate piers and alterations to the existing gates...' [from minutes of 1 February 1896]

Page 773

- **Contractors for new front wall:** '...On further consideration, we consider it more desirable to have this wall erected by the Contractors [Messrs. G Goodson and Sons] who are at present building the new staff quarters...' [from minutes of 15 February 1896]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 7, 1895**

- **Collision:** on 11th Dec**,** barge 'Principle' collided with the pontoon and damaged the ladder.
- **Damage to Albert Victor**: on 27 Dec, the Albert Victor, when in Halfway Reach, ran over what turned out to be a sunken barge, damaging the port paddle wheel and slightly indenting 2 plates.
- **New stoker: James John Hellyer** employed, to replace **Charles Tucker** who'd resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 8 Recovered patients brought back = 9
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**January 21, 1895**

- **Collision**: on 19th Jan the barge Canada collided with the Albert Victor and did some damage.

- **Captain Livett requests pay increase**: letter received from Captain Livett asking for pay increase.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 16 Recovered patients brought back = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**February 16, 1895**

- **Ice in river stopping ambulance steamers**: dense fog on 9th Feb, so Albert Victor unable to go to Long Reach. When it set off on the 10th Feb, on arrival at Bugsbys Reach (just below Blackwall) 'she was unable to make headway owing to the vast body of ice in the river – the weight of which added to the strength of the tide actually drove the steamer astern. The captain was therefore obliged to let the vessel go with the tide and return to South Wharf. Since the 10th inst. the ice floes have daily increased in number and size to such an extent that the river is only navigable by screw vessels with heavy plating – there is also great risk to vessels passing up and down owing to the number of derelict barges drifting with the tide – The patients which have arrived at South Wharf since the 10th inst. have been placed in the hospitals of the S.S. Geneva Cross which has been moored at the end of the pier at South Wharf for this purpose …'
- **Mate off sick: Henry Harvey**, Mate, suffering from dysenteric diarrhea.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15 'No. of patients now on board Geneva Cross' = 13
  Recovered patients brought back = 9 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5

**March 2, 1895**

- **End of the river freeze**: 'The exceptional circumstances which prevented the steamers proceeding to the Hospital ships … continued until the 22nd ult. when the ice floes in the river began to disappear and what remained had by atmospheric action become so far softened as to allow the Geneva Cross to proceed to Long Reach without the aid of a tug. On the 23rd ult. therefore the S.S. Geneva Cross proceeded to Long Reach and 34 patients were conveyed to the ships in her.'
- **Staff injury**: 'On the 23rd ult. whilst **C.C. Russell** the electric light attendant was attending the engines of the Geneva Cross when under way – his hand slipped between the eccentrics and two of his fingers were in consequence severely injured – this man will return to duty on the 4th inst…'
- **Staff sick list**: **Captain G. Livett** – influenza; Piermaster **James Foster** – influenza; Asst. Pierman **J. [?] Winter** – rheumatism; Engineer **W. Lanyon** – influenza.
- **Drunken Pierman**: 'Early on the morning of the 26th ult. Pierman **Waller** who had been granted leave of absence till 10.30pm was found to have entered the wharf from the adjoining premises (Gabriel's Wharf) in a state of intoxication and used very bad language to Piermaster **J. Foster** and also to **Dr J. B. Brooke**. Upon Pierman Waller being suspended by order from Norfolk House he tendered his resignation.'
- **Collisions**: on 11th Feb the barge Jaffa, having broken away from its moorings, collided with and damaged the Albert Victor. On the same day the mooring chain of the Maltese Cross carried away and caused it to collide with the piles at South Wharf and damaged the port forward sponson.
- **Death of baby on steamer**: on 20th Feb, William Quinton (?), 3-month-old baby with smallpox, died on the Geneva Cross when at the pier. Body sent to S.E. Hospital.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 41 Recovered patients brought back = 12
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**March 30, 1895**

- **Covering of piers**: submits plans for the covering of the bridges (piers) at South and North Wharves.
- **Change of Piermen: Joseph King**, Asst. Pierman, tendered his resignation. **Thomas John Bailey** employed to replace him.
- **Visit by Hospital Ships Committee** on 25th March, to South and North Wharves.
- **Damage caused by ice**: due to the Geneva Cross being moored at the end of the pier during the freezing of the river, the ice had taken most of the paint off her bottom; proposes to put it in dry dock to have the bottom re-coated.
- **Staff sick list**: Pierman **R. Winter** suffering from ague; **Thomas New**, stoker suffering from lumbago. Notes that Pierman **Winter** was previously on sick list in February; 'Pierman Winter joined the service on the 19th August 1894 and has repeatedly been unable to perform his duty for a day or so owing to various ailments and Dr Brooke informs me that this man will not be fit for service till about Tuesday next and that he will be more or less ailing as his health has been permanently

affected by residence abroad. I therefore recommend that this man be given a week's notice to leave the service - ' **Henry Harvey**, Mate, also off sick, with bronchitis.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships (over 4 weeks) = 37 Recovered patients brought back = 50 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**April 27, 1895**
- **Ailing pierman leaves: R. Winter**, Asst. Pierman, left the service on 9th April [see March 30 1895].
- **Drunken Pierman fired: R. Allison**, temporary Asst. Pierman at North Wharf, was reported as being drunk and unfit for duty one night. The Superintendent went to North Wharf to 'interview' him but found him absent – left a written notice suspending him from duty and asking him to attend at South Wharf the following day. The following morning Mr Allison left North Wharf for South Wharf, but didn't arrive. The Superintendent then ordered him to attend the next day with his Piermaster. 'On the morning of the 5th inst. the Piermaster attended South Wharf with R. Allison – when Allison acknowledged that he had been the worse for liquor and was unable to perform his duty and that he had no excuse to offer for not coming to South Wharf when ordered.' Was discharged.
- **Burglary on Benmore**: 'On the 15th inst. **David Quinlan** Night Watchman on the steamers reported that on going to his cabin on board the hulk Benmore which is secured alongside the South Wharf, he found that the cover of the companion of the hatchway had been forced open and also the wardrobe cupboard in the cabin – and that a gold watch and £1.16.5 in money had been stolen. I accordingly directed all the night duty staff to attend at my office on Wednesday 17th inst. in order to enquire into the matter, when it appeared that each member of the night staff had paid regular visits to the wharf and steamers and the watchmen on the steamers saw nothing during the right to arouse suspicion – and upon interrogation each man of the night staff thought no one on the wharf would commit the alleged robbery – the Watchman Quinlan who reported his loss could not think of anyone upon whom suspicion might rest - '
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships (over 4 weeks) = 29 Recovered patients brought back = 47 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**May 11, 1895**
- **Collision at North Wharf:** the sailing ship Banfillan [?] of Glasgow collided with the pontoon at North Wharf and carried away the flag staff and the covering over the pontoon.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 10 Recovered patients brought back = 14 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**May 25, 1895**
- **Disappearing Clerk, and replacement**: 'On the 11st inst. **Mr C. Richardson** Clerk of the River Service left the South Wharf since which date I have not seen him – I have received four letters from him which I submit herewith. On the 22nd inst. **Mr Frank Fenn** formerly a Clerk to the Steward at the North Western Hospital for 2 ½ years was temporarily engaged …' [Full name is Frank Vaughan Fenn]
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 7 Recovered patients brought back = 11 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**June 10, 1895**
- **Damage to steamers from speeding vessel**: on 9 June the P.S. Laverock 'proceeded down the river at such a speed' that it caused damage to the sponsons of the Maltese Cross and Red Cross.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 9 Recovered patients brought back = 9 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**June 24, 1895**
- **Start of work on new staff buildings**: on 12th June Messrs Godson & Sons started erecting a hoarding around the ground and started excavating for laying the foundations.
- **Covering of piers**: work starting on the coverings of the bridges (piers) at South and North Wharves; appointed **Frank Walker** as Clerk of Works again.
- **Visit by Professor Smith** and 13 friends to inspect South Wharf facilitates and procedures; also went to the hospital ships.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 10 Recovered patients brought back = 10 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**July 6, 1895**

- **Report on new clerk Frank Fenn**: 'In accordance with your instructions to report upon the ability of Mr Frank Fenn Clerk of the River Service, I have to report that he has up to the present time performed his duty in a satisfactory manner. Seeing the difficulty under which I have at times been placed in allowing the Clerk to pay wages during my absence on duty or otherwise, I have asked Mr Fenn to be guaranteed for £100 at my expense.'
- **Damage caused by passing vessel**: on 26th June the S.S. Clacton Belle in passing caused damage to the port forward bollard of the Red Cross.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 31 Recovered patients brought back = 11
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 8 Cases admitted to the shelters = 9

**July 20, 1895**

- **Steam launch Swallow – use of, and deterioration**: reports that the current steam launch Swallow's timbers are quite rotten and it won't be safe to use for much longer; has made sketch for replacement launch. Explains that the launch is used for going to the different wharves with stores and also when there are only a few patients at the ships for conveying staff to Long Reach, and for taking the Medical Officer to North Wharf to see patients at times when there are fewer patients and there isn't a Medical Officer based there – saves the expense of using a large steamer.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 55 Recovered patients brought back = 8
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 9

**October 12, 1895** *(includes reports from September, when Committee Meeting attendance cancelled)*

- **Pierman changes**: **William Dullamore**, Asst. Pierman at North Wharf, appointed Pierman at South Wharf. **James Cole** appointed Asst. Pierman at South Wharf
- **Damage to Red Cross**: caused by sailing barge Blanche of Ipswich on the 5th Sept.
- **Steam launch Swallow**: timbers so rotten that not safe to use; placed alongside South Wharf.
- **Covering of bridges** [piers] at North and South Wharves completed, 2 months behind schedule.
- **Stoker sick: Charles Littlefield**, Stoker, off sick with tonsillitis
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships (since last report of 20 July) = 507
  Recovered patients brought back = 394
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 48 Cases admitted to the shelters = 33

**October 26, 1895**

- **Lodging allowance for Deckhands: George and William Livett**, Deck Hands [sons of Captain Livett] ask for lodging allowance.
- **Melancholia of James Dixon**, Mate of the Steamers: placed on sick list with Neurasthenia and Melancholia – '… this man has told me that he has been troubled in this way for over 18 months and at times is inwardly prompted to jump overboard and he has had great difficulty in restraining himself - The private medical practitioner to whom he has been has advised him to leave the river work entirely – as it will be necessary to replace this man by appointing another man as Mate during his absence – I ask if Committee desire to retain his services … I have paid this man's wages for the week he has been absent.' [Note in margin: 'Not to be employed']
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 12 Recovered patients brought back = 66
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 0 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**November 9, 1895**

- **Death of patient in shelters**: Margaret Peckham, age 28, from West Ham, died of smallpox the day after she was admitted to the shelters. Body removed to S.E. Hospital.
- **Unaccounted-for child found on steamer**: on 4th Nov when the Albert Victor had left the hospital ships and was returning to London, a child named Nelly Lee, aged 5, whose name wasn't on the discharge sheet, was found on the steamer. This delayed the vessel while phone enquiries were made from North Wharf. [Doesn't state what happened to the child].
- **Gate Porter sick: Henry Bird**, Gate Porter, off sick with 'congestion of the lungs'.
- **David Quinlan**, Night Watchman of the Steamers, temporarily replacing the Gate Porter, while **William Peskett**, age 40, widower, no children, formerly Master with Victoria Steam Boat Association and with the London Steam Boat Co, temporarily replaced him as Night Watchman.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 33 Recovered patients brought back = 61
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 10

**December 7, 1895**

- **Replacement of James Dixon: Charles Digby**, Deck Hand, temporarily replacing him as Mate.
- **Deck hand sick: William Livett** off sick with catarrh.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 17  Recovered patients brought back = 20
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3  Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**December 21, 1895**

- **Death of patient at South Wharf**: Mary Mills, age 36, from St Saviours, died a couple of hours after she was admitted on 13th December, from hemorrhagic smallpox
- **Ink for drawings**: In the list of things purchased from petty cash is 1 bottle of liquid Prussian blue for drawings, from Reeves & Son.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 22  Recovered patients brought back = 20
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2  Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

# 1895 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Brooke**, Tom B. |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Lanyon**, William |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George + George, jun. + William |

# 1896

***Smallpox under control;***
***female staff block completed; new steamer White Cross being built***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Report for the Year 1896 of the Statistical Committee, with Appendices

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1896; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1586)

Pages 45-46

- **New female staff block**: 'The erection at the South Wharf of commodious quarters for the nursing and domestic staff employed in connection with the hospital wards of the steamboats and the shelters on shore has been completed, and the buildings are occupied.'
- **Patient shelter**: 'In our report for 1894, we mentioned that plans had been approved by the Managers … for providing a shelter at South Wharf, Rotherhithe, for the accommodation of smallpox patients who arrive at the wharf too late at night for immediate transport to the hospital ships at Long Reach. These plans provided for the accommodation of 14 patients. After correspondence with the Local Government Board with regard to a reduction in the number of patients, that board finally, by letter dated May 29th 1896, informed the Managers that provision should not be made for more than six patients as a maximum. In a report on this letter which we presented to the Managers on November 7th last, we expressed our regret that the Board should have considered it necessary to restrict the accommodation to be provided to such a small number as six patients, but as even that limited provision would enable the Managers on many occasions to dispense with the use of the ambulance steamboats at night, we considered that steps for the erection of the shed should be taken at as early a date as possible, and we recommended that the Works Committee should be instructed to prepare revised plans and estimate accordingly.'
- **Cost of running river ambulance service** £8,594 (no costs given for the steamer maintenance)

Page 49

- **Conveyed 2399 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 188
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 243
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 153
  Staff etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1815
- **Ambulance steamers listed**: Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross and Red Cross

Pages 88-89

- **Smallpox cases**: 265 cases sent to the wharves. Of these, 188 were sent to the hospital ships, and 75 sent home not suffering from smallpox. 3 smallpox cases were treated in the shelters, 2 of which were already convalescing from smallpox, the other died (a boy aged 7). A total of 2 died in the shelters (the boy with smallpox, the other patient from measles and pneumonia).

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1896-97 Vol. XXX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1896-97)

Page 46

- **Plans for smallpox shelter**: Letter from the Local Government Board [10 April] suggesting 'certain alterations' and returning the plans to be amended accordingly [from minutes of 11 April 1896]

Page 138

- **Dr Brooke temporarily employed at Gloucester:** '...We have to report that the Town Council of the City of Gloucester have applied for permission to be given for Dr. Brooke, Medical Officer of the River Ambulance Service, to take the management of the Council's Smallpox Hospitals during the continuance of the present epidemic in that city. Having regard to the very few cases of smallpox which for sometime past have occurred in the Metropolis, to our feeling that the Managers would desire to afford every assistance in their power to the Council in their present unfortunate circumstances, and to the necessity for immediate action, we considered it advisable to at once accede to the Council's request, without waiting to obtain the Managers' consent, but subject to the reservation of the Managers' right to recall Dr. Brooke for duty in their service at any time they may consider it necessary to do so, and on the understanding that, while engaged in the service of the Gloucester Corporation, he shall not be paid any salary or lodging allowance by the Managers...' (He left on 23 April and returned on 29 August 1896 – P. 486 - and **Dr. D. N. Cooper**, Assistant Medical Officer rendered extra services – P. 565) [from minutes of 25 April 1896]

Page 188

- **New smallpox shelte**r: reference to the proposed new shelter for smallpox patients at South Wharf, and the stipulation that the additional accommodation should not provide for more than six patients.

Page 644

- **Plans for smallpox shelter**: plans and estimates were drawn up for the erection of a detention shelter for six smallpox patients at South Wharf [from minutes of 5 December 1896]

Page 753

- **Nursing Superintendent Alice Pope – rheumatism exacerbated by South Wharf**: '...Miss [Alice] Pope was formerly employed for four years and nine months as Charge Nurse at the Hospital Ships, which post she voluntarily resigned, and after some interval she was appointed Nursing Superintendent on 20th December, 1895. For some time past she has suffered from rheumatism, and at our request was recently examined by Dr. Brooke, Medical Officer, River Ambulance Service, who reports that she is now suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, and further states "there can be no question that residence in such damp and low-lying locality as Rotherhithe has very much accelerated in Miss Pope's case a disease, which as a rule, is not so rapidly progressive." Under these circumstances, and as in our opinion Miss Pope is now unable to carry out the duties of her responsible office, with efficiency, we felt it our duty to terminate Miss Pope's appointment, and to make the recommendation set forth above...' (They recommended she be awarded a gratuity of £25 in consideration of her loss of office) [ from minutes of 30 January 1897 ]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1891-95*

[ *includes Jan 1896 ] (London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/002)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 4, 1896**

- **Female staff quarters**: currently being erected. Recommends brick wall be built behind it facing the roadway, to replace the wooden fence.
- **Deck Hand off sick**: **Walter Brown**, Deck Hand, had only been in service for 3 weeks, but was off sick with Gonorrhea and Orchitis. Not paid during his absence.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 18 Recovered patients brought back = 20
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**January 18, 1896**

- **Collision**: on 7th Jan the barge Sam collided with the Geneva Cross and slightly damaged a plate.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 28 Recovered patients brought back = 27
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 4

*Reports for 1896 continue in the following report book:*

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

All reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee

**February 1, 1896**

- **Deck hand requests lodging allowance: George Livett** [oldest son of Captain Livett] informed him 'that he is not now living with his father at 319 Rotherhithe Street the property of the Managers – and asking to be allowed the usual lodging allowance to Deck Hands'.
- **New Superintendent Nurse Miss Alice Pope**: joined the River Service on Jan 21 and took over the duties of Superintendent Nurse.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 22 Recovered patients brought back = 21
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 11 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**February 15, 1896**

- **Jury service**: 'On the 4th inst. **Captain G. Livett** and Piermaster **F Gardener** were directed to attend as jurymen at a Coroner's Inquest – I would like to know if the staff engaged in Hospital work are exempt from serving. So that such being the case due notice may be sent to the Coroner.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 14 Recovered patients brought back = 30
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 0 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**February 29, 1896**

- **Injury during building of staff residence**: 'On the 21st inst. Mr Sandall clerk of works for building the new staff residence severely injured his knee by stepping upon a piece of wood from which a nail protruded and which caused him to be thrown down, the knee coming into contact with a brick – he has not yet been able to return to duty.'
- **Henry Wilson and William Livett off sick / injured**: 'On 17th inst. Henry Wilson deck hand was placed on the sick list suffering from urethritis [inflammation of the urethra which is often caused by STD] and orchitis [inflammation of the testicles] and on 24th inst. William Livett deck hand was placed on the sick list owning to an injury to his leg while on board the S. S. Geneva Cross. The former has not been paid during the time he was absent ill viz. 7 days. The latter has been paid but has not yet returned to duty – I submit medical certifications herewith."
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 8 Recovered patients brought back = 11
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**March 14, 1896**

- **Collision**: 'On 29th inst. the sailing barge "Matilda" owned by Mr Cunis of 61 Great Tower Street collided with the S. S. 'Red Cross' and damaged the port paddle box.'
- **Dismissal of Henry Wilson**: 'In accordance with your instructions I on 4th inst. gave H. Wilson (Deck hand) notice that his services would not be required after the 11th inst. and on the latter date he was discharged the service – I ask to be allowed to engage another deck hand in his stead.'
- **Electrician Charles Russel leaves**: "On the 9th inst. Charles Russel electrical attendant absent himself from duty and returned to duty on the 11th inst. and asked to be allowed to resign at once as he had obtained a better situation when I informed him that he must send in his resignation in the usual manner by giving a week's notice – he left duty at 5.30 on 11th since which date he has not returned – I ask for this man to be discharged …'
- **Sick List:** '**W Livett** returned to duty on the 8th inst. having been absent injured for 12 days. On the 9th inst. **Chas Denny** stoker was placed on the sick list suffering from a severe chill …'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15 Recovered patients brought back = 19
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**March 27, 1896**

- **New staff:** on 17th **Ernest Walter Mason**, 'a freeman of the river lately an able seaman in the SS Silvertown as a deck hand' and **Frederick W West**, on 24th, as an electrical attendant for the Geneva Cross, coming with good recommendations from his former employers.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 9 Recovered patients brought back = 16
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 7 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**April 11, 1896**

- **Change of Pierman**: Mr **James Cole**, assistant Pierman at South Wharf resigns and is replaced by **Joseph King** - '…age 34. Single. Formerly an assistant pierman at South Wharf who resigned in order to better himself but is now out of employment. King is a very steady man and is also a very handy man'.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 2 Recovered patients brought back = 15
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**April 25, 1896**

- **Smallpox patient transferred from barge**: 'On the 14th inst. upon receipt of a wire from the Port Sanitary Inspector that there was a case of smallpox on board the barge "Milly" lying off the Old Barge House Wharf, Blackfriars … I ordered a steamer (**Dr Cooper** being on board) to proceed to the barge in case the barge should be in such a position as to render it unsafe or impossible for the land ambulance attendants to remove the patient – fortunately the barge was close to the wharf and it being high water at the time the patient was carried over a plank from the barge to the shore. Had it been anything but high water it would not have been safe to remove it – in cases of this description a light draught launch would be required.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 6 Recovered patients brought back = 14
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**May 9, 1896**

- **Death of patient at South Wharf**: 'Arthur Wright patient, aged 7 who was admitted to the shelters at 2.55pm on 1st inst. died at 12.30 am from Haemorrhagic small pox.'
- **Bolting horse causes havoc**: 'On the 5th inst. as reported to the Clerk to the Board an ambulance attached to the Western Ambulance station arrived at South Wharf at 1.10 pm with a patient from Kensington – after the patient had been removed and as the ambulance was being drawn out of the Receiving Shed, the driver being at the horse's head, a passing steamer blew her syren [?] whistle which startled the horse and caused it to bolt, throwing the driver nearly under the wheels. On the way down the drive the nurse who was inside the carriage opened the door and almost immediately afterward was thrown out. The horse proceeded towards the entrance gates and on the way the carriage collided with the outer wall of the change rooms for the staff – tearing the door from its hinges and otherwise injuring the body of the carriage. The horse was brought up after coming into collision with the post of the main gate which being rotten at the foot gave way – the nurse was conveyed to the western station in another vehicle.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 2 Recovered patients brought back = 4
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**June 6, 1896**

- **Possibility of tennis court**: 'In accordance with your instructions to report upon the practicability of forming a tennis court at South Wharf, its position on the wharf, and the probable cost of same. In view of a shelter for night patients being erected at the end of the wharf nearest to the pier – a portion of the ground at the back of the shelters could be used for a tennis court – the ground would require to be levelled and properly turfed the cost of which would be about £15…'
- **Collisions**: 'On the 15th ult. a sailing barge the name of which could not be obtained collided with the S.S. 'Red Cross" and damaged the port paddle box and wheel – and on the 28th ult. the 'Southern Belle' owned by the London & Clacton Steam Boat Co. proceeded at such a rate past the South Wharf at low water that the indraught caused the stern hawser pipe rings and the port stern bollard to be broken and the deck in wake of same was slashed of the "Geneva Cross"…'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15 Recovered patients brought back = 7
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 8 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**June 20, 1896**

- **Boilers in new female staff quarters:** Lengthy report about the question of appointing a stoker to maintain the two boilers in the new quarters for female staff. The boilers are for general heating in the buildings and hot water for baths, lavatories and washing up purposes. One of the boilers would always be alight and in cold weather both boilers would be in use.
- **Staff accident**: 'On the 8th inst. **Thomas New** stoker in passing over the gangway from the pontoon to the steamers injured his right knee and has been on the sick list since that date suffering from

Synovitis. He has been paid full pay for the 1st week since which he has been paid half pay…I ask for an extension of full pay for this man as he has been injured while on duty.'

- **Proposed tennis court**: Detailed statement about the laying of a tennis court. Further estimates have been requested, and some quotes received. Also a discussion about the merits, or otherwise, of the different types of surface the tennis court might have. [No further references to it].
- **Damage to steamer**: 'On the 11th inst. the S.S. 'Laverock' passed the S. Wharf at such a rate that the indraught caused such a strain to be thrown on to the mooring chains … as to carry away the starboard bow hawser pipe…' (doesn't say which vessel).
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 19 Recovered patients brought back = 6
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 7

**July 20, 1896**

- **Resignation of night watchman**: **David Quinlan** night watchman on the steamers tendered his resignation. New night watchman sought, and a deck hand standing in to do the work meanwhile.
- **Fire caused by pipe in pocket**: 'On the 16th inst. about 11.0 am the piermaster at South Wharf reported that he had discovered a fire in one of the cupboards of the private clothes room of the staff change rooms. The private clothing in the cupboard was entirely destroyed and upon examination I found a pipe and some half burnt matches. Fortunately the fire was discovered before any damage beyond the man's private clothing being destroyed and the inside of the door and the sides of the cupboard being scorched was done. The name of the man using the cupboard is **Chas Denny**, Stoker. And it is presumed that on his coming to the wharf at 10.30am…he must have put his pipe in his pocket under the impression that it was out.'
- **Sick list**: **Chas Littlefield**, stoker, 'was placed on the sick list suffering from diarrhoea.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 10 Recovered patients brought back = 9
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**September 26, 1896**

- **Collisions and damage to vessels**: 'Since the last meeting…the following damages to vessels occurred; On the 4th Aug the barge "Era" [or Eva?] collided with the "Maltese Cross" while lying secured at the moorings off the South Wharf…On 10th August the S.S "Ella Sayer" fouled the Lower Dolphin off South Wharf … On 24th August while the "Maltese Cross" was on passage to Long Reach and just abreast of the Surrey Commercial Dock entrance, the sailing barge "Charley Little" when under full sail collided with the port paddle box of this steamer and severely damaged the paddle box and paddle wheel…On 29th Aug the S.S. Laverock ... passed the South Wharf at such a rate as to damage the starboard Bow Hawser pipe of the "Geneva Cross" and on 12 Sept the S.S. "Royal Sovereign" … did a similar damage to the port bow hawser pipe…All damages made good at the expense of the owners of the vessels which did the damage.'
- **New night gate porter**: '…**W Dullamore** night gate porter at South Wharf gave notice to leave the Service…I engaged **Frederick Hiscock** age 43 widower…in his stead.'
- **Resignation**: 'On the 3rd inst. **Frederick West** Electric Light Attendant resigned to take up an appointment in a P & O Steamer he left the service on 10th inst…'
- **Sick list:** 'On the 8th inst. **J.T. Littlefield** engineer was placed on the sick list suffering from an ulcerated leg and has not yet been able to return to duty … and on the same date **George Crouch** night watchman on the steamers was taken with lumbago. **Dr. Cooper** had him removed to Guys Hospital – upon his return 9 days afterward Dr. Cooper recommended that Crouch should be put upon duty somewhere where he would not be liable to get wet – I have therefore ... appointed him Asst. Pierman at North Wharf … and have appointed **Walter Bott** Asst. Pierman at North Wharf as night watchman of the steamers in Crouch's stead. George Crouch joined the service as Asst. Pierman 31 July 1895.'
- **New steam launch White Cross**: 'The steam launch now being built … has been quite ready for launching for a fortnight but owing to the wet weather I considered it advisable to defer launching her till the 3rd Oct. for had she been launched the work upon her would have been stopped, as the men could not have worked upon the boat in the open in such weather. I have been instructed that the name of the launch is to be the "White Cross"'.
- **New female staff quarters nearly complete, and levelling of ground**: 'The building of the new quarters for female staff has with the exception of one or two minor matters … been completed – it will be necessary to have the ground surrounding same levelled up as it is principally clay, for paved or stone paths will be required to be laid.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 15 Recovered patients brought back = 45

Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 10  Cases admitted to the shelters = 8

**October 10, 1896**

- **Engineer off sick: Henry Littlefield**, engineer, still on sick leave with an ulcerated leg.
- **Preparations for White Cross**: 'On the 3rd inst. I proceeded to Gloucester to examine the hull and be present at the launching of the new steam launch – the launching was performed very satisfactorily and the boat was name the "White Cross" …'
- **Levelling of ground around new female staff quarters**: Makes a report on laying paths and making up the ground at the new staff quarters at South Wharf. 'The ground surrounding the building is of clay and soft earth and is very low and requires to be made up to at least 6 inches higher level than at present'. A plan submitted of proposed paved paths.
- **Fence and wall blown down**: 'On the 7th inst. during the gale the fence at the end of the garden of No. 319 Rotherhithe Street was blown down and a portion of the wall to which it was secured was also carried away…' Repairs done.
- **New female staff quarters handed over, and stoker appointed for boilers:** 'On the 8th inst. I received possession of the new staff quarters… There are one or two minor matters to be completed… as we have had such a continuance of wet weather I am of opinion it would be advisable to light the fires in the boilers and warm the building … I have appointed **Thomas New** who has been a stoker in this service for over 10 years to take charge of the boilers...'
- **Collision**: 'On the 9th inst. the barge Arthur Daley … collided with the paddle box of the Maltese Cross…'

**October 24, 1896**

- **Piermaster sick:** Night Piermaster **J. Foster** 'absented himself from duty' because of illness.
- **New Stoker**: **Joseph Bailey** stoker at the hospital ships asked to be appointed as stoker at South Wharf in place of Thomas New; had already given notice at the hospital ships.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1  Recovered patients brought back = 3

**November 7, 1896**

- **New electric light attendant**: **Francis Hunt**, aged 23, single, was engaged to replace **F. W. West** as the electric light attendant. The latter had resigned.
- **Sickness pay request**: 'I submit letter from **H. Littlefield**, engineer, asking for full pay during the time he was absent from duty owning to an injury … I do not recommend any further payment beyond the sick pay already paid to him'.
- **Deck hand sick: George Livett**, Deck Hand, off ill.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1 (No further patients numbers given)

**November 21, 1896**

- **Dispute over collision between Maltese Cross and Charley Little**: 'In my report of 26 Sept last I informed the Committee that the sailing barge 'Charley Little' when under full sail collided with the S.S. 'Maltese Cross" and severely damaged the paddle box and paddle wheel. After the damage had been made good the insurance company placed the matter in the hands of their solicitors with the view, if possible of recovering from the barge owner the amount paid for making good the damage but I regret to say that the solicitors found the master of the 'Maltese Cross' to be in fault … I desire to draw your attention to the fact that the statement made to me by **Captain Punter** who was in charge of the S.S. 'Maltese Cross' shortly after the collision did not agree with the statement made to the Receiver of Wrecks and to the solicitors … Captain Punter in his statement to me said that on seeing the barge be blew his whistle once in order to signal to the barge master to keep his port helm, but almost immediately after he blew the whistle, the barge's helm was put hard down and the barge came right at the 'Maltese Cross' – whereas in his statement to the solicitors … he said the barge was sailing on the port tack and was heading slightly for the south shore and kept her course – and under the latter circumstances it was Captain Punters' place to have kept clear and gone under the barge's stern. The Master of the barge made the same statement to the Receiver of Wrecks as to his sailing as Captain Punter did and said he fully expected the steamer would pass under his stern. Captain Punter no doubt committed an error of judgement but he should have properly reported the circumstances -'
- **Staff overboard**: 'On the 11th inst. Ward Servant **Emily Puill** [?] in passing to the 'Albert Victor' from the 'Geneva Cross' fell overboard but was at once secured by deck hand **W. Livett** - '

- **Change of Asst. Pierman**: **Thomas Baily**, Asst. Pierman, gives notice and leaves on 18th. **William Davis**, 'late a leading seaman in the Royal Navy' is engaged instead.
- **Captain Livett sick**: is absent through illness on 9th and returns to duty on 13th.

**December 5, 1896**

- **Possibility of acquiring 321 Rotherhithe Street**: gives detailed sizes of rooms and condition. Suggests that if the property is acquired then Captain Livett could live in it, as his present house could then be used for male staff.
- **Collisions**: On 19th ult. the barge Bombay No 62 collides with the Red Cross, damaging a paddle box. On 20th ult. the S.S. 'El Dorado' collides with the lower dolphin at South Wharf.
- **Preparations for delivery of the White Cross**: White Cross due to leave the shipbuilding yard that week and '…I propose going as far as Bristol where the boat starts and then joining her again at Reading as it will take about 10 days for her to come round being allowed to stream at a rate of not more than about 4 knots an hour through the canals'.
- **Decoration of Dr Brooke's quarters**: 'Dr Brooke would like the room appointed for a sitting room to have the skirting board and french window painted to suit the paper selected for the room – to paint this… to match the paper will cost about 50/-'

**December 18, 1896**

- **Delivery of White Cross via canals and Thames**: 'On 11th inst. I proceeded to Stroud … prior to the vessel leaving the shipbuilders yard – a short run was made that day with the boat on the canal when it was found that the orifices of the Sea Kingston valves were choked with weed and leaves – these having been cleared the boat left the contractors yard at Stroud at 7am on Saturday 12th inst… I proceeded in her to as far as the entrance to the Bristol Docks (near Sharpness) and during the passage everything worked very satisfactorily – the boat passed through the docks…(at)…the Kennet and Avon Canal – I am going to Reading tomorrow … to meet her and will I hope be alongside Temple Pier about 9 pm on Monday 21st Inst.' 'I have obtained the requisite permit … for the 'White Cross' to come down the Thames from Reading without registration'.

## Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to enquire into the nursing of the sick poor in workhouses (1902) (Wellcome Library online, ref: .b21357687)

Page 182

- **Nurse numbers**: table showing no's of nurses, matrons and superintendent nurses at M.A.B. institutions. At South Wharf the totals in 1896 were: Nurses = 8, Matrons = 2

# 1896 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Brooke**, Tom B. |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Lanyon**, William |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George + George, jun. + William |
| South Wharf: | **Quinlan**, David |
| | **Miller**, John |

# 1897

***Minimal smallpox cases; staff numbers reduced; White Cross starts service.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board
## Report for the Year 1897 of the Statistical Committee, with Appendices
(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1897; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1587)

Pages 93 - 94

- **Two deaths at the wharf**: one of smallpox, the other of 'senile decay'
  'The patient who died at the wharf was W.C., a male, aged 82 years. This patient had been sent from an infected ward at the Central London Sick Asylum, and was suffering from vaccinia on admission, and, being very old and feeble, was unable to withstand the constitutional disturbance to which the vaccination gave rise, the patient having a very bad arm.'

Page 52

- **Conveyed 1,283 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 69
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 55
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 132
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,027
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Red Cross, Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, White Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1897-98 Vol. XXXI
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1897-98)

Page 76

- **Accommodation in houses in Rotherhithe Street and mooring hulk**: 'The Managers at present possess Nos. 313, 315, 317, and 319, in Rotherhithe Street, and the house which it is now proposed to purchase adjoins No. 319. One of these houses (No. 315) is occupied by the Medical Officer of the River Service, and the other houses by men employed at the South Wharf and on the steamboats. The house that it is now proposed to acquire [No. 321] would enable us to make accommodation for two men who are at present lodged on an old disused mooring hulk lying on the mud alongside the wharf, and for two others who at present sleep in cubicles which have been fitted up in part of an old stable.' [from minutes of 27 March 1897]

Page 589

- **Staffing reductions, including Medical Officer Dr Brooke**: '...Having regard to the fact that smallpox has now for a considerable time been in abeyance in the Metropolis and in the large provincial towns from which it might be introduced into London, we have made considerable reductions in the nursing and navigating staffs of the River Ambulance Service; and we think that the time has now arrived when the Board may safely dispense with the services of a Medical Officer at South Wharf, Rotherhithe. Dr. T. B. Brooke, the Medical Officer in question, has been in the Board's service since 23rd January, 1893. His appointment is a temporary one and is subject to termination at one month's notice, but having regard to all the circumstances of his case we consider that he should on leaving the Board's service be granted a gratuity of £30...' (The Managers decided to give Dr Brooke three months' notice and so the Committee withdrew the proposal of a gratuity – see P. 637) [from minutes of 6 November 1897]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 1, 1897**

- **Delayed arrival of White Cross due to death of engineer**: 'On the day of the last committee meeting I fully expected to have the 'White Cross' alongside Temple Pier for your inspection, but owing to an accident at Newbury whereby Mr. F. J. Cook son of Dr Cook of Stroud who was an articled engineer pupil to Messrs Clark & Co. [builders of the White Cross] was unfortunately drowned the boat was detained on account of the inquest – the 'White Cross' however arrived at South Wharf on the following day (22 December) and was at once placed in dry dock for examination of her bottom…' Various small defects were repaired and a preliminary trial at Long Reach arranged – the official trial coming later.
- **Sick list**: **Henry Littlefield**, engine driver, was placed on the sick list with eczema.
- **Pierman applies for Thames police: William Pimm**, Assistant Pierman, asked for a testimonial to enable him to be appointed to the River Thames Police. '…he has conducted himself with sobriety and zealous attention to his duties.'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**January 18, 1897**

- **Accommodation for male staff**: Submits a report [not enclosed] indicating the amount of accommodation for male staff at South Wharf and his opinion as to the minimum required.
- **Sick list: W. Bott** on the sick list with a cold.
- **Superintendent catches chill:** 'I regret to say that on the trial trip I took a chill which has necessitated my remaining in bed since Thursday but I hope to be at the office in a day or two …'
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1

**January 30, 1897**

- **Collisions**: on 17th the barge 'Corrie Lea' collided with the upper dolphin at the end of the pier, and on 21st the barge 'Stanmore' collided with the middle dolphin.
- **Deck hand resigns: Walter Brown**, deck hand, resigned and is not replaced.
- **Deck hand injured: George Livett**, deck hand [son of Captain Livett], injured his foot.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**February 15, 1897**

- **Plan for accommodation in Rotherhithe Street houses**: a scheme for fully utilising the existing accommodation in the Rotherhithe Street houses is submitted 'providing therein for the men now sleeping in the hulk and in the cubicles on the wharf'. Also makes arrangements to dispense with the services of the Night Gate Porter.
- **White Cross – official trial:** the White Cross is given its final / official trial, six consecutive runs to Long Reach. It was run at full speed without stopping and the speeds of the runs, the workings of the valves and the pressure of the steam, were recorded and considered 'very satisfactory indeed'. The finishing touches and Passenger Certificate from the Board of Trade are the only things required before taking the boat over from the contractors, likely to be on Thursday next.
- **Death of patient on steamer**: on 8th inst. at 9am Elijah Jamieson, age 48, a patient from Camberwell Infirmary, died of small pox on board the S.S. 'Albert Victor' while lying secured at the end of the pier at South Wharf – the body was sent to the S.E. Hospital for internment.
- **Nursing superintendent leaves: Miss Alice Pope**, nursing superintendent, left on 10th Feb.
- **No. of patients** taken to hospital ships = 26 Recovered patients brought back = nil
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 11

**February 27, 1897**

- **New steamer White Cross received**: 'On 18th inst. the steam launch "White Cross" was taken over from the contractors who built the vessel'.
- **New Nursing Superintendent**: 'On 23rd inst. Miss **Jane Edwards** joined this service and took over the duties of nursing superintendent'.

- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 19 Recovered patients brought back = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 9 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**March 13, 1897**

- **Carpenter overboard**: 'On the 3rd inst. while **Chas Johnstone** carpenter was engaged repairing the woodwork of the piles at South Wharf he fell overboard – the following day he complained of not feeling well and was sent home suffering from severe chill – he returned to duty on the 6th inst…'
- **Stoker sick:** 'On the 10th inst. Chas Denny stoker was … suffering from tonsillitis…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 12
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**March 27, 1897**

- **Boiler scurfer temporarily disabled by vaccination**: 'Upon the 11th inst. Mr John Thomas a boiler scurfer engaged in cleaning the boiler of the 'Red Cross' was re-vaccinated by Dr Brook before going on board. On the 17th inst. his arm was so bad that he was unable to resume work and continued so till the 26th inst... The rate of wages for boiler scurfers is 5/-, 6/- and 7/- per day according to the class of work. Under the circumstances I paid this man for the eight days he was unable to work at the rate of 5/- per day and trust this will meet your approval…'
- **Mate off sick**: 'On 22nd inst. Mr **William Kelly** night mate on the steamers was placed on the sick list suffering from an abscess…'
- **Death of patient at South Wharf**: 'William Cameron, aged 82 patient admitted to shelters 1st March 1897 died at 8.15pm on 24th March 1897 of senile decay. The body was removed to the S.E. Hospital for internment on 25th inst.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Recovered patients brought back = 13
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**April 10, 1897**

- **Work injury**: 'In hoisting the cylinder of the 'Red Cross' engines on board… **William Parker**, stoker, had his right hand injured by being jammed between the chain sling and the cylinder. I ask to be allowed to pay this man full pay for the time he is absent…he will probably return to duty in about a week…'
- **Excessive gas consumption by Piermaster Gardner**: 'I am of the opinion that a limit should be placed by Committee upon the quantity of gas allowed to be consumed in the managers' houses and now in the occupation of married staff and that any quantity beyond that allowed by the managers should be charged to the officer occupying the quarters. I submit statement herewith showing the consumption – in each house and from which it will be seen that the difference in the consumption of gas in No. 313 when occupied by **J. Dixon** late a mate in this service – and by the present occupant (piermaster **Gardner**) is considerable, the mean consumption for the several quarters for 3 years during the occupation of each being

| | Lady Day Quarter H | Midsummer H | Michaelmas | Xmas |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| J. Dixon for 1890. 1 & 2 | 6.400 | 4.300 | 4.000 | 6.600 |
| Piermaster Gardener for 1894 5 & 6 | 14.900 | 6.600 | 5.200 | 11.900 |

  Each time I have drawn the attention of the piermaster to the quantity consumed he has informed me that he has been as economical as possible and that there has not been any waste. Nor is there any leakage. In 317 the consumption is I think very moderate but in no. 319 I think it higher than it should be.'
- **Collision**: 'Upon the 9th inst. about 7.50pm a barge in tow of a tug boat collided with the stern bulwarks of the 'Red Cross' and slightly damaged same – this damage has been reported… it was impossible to get the name of the vessel which did the damage as the tug boat proceeded down the river.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**April 24, 1897**

- **Collision**: a barge collides with the S. S. 'Red Cross' and damages the stern bulwarks.
- **Gas consumption in staff houses**: 'In accordance with your instructions for me to report what in my opinion would be a fair consumption of gas in each of the houses in Rotherhithe Street now in

the occupation of the staff, I am of the opinion that the following would be a fair consumption per quarter indicated in each of the houses.' [Table follows showing suggested fair consumption]
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 6
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5 Cases admitted to the shelters = nil

**May 8, 1897**
- **Gas consumption of Captain Livett**: 'I submit herewith letter from Capt. G. Livett asking to be allowed to pay the difference between the quantity of gas allowed and that consumed by him at the end of each year.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 6 Recovered patients brought back = 5
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**May 22, 1897**
- **Resignation of Deck Hand: William Mason** deck hand gives notice and leaves on 20th.
- **Wheeled litter sent for exhibition**: 'On 18th inst. in accordance with instructions from the Clerk to the Board I forwarded a wheeled litter completely fitted for conveying a cholera patient to the Victoria Era Exhibition at Earls Court.'
- **Visit by Dr Meyer from Berlin**: 'On the 19th inst. Dr Geo. Mayer from Berlin visited South Wharf and was shewn over the wharf and buildings on the same and the steamers – the method of receiving and embarking patients was explained to him …'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 6 Recovered patients brought back = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = nil

**June 19, 1897**
- **Visit by Dr Meyer from Berlin**: Mr Meyer of Berlin again visited South Wharf and then went on to the Hospital ships by steamer.
- **Collisions**: on the 15th during a gale the barges 'Busy' and 'Daisy' break adrift and foul the hawsers which are to hold South Wharf steamers in position. On the same day the barge 'Belgium' collides with the S.S. Red Cross and Geneva Cross.
- **Visit by Public Health Class**: 'On 17th inst. … eleven members of Professor Smith's Public Health Class visited South Wharf and were shown over the wharf and buildings and the steamers and … a special steamer was provided to convey those gentlemen to the hospital ships at Long Reach and back.'
- **Jubilee leave for staff**: 'I desire to ask what leave (if any) is to be granted to the staff of this service as Jubilee leave.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = [0?] Recovered patients brought back = 11
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**July 3, 1897**
- **Staff redundancies**: on 23 June **Joseph Hull** deck hand was taken ill with measles and on 25th June, 'he being one of the deck hands to be discharged (in accordance with the scheme submitted to Committee at their last meeting) received notice that his services would not be required after 3rd July. **George Livett** deck hand and **Chas Denny** and **Chas G. Littlefield**, stokers, also received notice that their services would not be required after the same date and in accordance with that scheme. **Capt. W. Punter** has been reduced to mate, **W Kelly** night mate and **Henry Harvey** and **C.J. Digby** day mates have been reduced to deck hands, and **Wm Lanyon** night engine driver and **Henry Littlefield** engine driver have been reduced to stokers.'
  This left: 1 complete crew, 1 look out man, 1 spare hand for deck work, 1 Engineer and 2 stokers for the Geneva Cross, 3 stokers for the other 4 boats and for relieving in case of sickness.
- **Sick list**: on 28th June **Thomas New** stoker left the wharf through illness suffering from gastritis.
- **Accommodation for stoker / engineer**: 'The Night engine driver having been reduced to stoker I have to ask if he is to remain in the engineer's house attached to the wharf or if the engineer is to take same – in such a case I would recommend that the 2 rooms taken off the house when altered for the accommodation of female staff be restored.'
- **Superannuation contributions of discharged staff**: 'I submit herewith applications from **G. Livett** deck hand and **Chas Denny** stokers, also from **J. W. Hull** and **Chas Littlefield** for the return of their contributions under the Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act they having been discharged through the reduction of staff.'

- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**July 17, 1897**

- **Resignation of night gate porter**: **Fred Hiscock**, night gate porter, gave notice of intention to resign and 'under present circumstances I do not recommend this appointment being done away with – but should Committee consider it necessary – the Night Piermaster will until further orders be required to perform the duty of a night gate porter in addition to his other duties…'
- **Accommodation for engineer**: 'In accordance with your instructions for the engineer to reside in the house formerly occupied by the night engine driver, who in accordance with the scheme for the reduction of staff has accepted the position of stoker – I have given **Wm Lanyon** stoker notice to vacate No 313 Rotherhithe St…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = [0?] Recovered patients brought back = [0?]
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**August 28, 1897**

- **Compensation for damage**: One pound paid in damages by the owners of 'Busy' and 'Daisy' which ruined the hawsers of the 'Red Cross. [see June 19, 1897]
- **Nursing Sisters: Miss J Edwards**, nursing sister, left, and **Miss Anne H. Witlock** took over.
- **Superannuation contributions: Henry Littlefield** 'late an engine driver' asks for the return of the amount deducted on account of the Poor Law Superannuation Act.
- **Bath for Engineer's house**: 'I have this day received a letter from the Engineer asking for a bath to be fitted in the house in his occupation'. [In the margin beside this is written 'not granted']
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**September 25, 1897**

- **Sick list: James Hellyer** stoker was placed on the sick list suffering from Parotitis.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**October 9, 1897**

- **Accommodation for night Piermaster**: arrangements being made to provide the night piermaster with quarters at South Wharf. '…the only available room is the one cut off no. 319 Rotherhithe Street vacated by the late Superintending **Nurse Pope**. This could be made into a bed sitting room, there is not any furniture and the following would be required, 1 single bedstead with wire mattress – 1 hair mattress – 1 bolster – 1 pillow, 1 wash stand with set complete – 1 table – 1 chiffonier (small) – 1 easy chair, 3 chairs, 1 carpet, 2 sets of window curtains – 1 chest drawers (painted)…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**October 23, 1897**

- **Damage to old wall, and use of river passageway**: 'During the night of 12th inst. a portion of one of the piers of the old boundary wall forming one side of the passage to the river at South Wharf was pulled out about eighteen inches from the bottom making a hole about 18 inches in diameter. I have had the same made good and as this was done by some unknown person in the street I have written to the District Surveyor calling his attention to same, and have asked him, if possible, to have the passage closed, as there are no steps from the river wall at the end of the passage to enable anyone to land or embark, and it is at all times in a most insanitary condition, the passage now being only used as a W.C.. The District Surveyor has written me to say he will give the matter his attention… If this passage be closed it will be a great boon not only to this wharf but also to the residents in the neighbourhood.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**November 6, 1897**

- **Closure of passageway to river**: The District Surveyor of Rotherhithe 'informed me that it has been decided to close the passage to the river…'

- **Collisions**: 'On the 24th ult. the barge "Hope" owned by Messrs J R Francis & Co, Lower Thames St, collided with the dolphin at South Wharf and broke the angle iron upon one of the piles … and on the 25th ult. the S. S. "Plato" … collided with the "Maltese Cross" and broke her away from her moorings, causing considerable damage to both the SS Maltese Cross and Geneva Cross.' The 'Maltese Cross' and 'Geneva Cross' are each to be placed in dry dock for repair. 'Upon 27th ult. I received a letter from the Clerk to the Board enclosing a summons requiring the Captain and others to attend the Receiver of Wrecks to give evidence as to the damage to these vessels…'. Captain **G. Livett** and deckhand **W. Kelly** attend, and subsequently also with Charles Thomson go to solicitors.
- **Sick list: Chas Johnstone** carpenter placed on the sick list on 4th suffering from a severe cold.
- **Superintendent's nose injury** 'I regret to say I was obliged to remain away from the office from 28th Oct to 2nd Nov owing to an injury to my nose, through coming into contact with a chain, in addition to a severe cold with rheumatism. During this time I was in daily communication with the office.'

**November 20, 1897**

- **Stoker suspected of bringing in spirits**: 'On the 17th inst. the superintending nurse informed me that she suspected **Thomas New**, stoker in the female staff quarters, of bringing spirits into the staff building. I at once questioned this man… when he denied having done so, and as the superintending nurse could only give circumstantial evidence… I think it is a matter for Committee's consideration.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = [0?] Recovered patients brought back = 2
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = [0?] Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**December 4, 1897**

- **Collision**: on the 25th Nov the S. S. 'Port Albert" in going downriver collided with the Geneva Cross, and damaged the paddle boxes, wheels etc.
- **Flooding and gale damage**: 'During the gale and exceedingly high tide on 29th inst. when the tide rose to within 8 inches of the top of the South Wharf, owing to the rotten condition of some of the wood facing, the tide forced its way through the river wall, more especially in the vicinity of the large crane.' Further flooding is guarded against by the building of a dam around it which will eventually be filled in with ashes from the steamers 'and so prevent any flooding whatever'. 'Part of one side of the timber built shed at South Wharf which faces the adjoining wharf was blown down …'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = nil Recovered patients brought back = nil
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = nil

**December 20, 1897**

- **Proposal to dispose of Red Cross**: 'In accordance with your instruction I submit herewith a report upon the S.S. "Red Cross" shewing in what respects it would be advantageous to dispose of this vessel.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = nil Recovered patients brought back = nil
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = nil Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

# 1897 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Brooke**, Tom Banning |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Atherton**, Edward |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |
| South Wharf: | **Bennett,** William Charles; **Miller**, John**; Crouch**, George |

# 1898

***Minimal smallpox cases; new patient detention shelter built; Red Cross sold; another clerk absconds with money***

## **Annual Report of the Metropolitan Asylums Board 1898** (in Two Volumes)

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1898;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1588 & MAB/1599)

Vol I, Page 46

- **New detention shelter**: contract entered into 15 Oct 1897 with H. Wall & Co for a detention shelter.

Vol II, Page 53

- **Conveyed 955 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 6
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 5
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 7
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 937
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Red Cross (sold during the year – see P. 49), Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, White Cross

## **Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1898-99 Vol. XXXII**

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1898-99)

Page 36

- **Plan for smallpox shelter**: The Local Government Board authorises the erection of a smallpox shelter at South Wharf [from minutes of 23 April 1898]

Page 172

- **Sale of Red Cross**: ambulance steamboat Red Cross sold to private buyer. On p. 333 it's stated that the proceeds would be used towards repayment of the loan taken out for the construction of White Cross). [report dated 21 May 1898]

Page 173

- **Need for repairs to pontoon and pier**: Mr [Charles] Thomson reports that the pontoon at the head of the pier at South Wharf - in use since 1884 - needs to be removed and examined in dry dock for repairs. There are also necessary repairs to the bridge to the pier. [from minutes of 4 June 1898]

Page 962

- **Claim from William Parker, former stoker** in the River Ambulance Service - asks for a gratuity, having been discharged - due to reduction in staff - after 13 years' service, and stating that he has permanently disabled his finger whilst in the Managers' service. [from minutes of 25 March 1899]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**February 12, 1898**

- **Departure of Dr Brooke**: 'Dr J. B. Brooke Medical Officer left South Wharf and this service on the morning of the 10th inst.'
- **Work begins on new shelter**: The ground for the new smallpox shelter was laid out on 10th and work began on 11th.
- **Complaint about insanitary condition of 317 Rotherhithe St**: 'I submit, herewith, letter received this day from **Mr E. Atherton**, Engineer in this service, relative to a medical certificate he received from Dr Brooke late Medical Officer as to the sanitary or rather, as stated, the insanitary condition of No. 317 Rotherhithe street in which the engineer resides. I am not aware of anything to cause the house to be insanitary beyond the fact that the ground under the flooring is not concreted, and being perhaps below the level of high water the soil beneath the surface may be damp – to the best of my belief there are not any drains under the house – the W.C. is at the back, and about 35 feet distant from the building. I may add that my attention has never been drawn to this in any way by Dr. Brooke during the time he was Medical Officer at this wharf.'
- **No. of patients:** none received at the wharves at all

**February 26, 1898**

- **Investigation into insanitary condition of 317 Rotherhithe St**: 'In accordance with your instruction to obtain from engineer **E. Atherton** and submit further particulars of the alleged insanitary condition of No. 317 Rotherhithe street… and report to you … I have had some of the boards taken up in each of the rooms on the ground floor. Upon removing a portion of the flooring of the front and back rooms respectively, the earth beneath was decidedly damp and emitted a damp smell, and upon removing some of the boards in the kitchen they were also found to be quite damp. There are two air bricks … in the front wall of the house and two in the back wall with an air space of about 2 feet under the joists of the front and back rooms – but in the kitchen which is an addition to the house, the joists are close to the ground in one part and about one foot from the ground in the other, and there is an air brick … in the front wall and one … in the back …. As the earth under the house is damp I would suggest that air bricks 6 ins x 9 ins be fitted instead of the present 3 ins x 9 ins and that four additional air bricks be fitted and that the ground under the flooring be covered with concrete 6 inches in thickness…'
- **Use of 315 Rotherhithe Street**: submits a scheme [not enclosed] for the use of 315 Rotherhithe Street, part of which has just been vacated by the Medical Officer.
- **Sale of Red Cross**: Submits a draft advertisement for the sale of the Red Cross.
- **Vaccination of workmen building shelter**: 'I am informed that the usual vaccination clause is not in the Conditions of Contract for building this shelter, and at present the 4 contractor's men and foreman are now working at South Wharf without re-vaccination being enforced. I ask if this is to apply to all the workmen who are to be engaged upon this building'.
- **Sick list**: 'On the 14th inst. **F. Hunt** electric light attendant absented himself from South Wharf and forwarded a medical certificate to the effect that he was suffering from bronchial catarrh …'
- **Resignation of Pierman:** 'I have this day received a tender of resignation from **Joseph King** Asst. Pierman at South Wharf and ask to be allowed to engage another man in his stead'.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3 Non-smallpox patients transferred to SE Hospital = 2

**March 11, 1898**

- **Disinfection of Red Cross prior to sale**: 'In order to prevent any friction with the Port Sanitary Authorities I think it would be advisable before advertising this vessel for sale to request the Port Sanitary Officer to disinfect her or for one of his staff to be present while the same is being done so that he may give a certificate of disinfection'.
- **Work on 317 Rotherhithe Street:** 'Upon removing the flooring of No. 317 to concrete beneath same, the joists and flooring of the front and back rooms on the ground floor were found to be in good condition, but the joists and flooring of the kitchen were quite rotten and required to be renewed. This has been done…'

- **Contractors for work on pontoon**: checking the underwater plating of the pontoon at South Wharf is long overdue but the process is 'somewhat troublesome and difficult…with a great deal of responsibility'. Consequently, none of the local repair companies are prepared to do it. 'Messrs W.C Reeder & Co I find, have done a similar work at Long Reach for the Hospital ships and have put in a regular and clear price which is submitted herewith…'
- **Visitor Dr Pfeiffer from Germany**: 'On the 12th inst. Dr Ernst Pfeiffer of Weimar visited South Wharf and was shown over the wharf buildings and steamers and every information as to the conveyance of S.P. patients was afforded him, he has this day proceeded to the hospital ships in the S.S. "Albert Victor".
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**March 26, 1898**

- **New Asst. Pierman**: 'On 14th inst. engaged **William James Johnson**, age 39, formerly a 1st Class Petty Officer in the Royal Navy (character throughout the service very good) as Assistant Pierman for South Wharf in place of James King resigned.'
- **Disinfection of Red Cross and preparations for sale:** 'On the 18th inst. the Sanitary Inspector under Dr Collingridge commenced disinfecting the vessel and completed the same on 21st inst. On the morning of 22nd inst. the "Red Cross" was placed alongside the Britannia dry dock Millwall for inspection by intending purchasers and upon this date…I engaged **Jesse Coker** age 34 formerly barge master…as temporary night watchman at the rate of 4/- per night.'
- **Order for disinfectant**: '…In the Requirement Book I am asking for 3 doz 4 oz tins of chloride of lime from the United Alkali Company. This is the disinfectant used by the Port Medical Officer for washing out saloons, cabins etc of vessels. The chloride of lime…is in casks and being required at irregular periods and sometimes with a long lapse of time between such periods, the lime in casks after being opened deteriorates in strength.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**April 25, 1898**

- **Use of 315 Rotherhithe Street for staff accommodation**: 'In accordance with your instructions to report what arrangements can be made for utilizing the rooms in the top floor of No. 315 for the single male staff at South Wharf without using any other portion of this house … I regret to say I cannot devise any practical plan for utilising the rooms in this way, for the only means of obtaining access to this floor, without using the entrance from the wharf, would be by going out of the main entrance gates, entering to No. 313 (the piermaster's entrance), going to the top floor of his house and through the room which was taken from the piermaster at the time we were so hard pressed for room for the female staff … If the rooms were used in this way there would certainly be no privacy for the piermaster and his wife and family, and each man to get to his room would have to change his clothes, and go out into the street before he could enter the house, and when at the top of the house two of the rooms would be common to all the men in order to get to the other 3 rooms, added to which, provision would be required to be made in some way where the men's food could be prepared and cooked, and there is no room in No. 313 suitable for this, as they are all so small, and with regard to W.C. accommodation, special provision would have to be made for this, there being now only one closet, which is small and only sufficient for the family now using it, moreover there is not any yard to this house in which one could be built.'
- **Piermaster sick:** '**J. Foster** Night Piermaster at South Wharf was on the 13th inst. absent from duty through illness; he returned to duty on 17th inst…'
- **Dead body in river**: 'At 9.30 am today the dead body of a woman was found attached to the paddle wheel of the S.S. "Geneva Cross" at South Wharf, the body was towed down to the Commercial Dock pier by the dinghy and handed over to the custody of the land police.'
- **Illness of Mr Atherton's wife**: 'I have this morning received a letter from Mr E. Atherton engineer of the steamers … in regard to which I may state that Mr Atherton informed me, some time previous to his wife's late illness and when he was residing at "New Cross", that he had to send his wife to Lancashire for the benefit of her health.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**May 9, 1898**

- **Red Cross taken to Fulham**: the "Red Cross" is removed from the Britannia Dry Dock and taken to Fulham. 'On the same date the services of **Jesse Coker** temporarily engaged as night watchman on the "Red Cross" were dispensed with as he objected to go to Fulham his home being at Poplar and **James Boucher**, age 48, …was temporarily engaged in his stead.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 0?
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**May 23, 1898**

- **New detention shelters**: 'In the specification for the new detention shelters now in course of erection at South Wharf no provision whatever is made to enable the patients (who are able) to wash themselves before being taken on board the steamer going to the hospital ships in the morning and seeing that the patients who will be placed in this shelter will arrive at South Wharf between 8.0 pm and 9.0 am the following day I would therefore recommend that a corner lavatory basin be fitted in the lobby adjoining each of the two W.C.s. It would also in my opinion be better if the ground immediately adjoining the brickwork was made to slope from the building and was tar paved to a width of from 2ft to 2ft 6, so that all rain water would run clear of the building.'
- **Fence blown down**: 'During the gale on 11th inst. the boundary fence on the west side of the garden in the rear of no. 319 Rotherhithe St. (occupied by **Capt. G. Livett**) was blown down, the posts and boards are very rotten – but as the owner of the adjoining premises has erected stabling and wall which covers at a distance of 105 feet immediately outside the boundary fence which has fallen, leaving only 25 feet without protection, I would recommend that only this portion be re-erected but would first like to know if the fence is the property of the Managers.'

**June 4, 1898**

- **Boundary fence**: Wood fence installed between the brick wall erected by the owners of the adjoining property and the outer wall of No 312… 'which will complete the boundary on the west side of no. 319, the property of the Managers …'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5 Cases admitted to the shelters = nil

**June 18, 1898**

- **Red Cross sold, and stoker discharged**: The S.S. "Red Cross" is sold, and vessel handed over on June 18 [doesn't specify who sold to]. Notice given to **William Parker**, Stoker of the Red Cross that his services would no longer be required after the 25th.

**July 4, 1898**

- **Removal of pontoon**: 'The preparations for the removal of the pontoon at South Wharf for the purpose of being placed in dry dock and the hanging of the bridge are well in hand and the pontoon will probably be docked early next week. Upon the removal of the deck of the bridge the condition of the planking shews that it is not being removed a day too soon…'
- **Staff illness: Henry Harvey** (Deck Hand) was taken ill on 30th June.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 1

**July 16, 1898**

- **Annual holiday**: 'I ask to be granted my usual annual holiday of one month, to be taken when my services can best be spared'.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 0?
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2

**September 24, 1898**

- **Clerk absconds with money**: 'Upon the 18th August I proceeded upon my annual holiday and according to the daily communications received from **Mr F. Fenn**, (clerk) by me, everything appeared to proceed satisfactorily at the wharves etc until the afternoon of Friday 9th Sept when I received a wire at Eastbourne from the telephone clerk at South Wharf to the effect that Mr Fenn had cashed the cheque for £50 which I had sent to him on the 7th inst. to pay the wages of the staff for the week ending 10th Sept, and that he had not been to the office all day (Friday 9th Sept). I immediately proceeded to London and on Saturday morning (10th inst.) I was informed that Mr Fenn had not been seen since the Thursday previous at 7.0pm when he left his lodgings. I at once

informed the Clerk to the Board by letter, and also wrote the Secretary of the Society by whom he was guaranteed to me, that he had absconded with £55.4.4…. Since my arrival I have not seen nor heard anything of Mr Fenn and upon enquiring I learn that he has not been at his lodgings since he absconded on the 8th inst. A warrant for his apprehension was applied for and obtained at Greenwich Police Court on the 17th inst. Owing to Mr Fenn having absconded I was obliged to pay the weeks wages of the staff from my private purse. I ask that another clerk may be appointed in his stead. Upon my claiming the amount from the Guarantee Society, the Secretary was of opinion that the Society should deduct the amount of wages (viz. 22/10) due to Mr Fenn when he absconded. Upon this matter I have written to the Clerk to the Board and I may mention that prior to Mr Fenn having absconded, he signed the wages book for a full week's pay. I should like to have the opinion of Committee up the question as to whether the amount of wages (22/10) should be paid to the Guarantee Society or not.'

- **Damage from speeding steamer**: 'upon the 5th inst. the paddle steamer "Yarmouth Belle" … passed South Wharf at such a rate that the indraught caused in passing broke the starboard after mooring bollard and damaged the stern rail of the S.S. 'Geneva Cross" …'
- **Insubordinate cook**: 'Upon the morning of the 20th inst. **Miss Whitlock** (Nursing Superintendent) reported to me the insubordination of **Harriett Ballard** (Cook in the female staff quarters), and informed me that she had on the previous night suspended her from duty, but that she refused to accept such suspension. I advised Miss Whitlock to again draw the attention of the cook to her having suspended her from duty and if she refused to accept it to send for me. Miss Whitlock did so, and the cook at once came over to my office to see me on the matter, when I informed her that she must accept the Nursing Superintendent's suspension and await the decision of Committee. She then said she would abide by what I said and would accept her suspension from duty.'
- **Visit by Dr Liebbrand**: 'Upon the same date Dr. C. Liebbrand [?] … came to and was shewn over South Wharf, the steamers and the shelters etc and the method of the reception of patients and mode of conveyance on board the steamers was explained to him, after which he took several photographs of the steamers, shelters and positions of the wharf premises.'
- **Repair of boundary wall**: 'A portion of the old boundary wall on the south side of South Wharf having fallen I have had same made good...'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach since report of 16 July = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2 Recovered patients brought back = 2 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4

**October 8, 1898**

- **Arrangements for new clerk and guarantee**: 'For several years past it has been my custom to insure the person holding the position of clerk to this service in a Guarantee Society for £100. As a new clerk is about to be appointed in the room of Mr Fenn who absconded I respectfully submit the Managers should in future relieve me from this payment, observing that I am at times compelled to leave money in the clerk's keeping, notably when I may be ill or on my annual leave of absence.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**October 22, 1898**

- **Death of Captain Livett's daughter**: 'I regret to report that on the 12th inst. a daughter (aged 17 years) of Capt. G. Livett died from brain fever at No. 319 Rotherhithe St one of the houses belonging to the managers attached to South Wharf.'
- **Imminent new clerk:** "The clerk appointed by you on the 10th inst. informs me that he will not be able to leave the Brook Hospital and take over the duties at South Wharf before the 31st inst."
- **Refund of money stolen by Clerk:** 'Upon the 14th inst. the Guarantee Society in which Mr **F. Fenn** (late Clerk) was insured, refunded the amount stolen by him viz £55.4.4. and the amount has been paid into the Treasury.'
- **Resignation of stoker / blacksmith: '**On the 21st inst. **Joseph Bailey**, stoker, gave a week's notice to resign his appointment having secured a better position. I regret losing this man as he is a good blacksmith and a very handy man. I ask to be allowed to engage another man in his stead.'
- **New detention shelter completed:** 'Subject to a minor defect in the fittings of the small ward being made good, I have this day taken over the new detention shelter from Mr F. W. Aldwinckle the architect.'

**November 5, 1898**

- **New stoker / blacksmith**: 'On the 27th inst. **Joseph Bailey** stoker having resigned his appointment left this service and on 1st inst. I engaged subject to your approval **William George Witton** as stoker (with a knowledge of blacksmithing) in his stead.'
- **New clerk:** 'On the 3rd Nov. Mr **Martin George Phillips** joined this service as clerk from the Brook Hospital.'
- **New detention shelter ready**: 'On the 3rd inst. the furniture for the Small Pox detention shelter recently erected was delivered at South Wharf, this shelter is now ready for the reception of patients.'

**November 19, 1898**

- **Proposals for reduction and rearrangement of staff due to new detention shelter**: 'In compliance with your instructions to report at the next meeting … what arrangements in the direction of economy can be made now that the new Small Pox detention shelter is ready for the occupation of patients. I beg to remind Committee that on 3 July 1897 when the night steamer was done away with, the services of the night staff were dispensed with and the general staff was reduced to as few as was then possible. Since then the night gate porter has been discharged, and upon the sale of the S. S. 'Red Cross' the staff was further reduced by one stoker. I now have only one complete crew and engine room staff for the S. S. 'Geneva Cross' and 1 deck hand as look out man when the steamer is away and 1 extra stoker for the other three steamers. With less that this number it will not be possible to carry on the service, but I would suggest the following viz
  1stly The appointment of Night Piermaster at South Wharf to be done away with for the present and the duty to be performed by a Night Pierman.
  2ndly, the duty of Pierman at North Wharf to be carried out by an Asst. Pierman – for this purpose I recommend that Night Piermaster **J. Foster** have the option of remaining as Night Pierman at South Wharf. The Night Pierman at South Wharf to have the option of remaining as Asst. Pierman at North Wharf. The Pierman at North Wharf (**J. Blackwell**) to be discharged…'

**December 3, 1898**

- **Reduction and rearrangement of staff due to new detention shelter**: 'In accordance with your instruction to dispense with the services of the Night Piermaster at South Wharf and those of a Pierman at North Wharf and to replace the latter with the rating of an Asst. Pierman, Night Piermaster **Foster** to have the option of remaining as Night Pierman and the present Night Pierman (**C. Bennett**) to have the option of remaining as Asst. Pierman at North Wharf in place of Pierman **J. Blackwell** to be discharged. Upon giving Night Piermaster **Foster** the option of remaining as Night Pierman he elected to accept his discharge and in consequence was discharged on the 30th ult. Night Pierman **Bennett** remains as Night Pierman at South Wharf and Pierman **Blackwell** at North Wharf has accepted the reduction to Asst. Pierman.'
- **Pierman covering clerk's job to superintendent's satisfaction:** 'Between the 8th September when Mr **Fenn** (clerk) absconded and the 2nd November when Mr **Phillips** took up the duties of Clerk of the River Service - the duty of clerk was performed by the Pierman doing duty as telephone clerk. I wish to recommend this officer to your consideration for some recognition of his services which were performed to my satisfaction.' [This was **William Austin**]

**December 17, 1898**

- **Stoker sick**: James Hellyer, stoker - suffering from acute catarrh and tonsillitis.
- **Remuneration for Pierman covering Clerk's duties:** 'In accordance with your instructions Pierman **Wm. Austin** has been paid the sum of three pounds (£3) for extra duty during the time this service was without a clerk.'
- **Redundant Piermaster:** 'On the 14th inst. I received a letter from **James Foster** late night Piermaster at South Wharf asking to be allowed some compensation for loss of employment…'
- **Engineer's gas allowance:** 'I submit herewith a letter received from Engineer **Edward Atherton** asking to be granted an increase to the quantity of gas allowed him …'
- **Collision with hospital ships:** 'On the 10th inst. at the request of the Clerk to the Board I surveyed the damage to the Hospital Ships 'Endymion' and 'Castalia' by the S.S. 'Barrowmore' and fully reported thereon to the Hospital Ships committee. … And on the 16th inst. I received instructions to send an ambulance steamer on the 17th to Long Reach, for the purpose of removing the furniture, bedding etc from the 'Castalia' to the 'Atlas' in order that the 'Castalia may be dry docked for

repair…the cost of transporting by this steamer should be sent in with the other bills for damage to the surveyor for the owners of the vessel which did the damage".

**December 31, 1898**

- **Sick stoker**: 'The new stoker in female staff quarters on the 29th inst. was obliged to leave the wharf owing to illness. I have since received a medical certificate stating that he is suffering from bronchial catarrh and gastritis.'
- **Pierman leaves for another job:** "On the 31st inst. **W. H. Johnson** [should be W J Johnson] Asst. Pierman at South Wharf having accepted an appointment at a wharf close by, gave notice that he desired to leave the service and in lieu of giving notice paid one week's wages to the Managers….
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital ships = 1

## Forty-second General Report of the Vestry of the Parish of Rotherhithe, London, for the year ending 25th March, 1898

(Wellcome Library online catalogue, ref: .b19874443)

Page 70

- **Acorn Wharf Stairs access**: 'Rights of Way: On 2nd November 1897, the Vestry RESOLVED - That an iron gate be erected at Acorn Wharf Stairs, and two keys obtained, one to be placed in charge of the Metropolitan Asylums Board at South Wharf, and the other of the Surveyor, and that a notice be painted up to the effect that the key can be obtained at the Board's Wharf, or the Town Hall.'

## Board of Works for the Poplar District: Annual Report, Year 1898 The Sanitary Condition with Vital Statistics of the Parishes of Poplar and Bromley within the Poplar District

(Wellcome Library online catalogue, ref: .b18222882)

Page 26

- **Outcomes of apparent smallpox cases**: Two cases of smallpox were notified on the Isle of Dogs but found to be suffering from chicken pox; two further cases in Bromley were considered suspicious and sent for isolation to South Wharf – after five days there they developed scarlet fever.
- **Isolating smallpox cases – 'suspected' or 'notified'**: 'The clerk of the Metropolitan Asylums Board was communicated with in order to know if, with suspicious cases of small pox, the South Wharf is available for isolation purposes without notifying cases as small pox. The answer received was "that suspected cases of small pox cannot be isolated at South Wharf unless they are notified as small pox."'

# 1898 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Brooke**, Tom Banning |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Lanyon,** William |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |
| South Wharf: | **Bennett,** William Charles; **King**, Joseph; **Miller**, John |
| '331 Rotherhithe St, South Wharf': | **Stone,** Frederick (this is likely to be an error as neither Frederick Stone nor 331 Rotherhithe St are known to be linked to South Wharf) |

# 1899

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year***

## Annual Report of the Metropolitan Asylums Board 1899 (in Two Volumes)

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1899;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1590 & MAB/1591)

Vol I, Pages 37, 43

- **Construction of smallpox shelter completed**, by H. Wall & Co; architect – Mr T W Aldwinckle. [This is probably the shelter referred to in the previous year, 1898]

Vol II, Page 50

- **Conveyed 1,468 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to the hospital ships = 11
  Recovered cases returned from the hospital ships = 6
  Visitors conveyed to and from the hospital ships = 17
  Staff conveyed to and from the hospital ships = 1434
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, White Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board - Board Minutes 1899-1900 Vol. XXXIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1899-1900)

Page 21

- **Claim from James Foster, late piermaster**: asked for compensation for his dismissal on account of reduction in staff after 14½ years' service [from minutes of 22 April 1899]

Page 71

- **Compensation for redundancies:** Gratuities of £25 are to be paid to **William Parker** late stoker and **James Foster** late piermaster as compensation for loss of office [ from minutes of 6 May 1899].

Page 394

- **Superannuation for Henry Frederick Harvey, former deckhand**: the Finance Committee recommended a superannuation allowance of £16 2s 9d per annum be paid to Henry Frederick Harvey (59) late deckhand from 3 August 1899 [from minutes of 21 October 1899]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 16, 1899**

- **New Asst. Pierman:** 'In accordance with your instructions the recent appointment as Asst. Pierman at South Wharf was offered to and declined by **J. Foster** late night Piermaster at South Wharf, and **Harold George Hoare Barnes** age 24 late a 2nd class petty officer in the Royal Navy, was on the 3rd inst. appointed in lieu of **W. J. Johnson** Asst. Pierman resigned.'
- **Gale damage to roof:** 'On the night of the 12 inst. during the heavy gale a number of slates were blown off the roof of the boat shed and saw pits at South Wharf.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 1
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 2 No. admitted to shelters = 1

**February 13, 1899**

- **Sick staff**: 'On the 9th inst. **William Austin**, telephone clerk and pierman was unable to attend to his duties owing to bronchitis … and on the 10th inst. **Henry Harvey**, Deck Hand … desired to be allowed to go home as he was suffering from pains in his back and left side which he attributed to a cold… Harvey's certificate states that he is suffering from injury to left side … I have also to report my absence from duty from 6th owing to bronchial catarrh and rheumatism.'

**February 26, 1899**

- **Collisions:** 'On the 13th inst. the barge "Brothers"… collided with the launch 'White Cross' while lying at her moorings… On the 21st inst. the barge No 3. of Lambeth owned by the London County Council, collided with the port after sponson beam of the "Maltese Cross"… and on the 22nd inst. the barge "Bamoral"… collided with the starboard quarter of the "Albert Victor"…'
- **Sick staff:** '**Henry Harvey** Deck Hand who was placed on the sick list on 10th inst. owing to an injury to his left side is still on the sick list, and on the 20th inst. **Capt. G. Livett** was placed on the sick list owing to a carbuncle on his neck and gout in the right foot…'
- **Height of river walls:** In response to the L.C.C. circulating the regulations for the prevention of floods, the Clerk of the Board requests a report as to any repairs necessary to comply. In reply the Superintendent states that 'The river walls at South, North and West wharves are now all at the standard height above the Ordnance High Water Mark and unless the tide should exceed this by any possible means, no flooding can ensue.'
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 2 No. of patients in shelters during the fortnight = 1

**April 10, 1899**

- **Collision**: 'On the 28th inst. the barge "Jessie" … collided with the S.S. "Geneva Cross" and slightly damaged the bulwark plating and one frame…'
- **No. of patients** received in the shelters = 1 Non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1

**April 22, 1899**

- **Telephone clerk sick: 'William Austin** telephone clerk at South Wharf was on the 16th inst. taken ill and obliged to remain at home through influenza. This man's annual leave was to begin on 24th and his wife has called and asked me to allow his leave to go on, in the hope that he may at the end of the same be in a fit state of health to return to duty and I have done so…'
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 2
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 2 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 4

**May 6, 1899**

- **Sudden death of William Austin**: 'I regret to have to inform you that William Austin, Pierman for telephone and other duties, died from general paralysis of the mind while on his annual leave. I ask to be allowed to engage another man in his stead. Austin was a very trustworthy reliable man and did his duty most conscientiously, he was taken ill on 23rd April and died on 3 May.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital ships = 0
  No. of non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 No. of non-smallpox patients in shelters = 1

**June 3, 1899**

- **Collision**: 'On the 17th May the sailing barge "Osprey"… collided with the S.S. "Maltese Cross" and damaged the rudder …'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital ships = 2 No. of recovered patients brought back = 2
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients detained in shelters = 2

**June 17, 1899**

- **Debilitated Deck Hand**: 'On the 6th inst. **Henry Harvey** Deck Hand was placed on the sick list suffering from acute catarrh and debility and is still unable to perform his duty. He only returned to duty on 27th March after being on the sick list for over six weeks. This man seems to be quite breaking up in health and in my opinion is not fitted for the duties he has to perform and I should be glad if Committee would direct that he be medically examined by one of the Board's Medical officers as to his fitness for this service, being so short handed in this service. One man makes all the difference in the work being properly executed. Henry Harvey joined the service on 5th October 1883, Resigned 11 June 1887, Rejoined the service 2 April 1892 and is now 59 years of age.'

- **Timber tumbles from adjacent wharf:** 'Upon the 25th May during the unloading of a steamer at Gabriels Wharf (adjoining South Wharf) a portion of a stack of timber fell and damaged the roof of the boat shed and wooden boundary fence of South Wharf.'
  **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital Ships = 1 No. of recovered patients returned = 1
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1

**July 3, 1899**

- **Henry Harvey medically assessed**: 'On the 28th ult. **Dr T. F. Ricketts** Medical Supt. of the Hospital Ships came to South Wharf and medically examined Henry Harvey, Deck Hand on the steamers as to his fitness for this service and on 1st inst. Harvey was taken to the Hospital ships for further Medical examination.'
- **Collision**: 'On the 30th ult. about 9.35pm the barge Creek No 254… collided with the s. launch 'White Cross' and damaged the taff rail and bulwarks around the stern …'
- **Change of piermen**: 'On the 1st inst. **John Miller** Day Pierman at South Wharf resigned his appointment, I recommend that **Harold G. H. Barnes** Asst Pierman be promoted to day Pierman and that I be allowed to engage an Asst. Pierman in Barnes' stead…'
- **Captain Livett on jury service**: 'On the 26th June Captain G. Livett was summoned to attend a jury at the Middlesex Sessions. This is the second or third time he has been called upon to act as a juryman and in the event of his services being required at a time when there are patients to be taken down to the hospital ships I should like to know how to act.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 1 No. patients admitted to the shelters = 1

**July 14, 1899**

- **Speeding vessel causes damage twice in a few days**: 'On the 8th inst. owing to the fast rate of speed of the S.S. 'Koh-i-Noor' when passing S/ Wharf the indraught caused the iron bollard on the port quarter to be broken. Also 7 fathoms of 6 inch manilla rope .... The S.S. 'Geneva Cross' was at the time moored between the dolphins off South Wharf … And on the 10th inst. the same steamer ('Koh-i-Noor') in passing caused the hawser pipe on the port bow of the 'Geneva Cross' to be broken by a similar cause.'
- **Change of piermen:** Asst. Pierman **Wm. Davis** resigned. **George Wells** 'age 36 formerly a Yeoman of Stores in the Royal Navy' appointed in his place. **Benjamin R. Padfield** 'age 30 formerly a private in the Royal Marines' also appointed as Asst. Pierman, in place of **H. Barnes**, former Asst. Pierman who was promoted to Pierman after the resignation of Pierman **J. Miller**.
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 0 No. of recovered patients brought back = 1
  No. of patients returned to their homes = 1

**July 29, 1899**

- **Henry Harvey resigns**: '… I have called upon Henry Harvey, Deck Hand in this Service, to resign his appointment. He tendered his resignation on 27th inst. and will leave the Service on 2nd August.'
- **Captain Livett and jury service:** '… instruction has been given to Capt. Livett to at once report to the Clerk to the Board should he in future be called upon to serve upon a jury.'
- **New Deck Hand**: 'I have also … engaged… **William Twin**, age 23, Freeman of the River Thames and now in the Thames Steam Boat Co. as Deck Hand in place of Henry Harvey resigned. William Twin will not be able to commence duty before the 5th inst. as he is obliged to give one week's notice to his present employers. He is well recommended to me by the Clerk at Waterman's Hall as being a very respectable young man. He is of good physique and well suited to this service.'
- **Vicar and flock lands at West Wharf:** 'In accordance with instructions by telephone from Norfolk House the Vicar of Fulham was on the 18th inst. permitted to land at West Wharf with about 107 women and 5 infants in arms.' [No further explanation given]
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 0 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 1
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1

**September 23, 1899**

- **Repairs to examining shed floor:** 'Upon repairing the flooring of the examining shed at S. Wharf it was found that the whole of the joists were quite rotten. This no doubt was due to their being laid upon earth and no ventilation. I have had these joists renewed ... The earth has been dug out so as to leave a 9 inch air space beneath the joists, the ends and centre of which now rest upon stone…'
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 0 No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 3

No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2

**October 9, 1899**

- **Bug-infested Captain's house**: 'On the 2nd inst. **Captain Livett** reported that 3 of the rooms on the upper floor of his house were infested with bugs. I examined the rooms and from outward appearance I was of opinion that such was the case. I had a portion of the paper stripped from the walls of each of the rooms and there was every evidence of the cracks in the walls being infested. It was in Sept 1886 that these rooms were last repapered…**'**
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 0 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 1
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1

**November 18, 1899**

- **Collision**: 'On the 8th inst. the barge 'Tom'… collided with the 'White Cross' and damaged the taffrail…'
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2
  No. of non-smallpox patients returned to their homes = 1

**December 4, 1899**

- **Resignations and new appointments:** Deckhand **William F. Livett** resigned, and left on Dec 2. 'Applications have been received from **Arthur F. Edrich** formerly in the Royal Navy and from **F. Cassam**, barge hand with Messrs Wakley Bros, Rainham Kent for the appointment as Asst. Pierman, and from **F. J. Showell** in the service of the Conservators of the River Thames for the appointment as Deck hand in place of W. F. Livett and **James Harper** respectively.'
- **Difficulty of persuading workmen to be re-vaccinated**: In the context of planning to dry dock the Maltese Cross for survey, he explains: 'The great difficulty lies in the restriction that all workmen must be re-vaccinated before being allowed to work on the vessels or wharves, and although those who are so frequently in touch with small pox very soon become callous to the idea of becoming infected, it must not be forgotten that at least 6 or 7 out of every 10 persons regard the idea of SP or any connexion with it, with horror, and a very great proportion strenuously object of re-vaccination. This is the great difficulty which has always had to be contended with but of which very little has been said. And now that there is no Medical Officer on the wharf, the difficulty will be greater.'
- **Borrowing of tools from Mr Moss's factory**: '… we have always been able to borrow all kinds of tools from Mr Moss's factory for our men to do different kinds of work and being so near to South Wharf it has been a very great convenience and has frequently saved expense.'

**December 16, 1899**

- **Medical examination of new staff**: '**Arthur J. Edrich** and **F. J. Showell** who were appointed by you… as Asst. Pierman and Deck Hand respectively have each been medically examined by the Superintendent of the S.E. Hospital and pronounced to be fit for this Service.'
- **Collision**: 'On the 4th inst. the barge "Lascar" No 1251 owned by Messrs Logan & Son… collided with the 'White Cross' doing moderate damage…' The owners passed him onto another [parent?] company, who repudiated liability, so he writes again to the owners.
- **Engineer sick**: Mr **J. Atherton**, engineer, went on the sick list with a 'violent cold'.
- **Evening heating of female staff quarters**: 'During the severe cold weather I ask to be allowed to retain a stoker for two hours after 7.00pm at overtime pay, so as to keep the female staff quarters at South Wharf properly heated.'
- **No. of patients** to Hospital Ships = 1 No. of recovered patients returned = 1

# 1899 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | **Brooke**, Tom Banning |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Atherton**, Edward |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |
| South Wharf: | **Bennett,** William Charles**; Miller**, John**; Davis**, William**; Bott**, Walter |

# 1900

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year***

## Annual Report of the Metropolitan Asylums Board 1900 (in Two Volumes)

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1900;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1592 & MAB/1593)

Vol 1 - Pages 114-115

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, White Cross.
- **Plans for new male staff accommodation**: accommodation for the medical officer and male subordinate staff consists of '4 houses adjoining the wharf, some cubicles in what was originally a stable, and an old barge hulk. The houses are old – too old for economical repair – and altogether they and the cubicles and the hulk are, in our opinion, unsuitable and in some respects insanitary.' Plans being made for new staff accommodation buildings.
- **Total cost of running the R.A.S.**: £8,201.

Vol 2 - Page 102

- **Smallpox admissions**: 94 patients sent to South Wharf, of which 64 were diagnosed as smallpox and sent to the hospitals. 11 were detained in the shelters for periods varying from 12-16 days.

Vol 2 – Page 54

- **Conveyed 1,635 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 64
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 69
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 42
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,460

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes March to December 1900 Vol. XXXIV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1900)

Page 148

- **Need for male staff accommodation**: 'For some time past we have had under consideration the condition and character of the accommodation provided for the medical officer and the subordinate male staff of the river ambulance service at South Wharf. It consists of 4 houses in Rotherhithe St, some cubicles in what was originally a stable, and an old barge hulk. In our opinion, in which the Board's Surveyor concurs, the four houses are now so old and out of repair that it is not expedient to lay out money in maintaining them, particularly having regard to the unsuitable character of the accommodation which they afford. The use of the cubicles and the hulk ought also to be discontinued, as they are unsuitable and insanitary.' Recommendation made to employ an architect to make plans and estimates for replacement accommodation. [report dated 26 June 1900]

Page 343

- **Plans for male staff accommodation**: Architects Messrs Aldwickle & Son of 1 Victoria St, Westminster appointed. 'It is proposed to pull down the 4 old houses in Rotherhithe Street and the rear parts of the offices and stabling on the Wharf and to erect the following buildings:
  1. Residence for medical officer near the entrance to the wharf.
  2. Cottages for 7 married men and a common wash house on the sites of the old houses in Rotherhithe Street and parts of the offices and stabling on the Wharf.
  3. Quarters for 10 single men, comprising mess room, kitchen, small scullery, pantry, and 10 cubicles ... all fittings to be of the simplest character.'

Page 189

- **Salary increase for Charles Thomson, Superintendent**: recommendation of increase in his salary, with details of his accomplishments and additional responsibilities: designed original plans for Geneva Cross and assisted in supervising its construction; designed and supervised construction of White Cross, prepared plans and supervised alterations for Maltese Cross and Albert Victor and to the pier bridges of North and South Wharves and the mooring dolphins at South Wharf. Since 1894 he also had the duty of conducting the surveys of the vessels.

Page 228

- **Wage increase for Master of Steamboat William* Livett**
  [*this can only be an error – it can only possibly relate to George Livett!]
  'Mr Livett was the first steamboat master employed by the Board when the river ambulance service was inaugurated in February, 1884. No increase has ever been made in his wages. His duties have always been performed satisfactorily, and during the whole of his service —nearly seventeen years — he has had no collision or accident of any kind.'

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 13, 1900**

- **Patients with both smallpox and scarlet fever:** 'On 20th December a patient was transferred to South Wharf from the S. Hospital suffering from small pox and scarlet fever combined. Subsequently 6 other patients were received from the same hospital with similar diseases. They were all treated by **Dr. Ricketts** in the SP shelter at South Wharf until arrangements were made for their transfer to Gore Farm Hospital, the last of the patients left South Wharf on the 30th December.'
- **Collision**: 'Upon the 29th Dec. the barge 'Cabul'…collided with the paddle wheel of the S.S "Albert Victor" and damaged the same… damage since been made good.'
- **Sick stoker**: 'On the 8th inst. **Wm G. Whitton** stoker was placed upon the sick list suffering from lumbago and sciatica and has not since been able to return to duty.'
- **Nurse and possible mercury poisoning incident**: 'Upon the 10th inst. Superintendent Nurse **A. Whitlock** by accident wiped her mouth with a towel upon which she had wiped her hands after handling pure chloride of mercury, and feeling very ill immediately afterward she realised what she had done. I at once telephoned to Dr. Turner of the S.S. Hospital and sent for the nearest private medical practitioner (Dr Spooner Lower Road Rotherhithe) and administered dozes [doses?] of white of egg. Dr. Spooner arrived very shortly after being summoned and after seeing Miss Whitlock he informed me that she had a weak heart and was more frightened than otherwise. Dr. Turner arrived shortly afterward and very fortunately, as we had 6 patients on that day whom he saw and pronounced to be S.P. and who were at once removed to the Hospital Ships … Early on the morning of the 12th inst. the Night Pierman at South Wharf was desired to telephone to the S.S. Hospital for a doctor as Miss Whitlock was suddenly taken ill again. The Night Pierman reported that Dr Turner replied that he was unable to attend at South Wharf and directed the Night Pierman to send for a private doctor. Dr. Spooner was again sent for and has since been attending the patient, Dr. Turner being of opinion it would be better for Dr Spooner to attend Miss Whitlock until Monday or Tuesday by which time Dr. Spooner was of opinion that Miss Whitlock would in all probability be well.'
- **Heating of female staff quarters:** 'No. of days upon which the stoker has remained 2 hours after 7.00pm in the female staff building owing to severe weather - 2'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital ships = 11 No. of patients transferred to Gore Farm = 7
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 13

**January 29, 1900**

- **Captain Livett sick:** 'Upon 24th inst. Capt George Livett was placed upon the sick list suffering from influenza. He returned to duty this morning…'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 7 No. of recovered patients returned = 1
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 2 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 6

**February 10, 1900**

- **Collision**: 'On the 1st inst. the barge 'Balfour'… collided with the bridge at South Wharf and damaged same...'
- **Change of piermen**: 'On the 6th inst. Pierman **W. C. Bennett** on night duty at South Wharf resigned. I recommend **John. C. Poulson** Asst. Pierman for promotion to Night Pierman and **Henry Downs** late an able seaman in the Royal Navy… for Asst. Pierman in place of J.C. Poulson.'
- **Heating of female staff quarters: '**No. of days upon which the Stoker has remained 2 hours overtime in female staff quarters - 5'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 1 No. of recovered patients returned = 8
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2

**February 24, 1900**

- **Pierman sick**: '**Herbert Austin** Pierman for telephone duty absented himself through illness from the night of the 16th Feb to the morning of the 20th inst…'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 3 No. of recovered patients returned = 9
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 0 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2

**March 12, 1900**

- **Carpenter sick**: **Chas. Johnstone** (carpenter) off sick with 'acute febrile catarrh'.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 1 No. of recovered patients returned = 4
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2

**March 26, 1900**

- **Collision**: 'Upon the 18th inst. the barge 'Egypt' … collided with the S.S. 'Geneva Cross' and damaged the bulwark netting and iron rails…'
- **Resignation:** Assistant Pierman **B.R. Padfield** (South Wharf) tendered his resignation.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 2 No. of recovered patients returned = 4
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 1

**April 9, 1900**

- **New Pierman**: 'I on 1st inst. appointed **Arthur Fletcher**, single, age 30, late a Lead Signalman in the Royal Navy as Asst. Pierman at South Wharf in place of Asst. Pierman **B. Padfield** resigned."
- **Gate Porter ill, but spotted on a bus:** 'On Monday 2nd inst. Gate Porter **H. Bird**… complained of being ill and unable to carry out his duty. I recommended that he should go to the S.S. Hospital and see the Medical Supt. But he preferred going to a private practitioner… Upon the 3rd inst. I received a medical certificate stating that Bird was suffering from influenza and upon the 5th about noon he was seen in an omnibus in the City of London. He returned to duty today and upon interrogation he informed me that the doctor ordered him to go out…'
- **Suicide of Pierman at North Wharf**: 'Upon the 3rd inst. Asst. Pierman **George Wells** at North Wharf committed suicide between 12.0 midnight and 7.0am while on night duty. The circumstances have been reported to the Clerk to the Board. An inquest was held on the 6th inst. and a verdict of suicide while suffering from temporary insanity was returned. A sum of 10/- was found in one of the drawers in this man's room which the Relieving officers under the direction of the Coroner claimed on behalf of the Poplar Board of Guardians who have given directions for the funeral. The Relieving Officer also claimed a post office bank book which shewed 4/- to the credit of deceased…'

**April 23, 1900**

- **Pay increase for Piermen**: 'I ask to be allowed to pay the increase of wages to the Piermen and Asst. Piermen in accordance with the resolution of the Managers…'
- **Gas usage by Captain Livett's household**: 'In No 319 Rotherhithe Street in the occupation of Capt Geo Livett there has been a consumption of 3,000 feet of gas over and above the quantity allowed by the Managers for the year ending Lady Day 1900. I have called for payment for this extra consumption and the amount viz 6S/3d has been received by me…'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 2 No. of recovered patients returned = 0
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 2 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 4

**June 17, 1900**

- **Collision**: 'At 3.5pm on the 31st ult. the barge "James Grant" … collided with the S.S. "Maltese Cross"…The surveyors did not agree as to the cost for making good the damage…' A wrangle ensues and the insurance underwriters eventually give the repairs the go-ahead.
- **Dead body found in river**: 'Upon 2nd June a dead male body was found attached to the paddle wheel of the 'Geneva Cross' by the Night Watchman on duty. The body was handed over to the custody of the Thames Police.'
- **Carrying chair:** 'The carrying chair asked for in the Requirement Book is in lieu of a worn out chair at South Wharf which has been in use for over 17 years.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships during last 4 weeks = 15
  No. of recovered patients returned = 6
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 4 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 11

**July 14, 1900**

- **Application for wage increase from Captain and Clerk**: 'I submit herewith an application from **Captain Livett** and one from the Clerk of this Service for an increase to their wages.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 5 No. of recovered patients returned = 5
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 3 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 6

**July 28, 1900**

- **Steps between levels at wharf:** 'The wooden steps leading from the higher to the lower level at South Wharf being completely rotten and dangerous – I have had concrete steps made …'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 1 No. of recovered patients returned = 7
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 6 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 3

**September 22, 1900**

- **Toilet leak:** 'Upon the 11th August it was reported that there was a nasty smell arising from the Closet [toilet] adjoining the Committee room at South Wharf – upon removing the flooring it was found that it proceeded from an old brick receiver, the bricks of which were quite porous and saturated …' The brick receiver was pulled down and pan replaced, and connected to main sewer.
- **Fire in Engineer's wash house**: 'On the 21st Aug about 9pm a fire was discovered to have broken out in the wash house in the rear of No. 317 Rotherhithe St, the residence of the Engineer of this service…'
- **Sick staff**: Deckhand **William Kelly** suffering from 'gastro-intestinal'. Stoker **New** suffering with gastro-enteritis. Stoker **J. Hellyer** suffering from influenza.
- **Change of piermen**: Asst. Pierman at South Wharf **A. F. Fletcher** resigned; **A**. **F. Edrich**, Asst. Pierman at West Wharf was transferred to South Wharf to replace him.
  Pierman **H. Barnes** resigned. Recommended that Night Pierman **J.C. Polson** become Day Pierman, and Asst. Pierman **William Downs** be promoted to Night Pierman.
- **Clerk sick**: 'On the 10th inst. Mr **Philipps** (Clerk) was placed on the sick list, he returned to duty on the 11th inst. – he was again absent through illness on the 17th inst. and upon his return to duty on the 18th inst. I suggested that he should see the Medical Superintendent at the S.E. Hospital – he did so and was ordered to remain in bed …'
- **Preparations for possible bubonic plague**: '…steam was raised on the 20th inst. in the S.S. "Albert Victor" to take Dr Shadwell from North Wharf to Long Reach and back re preparation in case of patients with bubonic plague – I met Mr Shadwell and explained the various accommodations of the Wharves, after which Mr Shadwell proceeded to Long Reach.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 3 No. of recovered patients returned = 10
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 0 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 2

**October 20, 1900**

- **Converting office lobby**: Submits plan 'for converting the lobby leading to my office and the drawing office which will be of no further use when these offices are pulled down into a room for myself...'
- **New pierman**: 'I on 10th inst. … engaged **Thomas Wadeson** age 21 Able Seaman from the Royal Navy as Asst. Pierman at South Wharf in place of **A.F. Fletcher** resigned.'

- **Nursing Superintendents**: 'Upon the 15th inst. **Miss Turner** recently appointed Nursing Superintendent at South Wharf went through the inventories of the rooms at South Wharf and upon the same day **Miss Whitlock** late Nursing Superintendent left the service.'
- **Preparations for possible bubonic plague**: 'Upon the 17th inst. Dr Downs L.G.B. Inspector and Dr Buchanan visited South Wharf in reference to patients suffering from bubonic plague and on the 19th inst. visited West Wharf for the same purpose.'
- **Injured finger**: 'Upon the 15th inst. **Henry Bird** Gate Porter at South Wharf injured one of the fingers of his left hand. I sent him to the S.E. Hospital where he was detained for the night – he returned to duty the following afternoon.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 0
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 0

**November 3, 1900**

- **Nursing Superintendent**: Miss **Turner** started as Nursing Superintendent at South Wharf.
- **Further inspection in planning for plague**: on 1st Nov Dr Downs and Dr Buchanan made another visit, to North Wharf to inspect the wharf and its buildings.
- **Clerk Mr M. Philipps:** requests a testimonial.

**November 19, 1900**

- **Sick list**: Stoker **W. Whitton** on complaining of feeling unwell was sent to the S.E. Hospital, returned to work 4 days later. Asst. Pierman **A. Edrich** sent to the S.E. Hospital 'suffering from violent pains in his left shoulder – he was placed on the Sick List owing to rheumatism.'
- **Collision**: 'On Friday night last (16th inst.) about 8.45 a sailing barge in tacking struck the paddle wheel of the Maltese Cross … and damaged same … it was impossible to obtain the name of the barge.'
- **No. of recovered patients** returned from hospital ships = 1

**December 17, 1900**

- **Collision with South Wharf dolphin**: 'On the 15th inst. about 12.30pm the S.S. Greyfriars … slid out of the creek at the lower end of Barnards Wharf adjoining S. Wharf and it being low water at the time she did not bring up till about 350 feet from the Wharf, her bow being almost in a line with the dolphins at S. Wharf and midway between the lower dolphin of this wharf and the upper dolphin of Commercial Dock Pier – As the tide rose the vessel swung and about 6.30pm she fouled the lower dolphin at South Wharf and damaged same …'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to hospital ships = 0 Recovered patients returned = 1
  No. of non-SP patients returned to their homes = 1 No. of patients admitted to shelters = 0

# 1900 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | **Gardner**, Frank |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | **Atherton**, Edward |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | **Livett**, George |
| South Wharf: | **Bennett,** William Charles; **Miller**, John**; Davis**, William**; Bott**, Walter |

# 1901

***New smallpox epidemic;***
***Rotherhithe Street houses demolished and work on new staff cottages begins***

**Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report – 1901** (in 2 volumes)
**Vol. 1 Being the report of the Board and the reports of its committees**
**Vol. 2 Being the 16th report of the Statistical Committee, with appendices**
(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1901;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1594 & MAB/1595)

Vol I - Pages 71-74

- **Building works planned**: Works Committee Report - Messrs Walter Lawrence & Son of Waltham Cross contracted to construct the following: permanent male staff quarters and medical officers' residence, receiving rooms for patients, isolation ward and male staff quarters, temporary quarters for the piermaster and 5 men, temporary building containing 8 additional cubicles for the male staff, additional female staff accommodation and new waiting room, a 'Washington Lyons' disinfector + related buildings, and separate steam boiler. T.W. Aldwinckle & Son listed as professional advisers [architects] for the staff quarters and medical officers' residences. Contracts dated November 1901.

Vol I - Page 124

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, and ambulance steam launch White Cross.

Vol I - Pages 129-130

- **Increase in patient processing at wharves, requiring new buildings**: 'When the disease is widely prevalent, as at present, the staff employed is a large and very expensive one; it is especially so in the present outbreak, because much more work is now done at the wharves than in former epidemics. Formerly patients arriving at the wharves were medically examined, and, if the diagnosis were verified, were sent to the hospital ships in the same state as they were removed. That is to say, if they were removed in their own clothing (as in many cases they are, owing to the circumstances in which they live) and were fit to continue the journey without being put to bed, they were allowed to do so. Now every patient is stripped, put into hospital clothing, and put to bed; lists of his clothing and property are made out and sent with him. This very materially decreases the amount of work to be done when the patients arrive at Long Reach. It has, however, compelled us to make considerable additions to the accommodation for staff, both male and female, at the wharves. New and improved receiving rooms for patients will be erected at South Wharf, and a new shelter for patients there, and two others at North Wharf.'
- **Total cost of running the R.A.S.**: £7,151.

Vol II - Pages 103-105:

- **Smallpox admissions**: 1,867 patients received at South Wharf, 157 of these were diagnosed as other illnesses and were returned home straight away or the next day. Many more cases were being sent to South Wharf with suspected smallpox, due to a more pre-emptive and cautious approach, leading to many more patients staying in the observation shelters.
- **Deaths at South Wharf**: 8 patients died at the wharf; 5 of these from smallpox.
- **Need and planning for Receiving Rooms**: 'Steps have also been taken to provide at South Wharf adequate receiving rooms for the examination of patients on their admission at the wharf. The need for this reform hardly calls for demonstration. Hitherto patients have been examined in a small room on the pier, badly lighted, inconvenient, and difficult of disinfection when in constant use. At the acute fever hospitals of the Board, suites of rooms are provided for the reception and examination of patients on their admission. Owing to the more serious issues at stake, the provision of such rooms at the Wharf is still more essential. Their absence makes a correct diagnosis unnecessarily

difficult to arrive at, and leads on the one hand to patients being detained in shelters for further observation, and on the other hand, to patients who are not suffering from smallpox being transferred to the hospital ships. I have reported that some such patients were so transferred last year. I feel sure that in most of these cases the error of diagnosis would have been detected had there been better facilities for examination at the Wharf...'

Vol II - Page 57

- **Conveyed 5,453 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 1,614
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 633
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,300
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,906

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1901 Vol. XXXV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1901)

Page 6

- **Male staff accommodation – architects**: Agreement with Messrs Aldwinkle and Son as architects for male staff accommodation at South Wharf [from minutes of 12 January 1901]

Page 15

- **Plans for male staff accommodation**: A sketch plan had been shown to the Board on 3 November 1900 and referred to the Works Committee. The new buildings would provide accommodation for a medical officer and cottages for the male subordinate staff. After some minor amendments, the Committee recommends the plans are approved by the Board at an estimated total cost of £7,331. [from minutes of 12 January 1901]

Page 212

- '***...Housing of male staff during erection of new quarters at South Wharf*** - As the Managers are aware, the scheme recently approved for the erection of new quarters for the male staff at South Wharf, Rotherhithe, provides for the demolition of the four old houses which now occupy the site on which the cottages for married members of staff will be erected. Three of these houses were occupied by the master of the steamboat, the engineer, and the piermaster. These officers have been required to find house accommodation elsewhere pending the completion of the new cottages. The allowance in lieu of quarters for the master of the steamboat and the engineer, under the scale of wages... is 10s. per week each, but no amount is fixed for the piermaster. In our opinion the allowances mentioned are insufficient under the exceptional circumstances. Only the master of the steamboat has been able to secure a house near the wharf. The engineer and the piermaster have been unable to obtain houses nearer than Catford and Hither Green respectively. We have, therefore, granted the following allowances during such time as the officers hereunder are compelled to reside away from the wharf:-
  Master-of-steamboat **Livett**, £1 per week, and £3 for removal expenses
  Engineer **Atherton** and piermaster **Gardener**, 15s per week each, with £3 10s and £2 10s respectively for removal expenses...' [from minutes of 20 April 1901]

Page 346

- **Telegraph pole**: Agreement reached with the Postmaster-General for the fixing of a telegraph pole near the entrance gate at South Wharf, Rotherhithe [from minutes of 29 June 1901]

Page 459

- **Delays in building new male staff accommodation:** Architects T.W. Aldwinckle and Son report that the contractors to construct the male staff quarters and medical officer's residence at South Wharf have '...failed to proceed with due diligence in the performance of their part of the contract...' Recommend dismissing them and employing someone else unless the contractors satisfy the Committee that they have no grounds to end the contract. [from minutes of 7 September 1901]

Pages 476-7

- **Alternative arrangements for new male staff accommodation**: Reported that the contractors Messrs. Veale and Carter failed to turn up at the Works Committee meeting and so recommend the contract 'be determined'. Recommended the acceptance of the offer of Messrs. Walter Lawrence and Son to take over the work at the same price less the cost of the work already completed.
  '...Male staff quarters - South Wharf - At our meeting on this date [23 September 1901] we were informed that there would probably be considerable delay in the erection of the new male staff quarters at South Wharf owing to the failure of the contractors, Messrs. Veale and Carter, to fulfill their contract. In these circumstances, and having regard to the existing prevalence of smallpox in London and its probable increase, we are strongly of the opinion that some temporary accommodation ought to be provided at the wharf for the piermaster and his assistants, who carry the patients from the ambulances to the ambulance steamboats and shelters, rather than that any of these men should be allowed to reside away from the premises...'
  [from minutes of 5 October 1901]

Page 580

- **Plans for new Receiving Rooms and isolation ward**: '...We have recently had before us a report by **Dr. Ricketts**, medical superintendent of the Hospital Ships, who is in charge of medical matters at South Wharf, with regard to the inadequacy of accommodation for patients at the wharf. In his opinion - with which we entirely agree - two new receiving-rooms are required and an additional isolation ward. We have accordingly instructed Messrs T. W. Aldwinkle and Sons architects to prepare plans for these buildings, and we now submit them for adoption by the Managers, together with plans for other buildings, to which further reference will be made.
  ***Receiving-rooms**, South Wharf* - The accommodation provided will consist of two receiving-rooms, with a third room adjoining in which a patient can be temporarily placed who has been found, on examination, to be suffering from a disease other than smallpox. There will be one bath-room, four w.c.'s, and a room in which patients' own clothing can be temporarily placed before removal to the steamboat. The department will be warmed by means of a low-pressure hot-water apparatus. Estimated cost £950.
  ***Isolation ward**, South Wharf* - This will consist of six separate rooms for each sex. Estimated cost £1,825...
  ***Medical staff quarters**, South Wharf* - At the same time, having regard to the prolonged delay which is likely to take place before the permanent building for the accommodation of medical officers is completed at this wharf, we instructed Messrs Aldwinkle to prepare plans of a temporary building suitable for the medical officers' use. At the present time the two medical officers engaged at the wharf are occupying rooms in the female staff quarters which are much needed for nurses. The plans now submitted provide two sitting-rooms, an office, mess room and pantry, bath room lavatory and w.c., housemaids' sink and four bedrooms. Estimated cost £1,350...
  **Male staff accommodation**, South Wharf - Having regard to the necessity which has arisen from the employment of more male staff at South Wharf than can be accommodated in the recently erected temporary quarters, we have asked the Works Committee to take steps to provide immediately another temporary building containing cubicles for eight men...'
  [from minutes of 25 November 1901]

Page 631

- **Approval of proposed building works**: Report of the Works Committee - all the above recommendations were approved. 'In view of the urgency of the matter, the architects were instructed to submit to us a tender from the contractors for the permanent buildings now in course of erection at South Wharf for the erection of the proposed additional buildings. In this tender …. Messrs Walter Lawrence & Son, the contractors, guarantee to complete the buildings within eight weeks from the date of the order … we have, at our meeting this day, directed the architects to instruct the builders to proceed with the works forthwith.' [from minutes of 14 December 1901]

Page 632

- **Rations for Superintendent Charles Thomson**: Due to the need to work long hours and since there is nowhere nearby to find refreshment, Mr Thomson is to be supplied with rations without charge whilst the smallpox epidemic is continuing. [from minutes of 14 December 1901]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1896-1901

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/003)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 1901** [no specific date given but probably at the beginning of the month]

- **Three collisions, including a repeat collision by the Greyfriars**: 'Upon the 20th Dec the S.S. "Greyfriars" … when leaving Barnards Wharf which adjoins South Wharf collided with the lower dolphin for mooring the steamers and did further damage – Committee may perhaps remember that this vessel had previously damaged the same dolphin on the 15th Dec when she broke away from her moorings and slid out of the creek at the lower end of Barnards Wharf into the stream. It will cost about £100 to make good the damage.' Suggests that instead of removing the damaged pile, to have a new pile driven directly in front of it, and have both piles bolted together. 'Upon the same day (the 20 Dec) the S.S. "St Kilda" … damaged the lower inner dolphin of the bridge at South Wharf … and upon the 8th inst. the barge "Red" collided with the S.S. Albert Victor and damaged the taffrail and stanchions to same on the port quarter and also the stern gratings …'
- **Stoker working late to keep heating on in bad weather**: 'Upon the 7th inst. owing to the inclemency of the weather the stoker in the female staff quarters was detained till 9.0pm …'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2 Admitted to shelters = 1

**January 26, 1901**

- **West Wharf used for ringworm examinations**: 'In accordance with your direction I have given instructions to the Piermaster at West Wharf for the Examining Room and Waiting Room at that Wharf to be used for the medical examination of children suffering from ringworm …'
- **Request for increase in staff wages, and praise for the Deckhands and Stokers**: draws the committee's attention to the rates of pay for the Engine Fitter and Stokers, compared to that paid to the same ratings in other parts of the M.A.B. Also suggests a small increase in pay for Deckhands 'as it remains precisely the same as when the Service was first originated.'
  'With regard to both deckhands and stokers – these are all reliable men, quite capable of taking higher ratings upon an emergency – they are all well disciplined and give I may really say, no trouble in any way, and are always willing to do any manner of work which may be required of them.'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 2 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 1 Admitted to shelters = 4 Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 1

**February 9, 1901**

- **Pierman and Clerk leave for military service in Africa**: 'On the 4th inst. **Harold R. Austin** Pierman for telephone duties at South Wharf, who is also a Sergeant in the 2nd West Kent Volunteers and has been selected for service in South Africa, resigned his appointment – I have written to the firms in which his brother (who will do temporary duty during his absence) has been employed … **Mr M Philipps** Clerk of the Service who is also a Color Sergeant in the Volunteers has also been selected for service in Africa and has tendered his resignation …'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2 Admitted to shelters = 1 Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 1

**March 11, 1901**

- **New Clerk delayed by flu**: 'I have received a letter from Mr Roach [**Roche**] the Clerk recently appointed to this service by you in which he informs me that he is suffering from influenza and will not be able to take over the duties till Monday next …'
- **Use of West Wharf for examining children**: ….: '…upon the 26th Feb the children from the various institutions were medically examined at that Wharf.' [see Jan 26, 1901]
- **Wash houses for new staff cottages**: 'I submit here a letter I have received from Engineer **E. Atherton** as to the house to be allotted to him when the new buildings are erected. Should Committee decide upon making any alteration, I would suggest that instead of building a large wash house on the ground with coppers, washing trays etc, that a small copper be placed in each of the sculleries instead – there is plenty of room for one in each scullery.'

**March 25, 1901**

- **Change of Piermen**: Pierman **John Christopher Poulson** resigned, and left on the 21st. **Arthur Frederick Edrich** promoted to Pierman in his place. Applicant to replace Edrich as Asst. Pierman was seen – '**Walter Goddard**, age 25, late of the Royal Marines … he joined the service 27 Aug 94 and left it by purchasing his discharge on 1st January 1901 having two good conduct badges. Character V.G. Ability V.G.'
- **Sick stoker**: **W. Lanyon**, Stoker, suffering from influenza.
- **Clerk started**: **Mr James Roche**, new Clerk, 'entered upon his duties today' [March 25].
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0 Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 1

**May 4, 1901**

- **Vacating of Rotherhithe Street houses in preparation for building staff cottages**: 'No's 313, 317 and 319 in the occupation of Piermaster **F. Gardner**, Engineer **E. Atherton** and Capt. **G. Livett** were … vacated on the 27th April, 20 April and 30 March respectively. I have had all the gas meters removed by the gas co. and the water has been cut off from the houses and the windows boarded up in order to prevent damage to the property.'
- **Collision**: 'On the 24 April the barge "Buller" [?] … collided with the S.S. "White Cross" and damaged the taffrail and … stancheons …'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 0 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2

**June 3, 1901**

- **Collisions with Vampire and dolphin**: 'Upon the 26th inst. the sailing barge "Vampire" … of Grays, Essex, while under way collided with the "Geneva Cross" and damaged 2 plates in the hull, the fittings round the stern and quarter, the stern rail …' [etc] 'Upon the same day the S.S. Vina collided with the lower mooring dolphin for the steamers at South Wharf …'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 1 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2 Admitted to shelters = 2

**July 1, 1901**

- **Demolition of Rotherhithe Street houses**: 'On the 20th inst. Messrs Veale and Carter building contractors visited the site for the new buildings and having received a notification from Mr Aldwinckle that this firm would shortly commence upon the works I handed over possession and the keys of No's 313-315-317 and 319 Rotherhithe Street … their workmen started pulling down the same day.'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 4 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2 Admitted to shelters = 4

**July 15, 1901**

- **Carpenters and engineers workshops**: an extra carpenter was engaged to help in erecting carpenters and engineers workshops to replace those about to be pulled down.
- **Damage caused by passing vessel**: 'On the 4th inst. the indraught caused by the P.S. "Yarmouth Belle" in passing South Wharf caused slight damage to the taffrail of the "Albert Victor"'.
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 6 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 2 Admitted to shelters = 4

**September 23, 1901**

- **Two claims of damage caused by wash of ambulance steamers:** 'With reference to the claim made by the Woolwich Steam Boat Co. for damage to their P.S. Stour alleged to be caused by the wash of the S.S. "Geneva Cross". I wrote the Co. desiring to be informed when and where I could see the vessel and inspect same, at the same time owing to the various statements made as to the actual day and the time the damage was alleged to have occurred I refused to admit liability – this claim has been allowed to drop. On the 7th Aug I returned to London from my holiday relative to a claim by the owners of the barge "Namur" for damage alleged to be caused by the wash of the "Geneva Cross" at low water – this alleged damage I found was caused at a time when another barge was just going alongside the "Namur" to make fast to same – and it was this barge which did the damage which was alleged to be due to the wash of the "Geneva Cross". From the letter of the owners of the "Namur" it was understood that the barge with which she collided was actually made fast to the "Namur" at the time the damage was done – and as there were two barges crews concerned in the case and it was impossible for us to call any evidence on our side, especially as

no notification whatever was made respecting the damage for about a month after it occurred, the underwriters considered it better to compromise the matter, and the claim made for £26 was ultimately settled for £8. If the case had done to Court the onus would have remained with us to prove we did not cause the damage, which would have been very difficult.'

- **Query about the ceilings of the shelters**: on being requested to report on the state of the ceilings in the shelters 'you having been given to understand that the ceilings and walls of the rooms are full of cracks which make it impossible to thoroughly disinfect the rooms' he explains in detail the structure of the ceilings and walls in 2 of the shelters which are covered with V-jointed match lining, with tongue and groove boarding. This structure he says doesn't interfere with the rooms being disinfected and he hasn't had any complaints from any of the Medical Officers on the matter. In another shelter the walls and ceilings are plastered and there are no cracks in that.
- **Arrangements for increase in patients, and Dr Wanklyn starts**: 'On the 27 Aug as patients for the Hospital Ships had increased considerably in number, a time table was arranged between **Dr T F Ricketts** and myself … for a steamer to run daily at 10.30am and 6.0pm with patients and visitors to the Hospital Ships and the same came into force on the 28 Aug and upon the same day **Dr A. F. Cameron** was transferred from the S.E. Hospital and entered upon the duties of resident Medical Officer at South Wharf. Upon the 5th inst. **Dr W.M.C. Wanklyn** took over the duties of Medical Officer at South Wharf and Dr Cameron was transferred to the Hospital Ships.
- **Disappearing pierman**: 'Upon 31st August **Walter Goddard** Asst. Pierman at S. Wharf went on leave at 2.0pm and did not return. He had previously removed his clothing – from information I have obtained it appears that this man disliked carrying SP [smallpox] patients.'
- **Pierman with hernia**: '**Thos Wadeson** Asst. Pierman at South Wharf is slightly ruptured – he went to Kings College Hospital and was told that he would be written to when there was a vacancy for him to be taken into the hospital for operation.' On later being admitted to hospital he was informed that an operation wouldn't be necessary, 'but that he must lay up for a week and have a new truss fitted, and if he took care of himself he would be quite well in about 12 months.'
- **Piermaster's son taken on as pierman**: 'I have appointed **F. Gardner** (son of the Piermaster at S. Wharf) age 21 as Assistant Pierman (temporary) during the time **Wadeson** is absent through illness.'
- **Promotions and new appointments to form a second crew:**
  Promotions - **William Punter** – Mate to Captain
  **William Kelly** – Deckhand to Mate
  **Chas Digby** – Deckhand to Mate for 2nd crew
  **J. Hellyer**, Stoker – to Engine Driver for 2nd crew
  Appointments - **Chas Denny** and **William Hickman** as Stokers.
  **G.J. Spencer, F. Milmoth, William Livett** and **F.C. Woodgate** as Deckhands
  Wharf staff – **A. Ash** appointed to replace **W. Goddard** who left the service
  **Henry Ellis**, appointed Asst. Pierman for night duty 'to assist the Night Pierman in receiving and attending upon patients'
- **Delays on construction of new buildings**: had handed over keys to Messrs Veale and Carter on 17 June. On 20 June Mr Comber, Clerk of Works commenced duty. 'Upon the 14th Sept – the only 3 men employed since 28th Aug! discharged. Since which date nothing whatever had been done.'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships (since last meeting in July) = 198
  No. of patients taken to hospital ships from Grays = 6
  Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 32 Admitted to shelters = 112
  Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 28

**October 5, 1901**

- **Inspecting potential patient piers at Erith and Grays:** 'Upon the 25th September I visited Erith and Grays, for the purpose of inspecting the approach and surroundings to the piers set out for embarking patients for conveyance to the Hospital Ships.' At Erith he found there was no suitable place for a steamer to run alongside to embark patients, and at Grays he found the town pier a dangerous place for a steamer to get to, and only possible at high spring tides and in daylight.
- **New building for Piermaster/Piermen commenced**: Messrs Lawrence & Co commenced on a temporary iron building for the Piermaster and Piermen – now close to completion.
- **Delay caused by fog**: on 30th Sept and 2nd Oct the steamer after discharging patients at Long Reach was delayed until the next morning due to fog.
- **Preparations for possible plague patients**: submitted a sketch plan of a floating stage and causeway at Long Reach 'in the event of same being required for plague patients.'

- **Deckhand's bicycle accident**: 'On the 1st inst. **Frederick Showell** Deckhand left S. Wharf at 10.30pm upon the return of the steamer from the Hospital Ships and when riding home on his bicycle fell (owing to a side slip) and injured his shoulder … Dr Wanklyn informs me that this man is not likely to be capable of performing his duty for some time as a deck hand, but that he could do duty as messenger or work of that description.'
- **Geneva Cross prepared for accommodating patients at South Wharf:** 'As the S.P. shelter at South Wharf will only accommodate 6 patients altogether of both sexes, and it being highly probable that more than that number may be received during the night, or in consequence of fog preventing a steamer from going down the river, that many more patients may require to be detained at South Wharf. I have placed the S.S. "Geneva Cross" at the end of the pier at South Wharf for the reception of patients over and above the number for which there is accommodation in the S.P. shelter and … I have appointed **George Spencer**, Stoker for night duty in order to attend the fires in the boilers of the "Geneva Cross" for keeping the hospitals in that vessel properly heated.'
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 50 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 26 Admitted to shelters = 62 Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 41

**October 19, 1901**

- **Piermaster/men's building**: building erected for temporary accommodation for Piermaster and Piermen completed, and Piermaster and night and day Piermen took up residence once furniture delivered and gas lights fitted.
- **Gate Porters Lodge**: 'The Gate Porters Lodge at South Wharf (formerly an old deck cabin which was on the top of one of the houses attached to the Wharf as a sort of look out house for about 12 years) and then taken down and erected near the Wharf gates, where it has done duty for the last 10 years, is now thoroughly decayed and worn out and requires to be replaced.' Submits a plan for a replacement – 'a small corrugated iron box to be erected on the site of the present'.
- **Hand trucks needed**: requests 2 hand trucks 'similar to those in use at rail stations for taking goods from the wharf down the pier to the steamers – it is very awkward and causes great delay in having to carry everything, especially now that there is such a quantity of goods from the Stores department to go down to the Hospital Ships.'
- **Plans for possible plague patients**: was requested to make a plan and costing for 'a more stable arrangement for landing and embarking plague patients' than that presented at the last meeting.
- **Inspection of possible patient landing places at Dartford:** went to inspect the Wharf at Dowder Creek and Builders Wharf at Dartford Creek 'as to their suitability for landing patients' – found the former unnavigable, and the latter could only be used at high water.
- **No**. **of patients** taken to hospital ships = 64 Returned to their homes, not smallpox = 17 Admitted to shelters = 52 Recovered patients returned from hospital ships = 53

*Reports for 1901 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1901-03

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/004)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**November 4, 1901**

- **Collisions and damage to wharf and steamers**: 'On the 25th October the SS Greyfriars collided with the lower dolphin for mooring the steamers at South Wharf and damaged same to the extent of about £100. And on the 30th Oct the barge Hilda owned by the Mercantile Lighterage Co collided with the S.S. Maltese Cross and damaged the starboard fore sponson …'
- **Promotions and appointments for third crew**: 'To put on a third crew and to run a steamer at 8.0pm to remain at Long Reach for the night and return the following morning, the following promotions and appointments have been made':
  Promotions:
  **William Kelly** from Mate to Captain
  **Frederick Showell** from Deckhand to Mate (in place of Kelly promoted)
  **William Livett** from Deckhand to Mate
  **William Lanyon** Stoker to Eng. Driver

Appointments:

Deckhands **Albert Henry Aynge** (in place of F Showell promoted)
**William Richards** (as above re W. Livett)
**Richard James Skelton**
**Wallace Brown**

Stokers **James Williams** (in place of W Lanyon promoted)
**George Hunwick**

Watchmen on Steamers: **William Woolford** and **Henry Ellis***

Assistant Piermen **Albert John Marchant** to West Wharf in place of **F Wright** resigned
**Albert Manners** for day duty at South Wharf
**Herbert Joseph Parrott** for Night Duty South Wharf

*** 'Henry Ellis** was an Assistant Pierman at West Wharf and resigned but accepted appointment as Night Watchman and **Francis Millard Gardner** who had done duty as temporary Assistant Pierman at South Wharf was on the 2nd inst. appointed Asst. Pierman at West Wharf in H Ellis stead.'

- **Delays caused by fog**: 'On the 2nd inst. the SS Maltese Cross left South Wharf at 8pm with 7 patients on board and was obliged to anchor in Erith Reach at 9.30pm on account of fog. She arrived alongside the Hospital Ships the following morning at 11.15am. Yesterday (Sunday) the Steamer was unable to leave South Wharf at 8pm owing to fog. No patients on board.'
- **New assistant to Dr Wanklyn:** 'On 2nd inst. Dr **B J Dudley** took up residence at South Wharf as assistant to Dr Wanklyn.'
- **Wheeled chairs for conveying patients, and lighting for receiving room**: '**Dr Wanklyn** has desired me to ask for 2 wheeled chairs to be provided at South Wharf for more expeditiously taking patients from the receiving room to the Steamer. He would also like 2 gas brackets as per enclosed sketch fitted in the Receiving Room for the examination of patients.'
- **Gardener needed**: 'Now that we are busy at South Wharf, the grass and flower beds are getting in a very bad state. I would ask to be allowed to engage a man to attend to same and for any other duty for which he may be required on the wharf.'
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital Ships = 192 Patients returned home, not S.P. = 36 Returned from Hospital Ships = 66 Admitted to Shelters and Receiving Steamer = 179

**November 18, 1901**

- **New appointments**: '**Alfred James** - late a stoker in the River Steam Boat Service.
**Richard Finlay** late a stoker in the Mercantile Marine, both having very good testimonials'.
- **Recovering costs of damage from collision:** 'On the 7 inst. the damage to the SS "Maltese Cross" by the barge 'Hilda' was taken in hand and the same was completely made good on 11th inst. The owners of the barge claimed exemptions on account of the stress of weather at the time - but seeing that a dinghy was obliged to be lowered in order to obtain the name of this barge, the claim for exemption falls to the ground - this the underwriters realise - and they have claimed the full amount of the damage. The expense necessary for the repair of the damage therefore rests between the underwriters and the owners of the 'Hilda' - the underwriters will be sure to recover.'
- **Intoxicated piermen dismissed and replaced**: 'On the 11th inst. **Alfred Ash** and **Herbert Joseph Parrott** Assistant Piermen at South Wharf were found to be under the influence of liquor while on the South Wharf - the former having previously been found in the same condition. With the approval of the Chairman both these men were dismissed the service and **Ernest Bosworth** and **Thomas Burke** were appointed in their stead.
- **Resignations and replacements**: **George Hunwick** resigned after a week as stoker and **Henry Ambrose** (age 27) formerly in the Mercantile Marine took up the post. **F. Gardner** resigned his post as Assistant Pierman.
- **Shortage of staff for handling of patients:** 'The Medical officer at South Wharf has complained of insufficiency of assistance when patients are being removed, but as the staff who handle patients are obliged to reside on the Wharf I do not see how I can render more assistance until accommodation is provided – therefore during an outbreak an attendant came with the driver and he assisted in carrying adult patients brought by the ambulance into the steamer or shelter as might be required. An attendant is now only sent from the South Eastern Ambulance Station and owing to this double work is therefore placed upon the men at South Wharf. Every patient is now either carried upon a stretcher or upon the carrying chair (none walk).'
- **No. of patients conveyed** to Hospital Ships = 132 No. of patients returned home not S.P. = 13 Recovered patients returned from Ships = 36 No. of patients admitted to Shelters = 141

**December 2, 1901**

- **New contractors for staff quarters**: 'Messrs Lawrence and Co of Kilburn took over the erection of the staff quarters following the bankruptcy of the previous contractors.'
- **Collision**: '19 Nov Barges 'Nellie' and 'Alice' collided with 'White Cross' and carried away the mast.'
- **Resignations**: **A E Edrich,** Pierman**,** resigned, and **E C Bosworth,** Asst. Pierman 'left the service'.
- **Visit by Medical Officers**: on 27 Nov, thirteen Medical Officers inspected the buildings at South Wharf and afterwards took the SS 'Geneva Cross' to the Hospital ships.
- **Dodgy deckhands dismissed**: '**F G Milmoth** and **E G Spencer** and several other deckhands on the steamers remained away from duty and as F Milmoth had previously kept very bad time on the wharf and had not performed his duties satisfactorily and was not at all a desirable man to have in the service and E G Spencer was found to be an apprentice and not a freeman of the river and was not a capable hand and both these men were inciting the others to remain away from duty and causing disturbance generally. I considered it advisable to give both these men notice to leave on 30 Nov. Everything is now working smoothly on the steamers.'
- **Fitter in hospital**: '**F Hunt** - fitter and Electrical attendant has already been signed off sick with bronchitis. His wife has written to inform that he has been moved to Poplar Hospital.'
- **Arrangement of stretchers in ambulances**: 'It would be of very great advantage to the working of this service, if the ambulance carriages with only one stretcher could have the stretchers all fitted on the same side of the carriages. At present some of the doors open on the nearside of the horse and some of the offside, and in consequence some of the carriages are obliged to wait till the others draw out of the Receiving Shed before they can enter, instead of all following on in regular order. This as the committee well understand very often causes confusion and delay of the patient.'
- **Staff promotions and appointments**:
  **J C Wadeson**, Assistant Pierman, promoted to Pierman in place of **A E Edrich**, who'd resigned.
  **W Judge,** Assistant Pierman, appointed in place of **W Garner**, who'd resigned.
  **W J Hooper**, Assistant Pierman, appointed in place of **J C Wadeson** who'd been promoted.
  **J Jacobs**, Assistant Pierman, appointed in place of **E C Bosworth** who'd resigned.
  **J Wilson**, Assistant Pierman, appointed for Mess Room duty in Piermans' Quarters.
  **S J Hinty** and **J Martin** appointed Assistant Piermen.
  **Thomas Kent** 'as Assistant Pierman for keeping the grass and flower beds and wharf generally in order and such other work as may be required.'
  **George Arthur Smith**, Deckhand, in place of **E G Spencer** who'd been discharged.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Hospital Ships = 266
  (This number includes 28 previously received and reported but unable to be taken down due to fog)
  No. of patients returned home, not S.P. = 14
  Recovered patients returned from Ships = 119 No. of patients admitted to Shelters = 69

**December 16, 1901**

- **Petition from Piermen for pay increase**: 'In accordance with your instructions I have informed the signatories to the petition from the Piermen that the Committee are not prepared to recommend the Managers to reconsider the rates of pay of Piermen and Asst. Piermen.'
- **Complaint by deckhands about unfair deductions from wages under Superannuation Act:** 'On Saturday 14 inst. a number of deckhands in this service came to my office in a body and complained of the deduction upon their wages under the Superannuation Act. They allege that when their services are not required, the Managers can dismiss them at a week's notice and then the money that is deducted is refunded. But should they avail themselves of an opportunity of bettering themselves and resign, that they then lose all their money, and as they say, they are only engaged temporarily, they ask for this deduction not to be enforced. Looking to the future, as I am only allowed to engage freemen of the river as deckhands, it will be a matter of serious consideration next Spring where I am to get the men to keep our Steamers going, for directly the passenger Steamers on the river commence running, the greater portion of the men (if not all) who have been recently engaged will leave this service for the passenger service where they can earn more money and have quite a different life. Last season the deckhands on the passenger steamers were paid 5/- per day for 6 days and double pay for Sundays with time and a half for all hours after 7.0pm. Most of the men engaged have been mates and deckhands in the passenger steamers. I would like to be able to engage other than freemen of the river.'
- **New clerical assistant**: **William Earle Hicks** engaged as Asst. Pierman for Clerical Work in the Doctor's Office at South Wharf.

- **Search for additional steamer due to increase in smallpox cases**: Following discussion of the increase in smallpox cases coming through the Service, an advertisement was placed in the Shipping Gazette seeking a steamer for hire or purchase suitable for the purpose. Only one vessel for hire was deemed suitable - the 'Conservator' though it was built in 1858. It was proving impossible to find a vessel for hire as any contact with smallpox would make the steamer impossible to charter or sell for any other purpose. He reports on a handful of possible steamers including the 'Solent' from Southampton, the 'Empress' from Glasgow, the 'Mermaid' and the 'Cleopatra' from the Thames. 'Seeing the great number of recumbent patients now being taken to the Hospital Ships during this outbreak and that in accordance with medical estimate the numbers will in all probability be greatly increased before the epidemic may be controlled, I am of opinion it will be advisable to have another steamer in readiness for such an emergency.'
- **Work begins on new buildings**: New Gate Porter's Lodge and additional temporary male staff quarters started on 2 December; keys handed over on 16 December. On 7 Dec, excavation of the foundations for a new isolation shelter began.
- **New appointments**: **Harold James Targett** as Asst. Pierman; **Alfred Charles Burberry** as deckhand (in place of **F Milmoth** discharged); **Joseph John Ruston** as Fitter (temp, in place of **F Hunt** in hospital); **William Earle Hicks** as Asst. Pierman for doctor's office.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 258 Recovered patients brought back = 137
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 26 Cases admitted to the shelters = 82

**December 28, 1901**

- **Purchase of the Solent [later to be called the Red Cross]:** 'Upon the 23rd inst. I proceeded to Southampton to inspect the paddle steamer 'Solent', built at Southampton in 1900 by Mordey, Carney and Co for the S.W. Rail & Co. Length 135 feet 9 inc, breadth 18 feet 6 inc, Draught 4 feet 8 inc … She has a large promenade deck with a saloon on the upper deck aft, similar to that on the Geneva Cross, and a saloon beneath this. These 2 Saloons will carry about 36 recumbent patients. There is also a fore saloon which would if requisite accommodate about 16 recumbent patients, or would do for recovered patients and visitors & co. W.C.s would be required to be fitted to the upper deck saloon and a nurses' cabin, and her fittings would require alterations both in the lower saloon aft and the fore saloon to fit her for carrying patients. In my opinion she is a very suitable steamer for this service and I think the price £7,900 very low. I have asked if the owners would accept £7,750 and submit their reply to me and also a telegram received this morning saying the price for transporting the steamer and delivering her in the Thames would be £120 extra. She is not fitted with electric installation but there is plenty of room in the Eng[ine] Room for this and the telegram states that if it is decided to purchase, they (the owners and builders) can secure same at once which is a final consideration.'
- **Disagreement about brightness of lamps and their need for disinfection**: 'On the 20th inst. I received the two portable electric hand lamps from Messrs Edison and Swan. In my opinion they give a very good light but **Dr Wanklyn** does not consider them powerful enough. I do not think that anything short of an electric installation will be of sufficient strength to meet the Doctor's requirements. I wished to bring one of the lamps to committee for their inspection, but Dr Wanklyn put it to me very strongly, that as these lamps are infected, he hoped I would not insist on taking one from the Wharf. I was willing to accept the responsibility of so doing but Dr Wanklyn said that the question of their disinfection was a responsibility of which no one could relieve him and that if he consented to allow them to be taken out he would fail in his duty both to the Managers and the public.'
- **Absconded staff**: 'On 21st inst. the following newly appointed staff absented themselves from duty and remained away up to the present date viz:
  **H. Ambrose** Stoker **J. Williams** Stoker **G. Smith** Deckhand
  in consequence I was obliged on 27 inst. to appoint **Chas Hinty** (formerly a Stoker in the Navy) but then doing duty as Asst. Pierman, as Stoker in place of Ambrose, and engaged **Walter King**, Stoker in place of J. Williams and have appointed **George Carlisle** late of the Evan Fraser Smallpox Hospital at Hull as Asst. Pierman in place of Chas Hinty now Stoker. I have not yet succeeded in finding a man in place of G. Smith Deckhand.'
- **Need for waiting room for visitors:** 'Now that new quarters are being built for the Medical Officers at South Wharf I think it would be advisable Committee should take into consideration the very meagre and altogether unsuitable waiting room accommodation for visitors to patients at South Wharf. At present there is only a small room 11 ft 6 x 7 feet 2 which adjoins the telephone room and which is entirely without lavatory accommodation of any description and nearly all that is said in

the telephone room is heard by those in the waiting room – it would in my opinion be advisable to have a general waiting room with proper lavatory accommodation and WC's for both sexes – the foundation previously laid for a doctor's house could be utilized as it is quite close to the entrance gates – the building could be erected so that the upper portion could be used for other purposes.'

- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 372 Recovered patients brought back = 105 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 24 Cases admitted to the shelters = 82

## Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to enquire into the nursing of the sick poor in workhouses (1902) (Wellcome Library online, ref: .b21357687)

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- **Nurse numbers**: Table showing numbers of nurses, matrons and superintendent nurses employed at M.A.B. institutions. At South Wharf, the totals in 1901 were: Nurses = 14, Matrons = 2

## The Times newspaper, Oct 3, 1901, excerpt from article 'Smallpox in London'

- **Vaccination in Rotherhithe and Rev. Sweeting of Holy Trinity**: '…In order to encourage re-vaccination, the Rev. W. D. Sweeting, vicar of Holy Trinity, Rotherhithe, the parish in which the South Wharf is situated, and the other managers of the National Schools arranged for a visit from Dr. Johnston, the public vaccinator, on Tuesday. Notice had been previously given that he would be prepared to examine any children over ten years old and to re-vaccinate them, if desired. In the boys' school, on Tuesday morning, the vicar was himself first re-vaccinated in the boys' presence, and then 29 boys presented themselves, and were vaccinated. Later in the day some others came; and another visit of the public vaccinator was to be made yesterday…'

## 1901 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Bott**, Walter; **Downs**, William Henry

*No other South Wharf addresses found; most staff were living off site while the new accommodation was being built.*

# 1901 Census

Transcription of census, taken on 31 March 1901, for South Wharf properties:

| | Name; | Mar. Status; | Age; | Occupation; | Birthplace |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Wharf | Henry W. Downs | S | 31 | Pierman at Hospital | London, Wandsworth |
| | Arthur F. Edrich | S | 22 | Pierman at Hospital | Norfolk, Coltishall |
| | Thomas Wadeson | S | 21 | Assistant Pierman | London, New Cross |
| | Walter Goddard | S | 25 | Assistant Pierman | London, South Lambeth |
| | Selina Turner | S | 37 | Superintendent Nurse | London, Bayswater |
| | Sarah Corbett | S | 30 | Nurse | Crewe, Cheshire |
| | Nellie Pullman | S | 27 | Nurse | London, Rotherhithe |
| | Lizzie Spooner | S | 39 | Cook (Domestic) | London, Kennington |
| | Mary Nicholson | S | 23 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | London, Woolwich |
| | Eliza Lester | S | 27 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | Leicester |
| | Agnes Lester | S | 19 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | Yorkshire, Hull |
| | Clare Bilbe | S | 23 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | London |
| | Esther Goodburn | S | 25 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | London Woolwich |
| | Laura Menier | M | 23 | Ward Maid (Domestic) | Cornwall, Polruan |

| | Name; | Relation to head of household; | Mar. Status; | Age; | Occupation; | Birthplace |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 313 Rotherhithe St | Frank Gardner | Head | Wid. | 53 | Piermaster | London, Brompton |
| 315 Rotherhithe St | Francis Gardner | Son | S | 17 | [?] Stoker | London, Islington |
| 317 Rotherhithe St | Edward Atherton | Head | M | 43 | Marine Engineer | Walton-le-Dale, Lancs |
| | Jane Atherton | Wife | M | 43 | | Lancaster |
| | Edward Atherton | Son | S | 18 | Marine Engineer's Apprentice | Barrow-in-Furness |
| | Eva A. Atherton | Daughter | S | 17 | | Barrow in Furness |
| | George Atherton | Son | S | 14 | | Granforth |
| | Hannah Atherton | Daughter | S | 11 | | Granforth |
| 319 Rotherhithe St | George Livett | Head | M | 51 | Waterman at hospital | S.Woolwich |
| | Mary A. Livett | Wife | M | 47 | | S.Woolwich |
| | William Livett | Son | S | 27 | Waterman Lighterman | S.Woolwich |
| | James Livett | Son | S | 23 | Commercial Clerk | S.Woolwich |
| | Marion Livett | Daughter | S | 21 | | S.Woolwich |
| | Robert Livett | Son | S | 17 | Commercial Clerk | S.Woolwich |
| | Arthur Livett | Son | S | 16 | Dock Messenger | Rotherhithe Surrey |
| | Reuben Livett | Son | S | 15 | | Rotherhithe Surrey |
| | Hilda Livett | Daughter | S | 13 | | Rotherhithe Surrey |
| | Lilian Livett | Daughter | S | 8 | | Rotherhithe Surrey |
| | Walter Livett | Son | S | 3 | | Rotherhithe Surrey |

# 1902

***Busiest year ever at South Wharf;***
***smallpox epidemic and the highest ever number of patients;***
***major building works completed including Receiving Rooms, patient shelters, married staff cottages and other staff accommodation;***
***new Red Cross starts in service; Conservator bought; Benmore sold***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the year 1902

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1902; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1596)

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- **New staff buildings**: 'The emergency buildings erected at these wharves by Messrs. T.W. Aldwinckle & Son …. comprise receiving rooms, isolation wards, assistant medical officers' quarters, female staff quarters (additional female staff change room), additions to male staff change room, disinfecting apparatus and house, two buildings for male staff, also sundry external works, including new roadways and drainage at the South Wharf ... They were erected by Messrs. Lawrence & Son in periods averaging nine weeks for each building.'

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- **Contracts for new buildings**: Contracts entered into during the year 1902: Additional female staff accommodation and new waiting room; architects - T.W. Aldwinckle & Son, and contractors Walter Lawrence & Son. Contract dated March 12, 1902.

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- **Two new vessels purchased**: Red Cross (formerly the Solent) and old steamboat Conservator.
- **Record number of patients and visitors conveyed in a day:** Greatest number of patients conveyed in a single day to Long Reach was 157, and visitors etc was 96.

Pages 136-141

- **Fog delays and need for motor ambulance**: 'On the night of 6th March, owing to fog having prevented the steamboats going to Long Reach, no fewer than 120 patients had accumulated at South Wharf, and it became absolutely necessary to remove some of the patients in order to make room for the next day's admissions. A number of those patients able to bear the journey sitting up were, on the morning of the 7th March, conveyed to Long Reach in omnibuses.' It was proposed to have a motorized ambulance available to cater for these circumstances – Thorneycroft Steam Wagon Company was contracted to construct a steam motor ambulance able to convey 8 recumbent patients.
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**: Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, steam launch White Cross, and steamboats Red Cross and Conservator (both purchased during the year).
- **Construction delay with new staff residences**: Building work started on medical officers' residence, 7 cottages for married men, and quarters for 10 single men, but due to 'various difficulties including failure of the original firm by whom the contract was first taken, the buildings were still in the early stages of construction when the outbreak of smallpox occurred…' – building work abandoned and temporary buildings and huts constructed instead.
- **Building work completed:** Receiving rooms, bathrooms etc successfully completed, and another isolation shelter with 6 separate rooms for each sex, plus for nurses and domestic staff, additional temporary buildings with 10 bedrooms etc, and a waiting room for patients' friends. Steam disinfector also installed.
- **Increase in staffing:** due to the epidemic, many extra staff were employed - 35 appointments made (though also 16 resignations). Wharf foreman appointed to assist superintendent.
- **Cost of running the R.A.S.**: £23,356.

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- **Conveyed 24,616 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 7,239
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 6,002
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 5,708
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 5,667

Pages 232 - 236

- **Smallpox admissions and deaths at the wharf**: 7,986 admissions at North and South Wharves; 7,842 'certified' cases, of which 7,235 proved to be smallpox. 36 deaths on ambulance service premises, 32 being smallpox, one being a baby born at South Wharf who died there.
- **Smallpox cases among workmen:** '2 cases of smallpox occurred among persons employed by persons at the wharf - both among the contractors' men engaged in putting up the various buildings enumerated below. Neither of these men had availed himself of the offer of re-vaccination made to them by the managers.'
- **New Receiving Rooms:** 'At South Wharf the new receiving rooms have proved a great benefit to the patients … The road and approach to the receiving rooms have been doubled in width, and a sloping footpath which has been found of great service, has been made near the steps leading to the wharf front. By means of these improvements it is possible now to deal with admissions as quickly as they arrive, and a number of cases greater than occurring last winter could be handled effectively'.
- **Impact on smallpox in neighbourhood**: 'The medical officer of health for the borough of Bermondsey, in a report on smallpox in the borough from October 1901, to October 1902, discussed the influence of the wharf on its neighbourhood. He estimated that the percentage of cases arising in this area was twice as great as that in any other part of the borough and held the wharf largely to blame for this. But the evidence in support of his theory was very slender, and obliged him to admit "it is not safe to draw conclusions from so few facts"; and a careful consideration of the same facts convinced you that they did not warrant him in bringing him so grave a charge. The total number of cases occurring in the neighbourhood from October, 1901, to June, 1902, was 14, showing a proportion no greater than that in other parts of the borough. It is evident how small an addition to this figure swells the percentage. From June 1902, to October, 1902, 13 more cases occurred. During the same 12 months there were 297 cases in the borough, and in London, about 10,000.'

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1902 Vol. XXXVI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1902)

Pages 1 - 5

- **Increase in smallpox and need for extension of ambulance service**: due to the increasing prevalence of smallpox, an additional (land) ambulance station and steamboat were needed. 'On a recent day 142 cases of smallpox, fever and diphtheria were removed from their homes to the hospitals …'
- **Need for additional steamboat: '**We have caused numerous enquiries to be made by Mr. C. Thomson, superintendent of the River Ambulance Service, with the view, if possible, of hiring a suitable vessel, but without success. Mr. Thomson inspected several boats which were offered for sale, and we are advised that the paddle-steamer **"Solent"** is the vessel which most nearly meets the Managers' requirements. She was built in 1900 by Messrs. Morley, Carey and Co., of Southampton; her length is 135ft. 9in., breadth 18ft. 6in., draught 4ft. 8in.; one saloon in the forepart and two aft; which, if circumstances so required, might be adapted to carry 46 recumbent patients. The owners have agreed to accept £7,750 for the boat...'
  '...We propose to have electric light installation placed on board the vessel, and we consider the work should be done before the vessel leaves Southampton. Messrs. Morley, Carey and Co. are willing to provide and fix up a 65 lamp installation for £340...'
- **Need for additional female staff accommodation and new waiting room at South Wharf**: 'The quarters erected for nurses and servants at South Wharf are already fully occupied, and cannot accommodate any extra staff which may be required to replace persons off duty through illness or other cause, or required for the additional buildings now being erected for patients and medical

officers. A better waiting-room for friends of patients is also much needed. We accordingly requested Messrs. Aldwinckle and Son to prepare plans for a building adjoining the existing female staff quarters to accommodate five nurses and five servants, and to contain a waiting-room on the ground floor. These plans and the architects' report are now submitted…' [as follows]

- '***Proposed extension of female staff accommodation and new waiting-room*** *- Architects' report upon plans.* The plan now submitted shows a two-storied building of the "bungalow" type, and provides five bedrooms for nurses and five cubicles for female servants, together with w.c. and housemaid's sink. No bath is provided, there being ample bath accommodation in the existing female staff quarters. There is also provided a waiting-room for friends of patients (18ft. by 12ft.), with w.c. accommodation for each sex. It is not possible to provide fireplaces to these rooms, as from the proximity of the building to the present staff quarters (three storeys high) the chimneys would smoke. The building will be warmed from a new circulation of the heating apparatus of the present quarters. The concrete base already put in place for the doctors' house will be utilised (shown by dotted lines on plan). Estimate, £1,400, including allowance for rapid building...'

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- **Building work – female staff accommodation, waiting room, disinfector, receiving rooms:** Confirmation of the contract to build the new female staff accommodation and waiting-room for £1,357 with Messrs. Walter Lawrence and Son.
  '...With regard to the additional buildings now in course of erection at South Wharf, we have to report that the architects have been instructed by the Ambulance Committee, with our concurrence, to erect a "Washington Lyons" steam disinfector for the purposes of disinfection, and to carry out certain slight variations in the plans of the receiving room, to meet the requirements of the medical staff at the wharf...' [from Report of the Works Committee, dated 18 Dec 1901]

Page 33

- **Need for wharf foreman**: '…The existing smallpox epidemic has necessitated the employment of a considerable male staff at South Wharf and on the steamboats. In our opinion it is necessary that there should be at this wharf at all times an officer exercising control over the whole male staff. The superintendent of the River Ambulance Service, **Mr. Thomson**, is non-resident, besides which the performance of his duties frequently calls him away from the wharf. We therefore consider it desirable to appoint a wharf foreman who shall be in charge at times when Mr. Thomson is absent. The salary and emoluments proposed are £120 per annum with residential allowances...'

Page 91

- **Piermen's Wages**: '... We have received from the assistant piermen employed in the River Ambulance Service an application for an increase in wages.
  Their present wage is 21s., rising to 1s. per week per annum to 23s., with lodging, washing and uniform. We have fully considered the application, and, having regard to the heavy demands made on the men owing to the large number of cases of smallpox with which they now have to deal, we have come to the conclusion that an increase in wages in justified, both in the case of the piermen (who have not applied) as well as of the assistant piermen.
  We therefore recommend - that during the continuance of the present epidemic of smallpox the wages to be paid to the piermen and the assistant piermen, who work at the wharf for the embarkation of patients, be as under, any resolution of the Board to the contrary notwithstanding:-
  Piermen - 28s per week, with lodging, washing and uniform, or an allowance of 4s per week in lieu of quarters, and overtime pay at rate of 8d. per hour.
  Assistant piermen - 24s. per week, with the same allowances, and overtime pay at the rate of 6d. per hour.
  We have also under consideration applications for increased pay made by certain men of the steamboat crews.'
- ***'Change rooms and additional baths for staff at South Wharf - Male staff - Baths*** - A larger number of male staff is now employed at this wharf than was formerly required, and the number of baths is inadequate. By our instructions, Messrs. Aldwinckle and Son., architects ... have prepared plans for two additional baths, increased change room accommodation, and a new boiler…
  ***Female staff - Change-rooms and additional baths***. - There are not at present any proper change-rooms for female staff at South Wharf. Messrs Aldwinckle and Son have therefore prepared, under our instructions, plans for providing in a separate building, two change-rooms, two bath rooms and the necessary hot water supply…' [from minutes dated 8 February 1902]

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- **Additional building works**: Additional works authorised include reusing the cupboards, seating etc from the old oil and paint store in the new store house, forming a sloping path to the level of the road for the receiving rooms, building a retaining wall and tar-paving the road around the isolation ward, filling up the boat slip, the provision of a bathroom in the temporary female staff quarters for the use of the nurses and servants, and the immediate erection of the change rooms and additional baths for both male and female staff. [from minutes of 22 February 1902]

Pages 127 - 128

- **Wage increase for stokers and deck hands:** 'At the last meeting of the Board we stated that we had received applications for increases of wages from certain members of the crews of the ambulance steam-boats. These applications have been made by stokers and deck hands only. It is the practice in the River Ambulance Service when it becomes necessary to employ more than one crew, to promote the subordinate members of the permanently employed crew to the higher positions, thus, the mate becomes captain of the second crew; one of the deck hands would become mate; the engine driver is promoted to the position of engineer, and the stoker becomes engine driver. By these means it is only necessary for the committee in times of pressure to employ men for the lower grades so long as no more than two or three crews are required. The men in the higher grades have made no application for increased wages, and it is therefore only necessary to deal with the deck hands and stokers. The men have expressed a wish to be paid according to union rates of wages, and we consider that their application should be granted. The pay for both deck hands and stokers, according to the Managers' scale, is as follows:-
  26s, rising 1s. per week per year to 28s. per week, with quarters, gas, washing, and uniform, or an allowance of 4s. per week in lieu of quarters and gas.
  The union rate of wages is: - 5s. each week-day, and 10s. each Sunday, pay only to be made for actual time worked. Overtime pay at the rate of pay and a half....'
- **Refitting of Red Cross and purchase of Conservator**: the Committee proposes to have the recently-purchased Red Cross fitted out to take recumbent patients. The Albert Victor could partly cover her duties during the refit. In the event of an emergency however the Committee has been offered The Conservator and seek authorisation to make the purchase at £900.

Page 191

- **Retention of patients at South Wharf***:* The Local Government Board wrote to express concern at the number of smallpox patients retained at South Wharf in January. '...they considered it most important that no acute cases of smallpox should be allowed to remain at the wharves any longer than is absolutely necessary, and that the cases should be transferred to a hospital with the least possible delay. The Board asked for the observations of the Managers with regard to this matter.
  The retention of patients at South Wharf is a matter which has not escaped our attention. The medical officer at the wharf is well aware of the desire of the Local Government Board, and of the Managers, that all smallpox cases should be transferred to the smallpox hospitals as rapidly as possible, and he had already given us his assurance that no effort is spared to effect the removal of all cases from the wharf with the utmost expedition.
  We thought it desirable however to furnish him with a copy of the Local Government Board's letter and to ask for his observations thereon. From these observations it appears that the cases remaining at the wharf over night are not all smallpox cases, and those that are smallpox are not all on shore. They comprise:-
  (a) Those patients on the steamer lying alongside the wharf, and who are really smallpox cases
  (b) Those patients in the shelters who are probably developing smallpox; and
  (c) Those patients who are probably not smallpox patients.
  The medical officer states that "during the present epidemic it is the practice for cases to be certified at a very early stage of the disease, many also are certified who can only be described as suspects - that is, patients who have been undoubtedly in contact with smallpox and have developed some trifling ailment such as a common cold; of these, some after remaining here [at the wharf] for a couple of days, perhaps in fair health, develop smallpox. In this connection it is notable that in January 50 per cent of the cases were admitted on the first or second day of the rash, and 75 per cent on the first, second or third day of the rash. Among such cases are a proportion which cannot be absolutely diagnosed without a short period of detention for observation."

The medical officer also states that the proportion of cases of other diseases sent to the wharf is higher than formerly, being now 14 per cent as against 8 per cent in 1893.
In view of these facts, and of the fact that the number of patients who passed through the wharf in the last month were in excess of the number who passed through it in the busiest months of the epidemic of 1884 and 1885, it does not appear to us that the number retained at midnight at any date could very well have been lessened.
We will continue to give the matter careful attention, and to adopt every means to reduce the number of smallpox cases retained as much as possible...'

- **New stoker to work with disinfector**: '...We have appointed temporarily at South Wharf a man as stoker, whose duty it will be to attend to the recently erected disinfector and to carry out the disinfecting work, at wages of 35s. per week and uniform..." [from minutes of 8 March 1902]

Page 192

- **Recommendation for further ambulance station and patient shelters mid-way between London and Gore Farm Hospital:**
'...(b) *Transport of smallpox patients from London to the smallpox hospitals*:- In this connection there is a question which requires serious and early consideration. If precedent should be followed, and the expectations of those whose opinion is of value should be realised, it is fairly certain that the present outbreak of smallpox will continue through at least the next winter and perhaps with increased activity. It is now the settled policy of the Managers, recognised and approved by the Local Government Board and the public, to be prepared to afford in their hospitals accommodation for the proper isolation of every case of smallpox that may occur in London. To secure that end, it is essential that the transport arrangements should be perfected, so that in all circumstances patients may be conveyed to the hospitals.
The river transport is probably equal to any demands that may be made upon it in ordinary conditions. But although the worst months of the present winter have been passed and we may now reasonably hope that no serious difficulty will arise from ice or prolonged fog, it would be quite unsafe to count on freedom from these disturbing conditions another winter; and if a fog (the most likely contingency) of some days' duration should occur, such as to render river navigation impossible, at a time when a large number of smallpox patients were being daily admitted, the service as at present constituted would break down. It seems to us that the Board must, so far as lies in its power, take steps to guard against any such disaster. It must not be overlooked that in 1895, from 10th to the 23rd of February, the ambulance steamboats were frozen up at South Wharf. Fortunately, at that time, the admissions were few - 32 in 13 days - and the steamboats afforded sufficient accommodation for them until the ice broke up and the boats were able to take the patients down to the Hospital Ships. We know that the recurrence of such a severe frost is unlikely, but dense fogs may occur at any time and cause an absolute stoppage of all river traffic for days together.
At the daily rate of admissions of the present epidemic the ambulance steamboats themselves would probably only serve as a resting place for one day's admissions; and it may at any time next autumn or winter become necessary to resort to road transit to the smallpox hospitals for every case admitted. With the Board's present organisation this would be impracticable, except for a few cases; for a large number it would be hopelessly impossible. We therefore are of opinion [sic] that no time should be lost in carefully considering and settling how arrangements can be made whereby at a few hours' notice road transit can be set up and worked efficiently to whatever extent may be necessary.
To provide this will be a considerable problem; how serious will be realised if we consider what would be necessary to remove say 100 patients a day from their homes to the smallpox hospitals near Dartford. If no better arrangement can be made than to carry no more than two patients in one ambulance, the number of vehicles, horses, drivers, and nurses required would be enormous. The large majority of the patients would have to be dispatched in the latter part of the day; the same vehicles could not be back and ready for use again the next day. It is practically impossible that the whole journey should be performed by the same horses, nurses, and men, all of whom in that case would have to be housed and fed in the smallpox hospitals, a complete duplicate of all horses, vehicles, drivers, and nurses being required for the next day.
A half-way establishment seems to be a necessity, and this must probably be on a considerable scale.
We therefore recommend that

The Ambulance Committee be authorised to take all the necessary preliminary steps with the view of securing sufficient freehold land for the purposes of an Ambulance station and shelters for patients midway between London and Gore Farm Hospital.'

- **Purchase of Conservator as spare river ambulance:**
  The Ambulance Committee reports that it has taken a second opinion on the paddle steamer Conservator. The report acknowledges the age and slow speed of the steamer but confirms that it would be suitable at the price agreed. The Committee outlines the vessel's history and that Mr Thomson has examined the hull and machinery, which confirms the steamer is suitable. 'We require a boat which can be used at any time when the boat usually employed in the conveyance of recovered patients, visitors &c., is temporarily withdrawn from service. At the end of the present epidemic the boat must be disposed of, as we shall not require five large steam-boats, nor have we berthing accommodation at South Wharf for more than four. Even if the Managers were to purchase a first-class boat, we know that when she came to be sold out of the smallpox service the price she would realise would be very small...' The Committee once again recommends the purchase.

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- **Appointment of chaplain at South Wharf**: '…During the present epidemic of smallpox, it has been necessary to retain, for varying periods and for various reasons, considerable numbers of patients at the South Wharf Shelters. In many instances, patients, or their friends on their behalf, desire the services of a minister of the Church of England, and the **Rev. W. D. Sweeting**, vicar of Holy Trinity, Rotherhithe, has hitherto readily consented to attend when requested by the medical officer at the wharf. He has, however, pointed out to us that attention to the spiritual needs of the patients has made considerable demands upon his time. It will probably continue to do so until the termination of the present epidemic. We consider it very desirable that the medical officer should be in a position to call for the services of a clergyman whenever required, and that a chaplain to the wharf should be appointed...' They recommend that Rev. W. D. Sweeting is appointed on a temporary contract at a stipend of £10 per month. [from minutes of 22 March 1902]

Page 245

- **Gate-porter's lodge**: a lodge for the gate-porter is to be erected at South Wharf for £57

Page 259

- **Salary of Dr. Wanklyn**: report of the Ambulance Committee - 'We recommend – that … Dr. W. McConnel Wanklyn be paid an additional salary at the rate of £200 per annum as long as he shall continue to discharge the duties of medical superintendent of the River Ambulance Service. … [the Hospitals] committee appointed Dr. Wanklyn as an assistant medical superintendent in the hospitals service, and … Dr. Wanklyn was directed to reside at South Wharf, and to undertake the duty of revising the diagnosis of all cases removed to the wharf certified as suffering from smallpox. When the prevalence of smallpox began to assume epidemic proportions, the Ambulance Committee found it necessary to endow Dr. Wanklyn with the duties and responsibilities of medical superintendent of the River Ambulance Service. As a consequence his duties were altered and much increased, but his salary as assistant medical superintendent remained the same, viz: - £300 per annum. He is now not only wholly responsible for revising the diagnosis of all patients, but is also answerable for the administration throughout of the River Ambulance Service, except in matters of navigation; in fact it may be said that as a whole his responsibilities are as great as those of a hospital medical superintendent. The work imposes on him a very heavy strain and considerable sacrifices, and it is subject to repeated and severe emergencies. As an instance it may be mentioned that owing to the fog which occurred two weeks ago, in a few hours 120 patients accumulated at the wharf and required treatment, &c., *in situ*. The non-permanent character of the work, for the epidemic cannot in the nature of things last more than a year or two, is a reason why the rate of pay should be higher than for work which is lasting. These considerations make it clear to us that Dr. Wanklyn is not adequately remunerated by his present salary of £300. We consider that the proposed increase in salary should be regarded as personal to Dr. Wanklyn. On the termination of the epidemic, and on his ceasing to hold office in the River Ambulance Service, he will, we presume, revert to his former position and salary as an assistant medical superintendent...' (This was later agreed). [from minutes of 5 April 1902]

Page 330

- **Additional building works – sheds, roads, fences etc**: *'*At the request of the Ambulance Committee we have this day authorised the execution of the following additional works in connection with Messrs. Walter Lawrence and Son's contracts at this wharf viz. :- (i.) provide three small coal and coke sheds ; (ii.) pave with granite pitching and concrete the roadway under the covered way at the entrance to the receiving rooms, and fit an arc lamp to this covered way; (iii.) repair and re-metal roads; (iv.) erect lattice fences and a wall so as to fence off the female staff quarters, &c., from the remainder of the wharf; (v.) provide additional sanitary accommodation.' [from Report of the Works Committee, minutes of 3 May 1902]

Page 331

- **Salary of Dr Cameron, put in charge at North Wharf: '**Dr Cameron was appointed in June last as an assistant medical officer in the service of the Hospitals Committee, and in November was transferred to South Wharf. Since that time he has acted as senior assistant to the medical officer of the River Ambulance Service, and has been in charge in his absence of the medical department, and responsible for all patients sent to the wharf. Recently the Hospitals Committee made an arrangement with the Corporation of West Ham for the admission into the Board's smallpox hospitals of any smallpox cases arising in the corporation's district. Partly in consequence of that arrangement, and partly owing to the occurrence of many cases of smallpox in the Eastern district of the metropolis, we have found it desirable to open the North Wharf at Blackwall for the medical examination and embarkation of patients. Dr. Cameron has been placed in charge of this wharf, and his medical responsibilities have therefore been largely increased, and he frequently has to act entirely on his own initiative. We are therefore of opinion that he should be placed on the status and pay of a senior assistant medical officer of the Board's hospitals.' [from minutes of 3 May 1902]

Page 404

- **Additional building works, and blue brick paving for ambulance shelter:** Further to the additional works listed in the minutes of 3 May, they now report the costs of these. Of specific interest is the following, which still remains today as the flooring of the forge: 'paving with blue brick (and not with granite pitching and concrete as previously reported) of the roadway under the covered way at the entrance to the receiving rooms…' [from minutes of 14 June 1902]

Pages 710-11

- '…***South Wharf - Proposed demolition of old shed and erection of boat-shed and workshops*****. -** At this wharf there is a large old wooden shed. In the bottom part of it is a saw pit, and the upper part was used by the former owners of the wharf for machining and storing light boarding. In a portion of the lower part temporary workshops for the carpenter and engineer have been constructed. It is situated on the south boundary of the wharf, and the adjoining premises are used as a timber wharf. Near it are the patients' shelters and other buildings which were erected to meet the exigences of the recent smallpox epidemic. The great risk to these buildings, should the shed unfortunately take fire, is apparent; and we are of opinion that it should be demolished as soon as practicable. In its place we propose that there should be erected a corrugated iron boat and mast shed and workshops for the engineer and carpenter....' [from minutes of 15 November 1902]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1901-03

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/004)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee: January 13, 1902**

- **Collisions:** 'On the 28th inst. the barge "Hope" No. 930 owned by the Mercantile Lighterage Co. collided with the S.S. Geneva Cross while lying at her moorings at S. Wharf and damaged bulwarks of same. On the same date the "White Cross" collided with the barge "……. [?] and in consequence the bulwarks and rail of the "White Cross" were damaged...'
- **Claim of damage caused by Geneva Cross:** 'On the 31st inst. I received a letter from the Solicitor to the Barge Owners Protection Society claiming for alleged damage to the barge Herbert by the Geneva Cross when going alongside South Wharf, which I resisted and refused to acknowledge liability for – as I was on board at the time of the alleged damage…'

- **Fitting of electric lights, and refusal of contractors workmen to complete**: 'In accordance with the instruction of the Sub Committee who visited South Wharf on the 1st inst., I issued an order to the Welsbach Incandescent Light Co to fit A & B Shelters, the Recovery Room and Shed, the bridge and other places on South Wharf with their incandescent lights. One of their workmen came to the Wharf and was revaccinated and four days afterward deposited the requisite lights and fittings on the Wharf and fitted about 6 brackets with Mantles after which I was informed that the workman refused to go on with the work. In consequence, I was obliged to superintend the alterations to the fittings myself, and the staff put them up.'
- **Pierman discharged due to health**: 'Dr Wanklyn having informed me that the health of Asst. Pierman **W. E. Hicks** (appointed for duty in the doctor's office) does not permit of his doing work in this service… he is too infirm to be of any use on the wharf.' Was given one week's notice.
- **Sick list**: **F. Hunt**, Fitter & Electrician; **Richard Finlay**, Stoker; **Alfred C. Burbery**, Deck Hand.
- **New appointments**: **Edward Stevens** Stoker (temp) in place of **Walter King** (left)
  **John Arthur Clark** Stoker (temp) in place of **R. Findlay** (sick)
  **Alfred James Cook** Deckhand in place of **G. A. Smith** (left)
  **Walter King** was appointed temporarily in place of **J. Williams** who left the service. King also left the service on the 30 inst. without giving notice.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 499 Recovered patients brought back = 218
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 31 Cases admitted to the shelters = 132

**January 27, 1902**

- **Trials, delivery, running and capacity of new Red Cross**: 'On 16 inst. I went to Southampton in order to be present on the 17th at the trial of the S.S. Red Cross under steam at the measured mile in Stokes Bay. This steamer left Southampton at 10.0am and returned at 4.30pm. The trial proved to be satisfactory the mean speed realized being 10.8 knots per hour. This steamer left Southampton on Tuesday 21 inst. and arrived at South Wharf on Thursday 23 inst…
  I appointed a crew for this steamer … This steamer is now running with staff and recovered patients. When fitted for carrying patients she will accommodate at least 50 adults in a recumbent position and will carry 300 ordinary passengers as per Board of Trade Certificate. This vessel having been fitted for passenger traffic, to convert the present saloons into hospitals will require material alteration to her interior fittings…'
- **Undesirable deck hand: 'Alfred Burberry** Deck Hand left South Wharf on Tuesday 21st inst. and upon returning about 11.0am on Saturday asked for his money – I informed him I would refer the matter to the Committee and suspended him – this man has absented himself on several occasions and is not a desirable man to have in the Service and I recommend that he be discharged.'
- **Promotions and appointments:**
  **C. Digby,** Mate, promoted to Master of Red Cross; **C. Twin** Deck Hand promoted to Mate of Red Cross; **F. Woodgate** promoted to mate; **A. J. Cook** Watchman promoted to Deck Hand
  **William Howard** appointed as Watchman; **Joseph Samuel Tracey** appointed as Deck Hand
  **Walter Brown** and **Robert Gale** appointed as Deck Hands on Red Cross
  **Henry Ellis,** Watchman, promoted to Deck Hand; **George Guin [?]** appointed as Deck Hand
  **William Francis** appointed as Watchman
- **Sick list: 'F. Hunt** Electrical Attendant at South Wharf has been on the sick list since 4th Nov and it is very uncertain when if ever he will be able to return …'
- **No. of patients** taken to Hospital Ships = 346 Recovered patients brought back = 270
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 55 Cases admitted to the shelters = 120
  Died = 1

**February 10, 1902**

- **Removal of slipway and use of crane**: 'When the plans for the doctor's house were being drawn, I was given to understand by Messrs Aldwinckle & Son, the architects, that the timber slipway which is of no use whatever, was to be filled in so that access could be had to the large crane by carts or trolleys for the removal or otherwise of heavy parts of machinery from the steamers and although I understood that this was to form part of the specification of the works - I am now informed that no orders have been given for this to be done. Unless this slipway is filled in a valuable crane will be useless and will necessitate our paying for such removals when ringside at some other wharf.'
- **Piermen on strike:** 'Upon the 3rd inst. on my arrival at South Wharf at 9.30 am I was informed that the Assistant Piermen refused to do any work until they had seen me. I at once interviewed these men and they informed me that they considered they were underpaid for the work they did and

asked me to pay them 5/= per week more than they were receiving. I informed them that I had not the power to do this and tried to persuade them to carry on and put their application in writing before Committee – this they refused to do. I eventually persuaded them to go to work upon the understanding that I would ask the Chairman to come down and see them – finding later on that the Chairman could not come to South Wharf until the following day. I informed them to that effect – when they again struck work, but after some time I persuaded them to again resume work until the next day and to put their grievance in writing which they did – the same had been read to the Committee on Friday last.'

- **New Wharf Foreman**: **Mr Connor** started on Jan 28 as Wharf Foreman at South Wharf.
- **Messy Mess Room Attendant: 'Thomas James Burke** Asst. Pierman for duty as Mess Attendant at South Wharf has been several times reported to me for allowing the Mess Room to be dirty. In my opinion, this man is not fit for this service and should be given notice to leave.'
- **Deckhand overboard**: 'On the 30 January **George Guin** [?] deckhand by accident fell overboard from the "White Cross" while underway off Greenwich. He was picked up by the Conservancy Launch 'Dromedary' which was at the time following the White Cross and was close to. This man was sent home for the rest of the day.'

**February 24, 1902**

- **D Shelter completed and handed over**: 'Upon the 11th inst. the keys of D Shelter (the new shelter recently erected at South Wharf) was handed over to me and the same were given by me to the Nursing Superintendent.'
- **Death of workman on ambulance steamer**: 'On the 15 inst. William Guest one of Messrs WC Reeder and Co workman who was engaged in repairing the Hospital Ships while on passage from Long Reach to North Wharf died on board the SS Albert Victor while in an apoplectic fit. His body was eventually handed over to the police at South Wharf.'
- **Office for Piermaster and Storekeeper**: the old Piermen's room, converted into an Office for the Piermaster and Storekeeper, was handed over.
- **Collision:** '…the S.S. Albert Victor while in charge of **William Punter** Master collided with the Geneva Cross on going alongside North Wharf Pier and broke the bollard on the S.A. sponson…'
- **Building work:** the 3 wards were completed, but 'the receiving room walls have not been painted where altered nor has the ceiling been whitened…' The change rooms and waiting room were in the process of being erected but would be about 5 weeks before ready for use.
- **Children left waiting at North Wharf:** 'It frequently happens that very young children are discharged at North Wharf and the parents not being there to receive them, they are obliged to be taken in charge by the Piermaster's wife until they are removed to their homes – this is sometimes for hours after their arrival at the wharf – I have been asked to bring this to the notice of committee with the view of some slight compensation being made to the Piermaster's wife.'
- **Suggestion of North Wharf Piermaster's daughter attending telephone and young children:** 'When North Wharf is in readiness for receiving patients it will be requisite to have someone to attend the telephone – the Piermaster has a daughter nearly 16 years of age who could do this work and at the same time could attend to young children (recovered patients) on their arrival at that wharf.'
- **Sick list: William Howard**, Watchman on the Steamers – general catarrh; **Michael Cronin**, stoker.
- **Design for stretcher carrier**: '**Dr Wanklyn** has handed a sketch to me for a 3 wheeled (rubber tyres) stretcher carrier and would like 3 ordered for use at South Wharf.'
- **Appointments**:
  **Samuel John Brown** – Stoker, in place of **J J Worls** [?] who'd resigned
  **Thomas Alton** Asst. Pierman in place of **J Burke** discharged
  **Albert Edward Howard** Asst. Pierman to assist in office
  **Edmund Lester Pentin, Thomas William Collins** and **John Richard Jackson** –
  spare deckhands for Steamers when other one ill or when 4th Steamer is required
  **John Joseph Ritson** - Spare Stoker
- **Resignations: J J Worls** [?], Stoker and **J A Austin**, Telephone Clerk
- **Staff discharged: T J Burke** Asst. Pierman and **Francis Hunt** Electrical Attendant
- **No of patients** removed to the Hospital Ships = 755 Returned home not smallpox = 57
  Recovered patients brought back = 398 Admitted to Shelters = 191 Died = 3

**March 10, 1902**

- **Fog stops work**: '…I gave orders for the rooms of A Shelter to be distempered and whitened but owing to the continuance of fog on the 6 and 7 inst., these rooms were required to be used and the workmen after having cleaned off the ceilings and walls were obliged to cease work.'
- **Paying the North Wharf Piermaster's Daughter**: Suggestion of remuneration for Piermaster Deeble's daughter – 'The girl is not quite 16 but with instruction from the Piermaster she would perhaps be very useful in attending to the telephone and attending young children (recovering cases) from Gore Farm and I think 12 or 13 shillings per week with uniform should suffice.'
- **Preparing patient accommodation during fog delays**: 'Upon the 7th in order to be in readiness for the reception of patients at South Wharf, the Steamers and other accommodation at the Wharf being nearly full of patients, I directed the two after Saloons of the Red Cross to be made ready for the reception of patients but fortunately the fog lifted before this vessel was required.'
- **Steamers delayed by fog**: 'Owing to dense fog on the 5 inst. the S S Maltese Cross which left South Wharf at 4.5pm [sic] on that day did not arrive at the hospital ships until 1.15pm the next day having been obliged to anchor at Barking Reach and owing to the same cause the Steamers at South Wharf were delayed with patients on board until 1.40 and 3.10pm respectively on the 7th when the Albert Victor and Geneva Cross left with 89 patients on board. The Albert Victor with 23 and the Geneva Cross with 64. The Maltese Cross left Long Reach at 9.15 on the 7th arriving at South Wharf at 2.40pm when the fog cleared.'
- **New boilers and disinfector:** now fitted at South Wharf, but needing the water laid on and testing.
- **New appointments, and promotion**:
  **F Williams** Fitter and Electrical Attendant in place of **F Hunt** discharged
  **J Hocking** Asst. Pierman in place of **A E Howard** to Telephone Clerk
  **J Webb** for charge of disinfecting apparatus **J J McMahon** Asst. Pierman for night duty
  **A E Howard** Asst. Pierman promoted to Telephone Clerk in place of **J A Austin** resigned
- **Absent watchman: 'William Howard** Watchman on Steamers has absented himself since 1st inst. and I recommend that he be discharged.'
- **No of patients** removed to the Hospital Ships = 787 Returned home not smallpox = 44
  Recovered patients brought back = 352 Admitted to Shelters = 183 Died at the wharves = 6

**March 24, 1902**

- **North Wharf Piermaster's daughter appointed**: 'On the 20 inst. Miss **E F Deeble** entered upon her duties as telephone clerk and to attend upon young children (recovering patients) at North Wharf.'
- **Conservator comes to South Wharf and starts work: '**On the 13 inst. Mr Piper the owner of the SS 'Conservator' handed this steamer over to me in the West India Docks. On the same day steam was raised and the vessel was taken out of the docks and moored off South Wharf. On the 21st inst. this vessel made her first journey to Long Reach from South Wharf running the distance wind and tide in her favour in 1 hour and 10 mins. She made the return journey with recovered patients against wind and tide and calling in and discharging patients at North Wharf in 2 hours.'
- **Skylight for changing rooms**: 'When the addition to the Male Staff Change rooms is completed at South Wharf the old portion will be very dark and without ventilation. I would suggest that Messrs Aldwinckle have a small skylight say 4feet x 3 feet (about) fitted over each of the two rooms.'
- **Staff latrine threatened by proposed staircase**: 'I understand that in order to make a staircase to the quarters about to be erected over the offices for the wharf foreman, it is proposed to cut away a part of the lavatory of the officers and to do away with a WC used by the clerks, gate porter, storekeeper and others. The latrine accommodation at South Wharf is now very meagre and by doing away with one WC, there will only be one left for 24 staff. If a staircase could be provided outside the residence this might be avoided.'
- **Appointments**:
  **Tho Shoult** Watchman in place of **Wm Howard** discharged
  **Catherine F Deeble** Telephone Clerk to assist with young children (recovered patients) North Wharf
  **George Moore** Asst. Pierman in place of **F Martin** resigned

*A page is missing at this point in the report book, containing the rest of the March 24 report and the beginning of the April 7 report. This has been checked against the Ambulance Committee's Minute Book for any missing information of relevance – this is as follows:*

**M.A.B. Ambulance Committee Minute Book**
(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/0164)

**March 24, 1902**

- **Receiving Rooms**: a memo was received from the Works Committee dated 14 March 1902 reporting on the progress of the construction of the Receiving Rooms: '...the receiving rooms at South Wharf will be finished on Saturday next … exclusive of the verandah roof and covered roadway roof...' They were otherwise ready to use. The architects Messrs Aldwinckle reported that the contractors Walter Lawrence & Son 'have effectively settled the strike by paying off the strikers and employing another gang of men. They have, at the same time, refused to take on any of the men who have struck for a rise of pay.'
- **Complaint about Nursing Superintendent Miss Turner**: Dr Wanklyn complains about her not carrying out his instructions. A typed reply/explanation from Miss Turner herself is enclosed in the Minute Book.
- **Collision with police station pier**: on March 17 the Red Cross, in going alongside North Wharf, collided with the dumb barge at the end of the bridge of the River Police Station and broke one of the lamps.
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Walter Brown**, Asst Pierman **W. Hooper**
- **Promotions**: **Albert Aynge** promoted to Master of Conservator, **William Woolford** to Mate **Joseph Ruston** from fitter to engine driver.

**April 7, 1902**

- **Steamer schedules**: detailed discussion about timings of steamers for patients, and for visitors, staff and recovered patients.
- **Petition against superintendent nurse**: Charge Nurse **Mole**, who had recently resigned, had brought a petition from some of the nurses at South Wharf. The petition expressed dissatisfaction with the day superintendent nurse. Nurse Mole 'explained the circumstances which induced her to resign.' The actual problem isn't specified, though nurse **Turner** is mentioned, who is presumably the superintendent nurse of whom they complain.

**April 7, 1902**

(*See also directly above for more from this date)*

- **Problem of large packages being conveyed on ambulance steamers**: 'Large packages weighing from 4 to 5 Cwt and more are frequently sent to South Wharf for conveyance to the Hospital Ships on the Ambulance Steamers, the beams of which for carrying the decks have not been built to sustain such weights in a small compass, and as nearly all the decks are covered by the skylights for the hospitals and engine room and by the casings over the boilers, the only space in which such can be placed is immediately in front of the entrances to the hospitals, which is now nearly always taken up with linen baskets of various descriptions for patients and co. Small packages of not more than one Cwt can be distributed in the vacant spaces on the deck. They are more or less of an encumbrance in the working of the steamers and frequently form an excuse for a man not smartly taking a turn with a rope when required, but still they can be taken on board. But packages of a larger size weighing more than this can only be carried in front of the entrances to the hospitals where the linen and clothes baskets are now carried and irrespective of the deck being made to leak by such heavy packages, should any accident arise whereby it might be requisite to remove the patients from the hospitals at once, it would be very difficult if not impossible to do so, and the result might be very serious. This matter has on one or two occasions previously been before the committee and I should be glad if attention were once again drawn to it.'
- **Resignation:** Mate **W Woolford**
- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 634 Returned home not smallpox = 34 Recovered patients brought back = 445 Admitted to Shelters = 134 Died = 2

**April 21, 1902**

- **Claim for workmen incapacitated by vaccination**: 'I herewith submit a statement form Messrs Reeder and Co showing the loss incurred by them in paying men's wages for the time they were unfitted for work through vaccination and they have written asking for the amount to be repaid to them. These men were engaged at South Wharf on the SS Red Cross.'

- **New building for visitors and additional female staff accommodation completed**: 'On the 14th inst. the new building for visitors and female staff bedrooms (additional) was handed over to me by Messrs Aldwinckle and Son and upon the same date I handed the care of the staff bedrooms over to the Nursing Superintendent.'
- **North Wharf in use:** 'Upon the 15th inst. North Wharf was opened for the reception of patients.'
- **Change of piermen's hours**: 'In order to prevent as much as possible overtime pay I have altered the working hours of the day pierman and asst piermen from 7.0am to 7.0pm to 8.30am to 8.30pm, the night man coming on duty at the later hour. The Piermaster is more or less continuously on duty from about 7.0am until the last boat leaves at night; at the present time this is about 9.30pm. With 2 steamers under repair (one of which is in dock), this cannot be avoided but as soon as the Red Cross is completed I hope to be able to work the steamers so that there may not be overtime or at least very little. The steamer which should arrive at S Wharf from Long reach at 8.15pm seldom arrives before 9.0pm and at present it is advisable to have one steamer ready to come alongside S Whf to take in patients before the other steamer leaves, and it is due to this that the steamer does not get away from S Whf till from 9 to 9.30pm.'
- **Collision:** 'Upon the 12th inst. the barge "Namur" … collided with the S.S. "Maltese Cross" and damaged the port side house and paddle box rim …'
- **Mooring hulk Benmore to be sold:** 'The old hulk "Benmore" is of no further use in this service and is very rotten and I recommend she be sold. She was a vessel condemned to be broken up when bought for this service – but with a little repair she has done good service for about 16 years.'
- **Complaint about Dr Wanklyn giving orders outside his authority for wheeled litters and chicken steps**: 'Upon the 18th inst. after I had left S Wharf, **Dr Wanklyn** about 7.30pm sent for the Piermaster (**Mr Connor** the Wharf Foreman having gone on leave for 2 hours) and ordered him to send 2 of the Wheeled Litters from store to North Wharf by the 8.0pm steamer and he also directed that the Carpenter when he came in the morning was to make sufficient chicken steps for the pier at North Wharf (about 65 being required) and to go over in the first steamer to North Wharf and secure them in position.
  It may be possible that these steps may be requisite, but it is only a few years since that a complaint was made that in carrying patients on a stretcher at North Wharf the man in the rear of the stretcher being unable to see them, tripped over these steps and they were accordingly done away with. Of course with a man running a wheeled litter the steps can be seen but at South Wharf as a rule the pierman takes one handle of the litter and the ambulance attendant the other and both generally walk on the plain part of the bridge. The steps any way may at times be a convenience and a help. At the same time as the officer in charge of all constructive work I submit that this is work which should not be ordered to be done by the Medical Officer but by myself and I consider that I should be personally consulted on the matter.
  With regard to the wheeled litters they are all on store charge and none have ever been used at North Wharf and if required I am of opinion it was the duty of the Piermaster at North Wharf to requisition these on a proper form provided for all stores and the same would then have been placed before me in the usual way. It was not for me to find out in course of conversation about the chicken steps with the Piermaster that these wheeled litters had been sent over the previous night. In justification for Dr Wanklyn having ordered these chicken steps I am told that a man carrying a patient slipped on the pier but the Piermaster at North Wharf told me the man appeared purposely to slip. But taking that into consideration I am of opinion that the artizans should be entirely under my orders and that all constructive work or alterations or additions should pass through my hands.'
- **New Pierman**: **Dougherty Michael** (Asst. Pierman) appointed in place of **John Wilson** who left South Wharf without notice.
- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 457 Returned home not smallpox = 30 Recovered patients brought back = 435 Admitted to Shelters = 144 Died = 1

**June 2, 1902**

- **Pierman disappeared**: 'On the 25th April **M. Dougherty** Asst. Pierman left South Wharf and has not since returned … **B. R. Padfield** was appointed in his stead.'
- **Female bathing and changing rooms completed**: on 26 April the new bath and change rooms for female staff at South Wharf were taken over from the Contractor.
- **Three deck hands leave**: '**W. Facey** Deck Hand has absented himself from 22 May to 28 May. He then called and said he did not wish to do any more work at the wharf and asked for his money – being a casual hand on union rate of wages I paid him the 3 days pay due to him … I have this day

engaged **George William Alfred Hough** in his stead. **J. Jackson** Deck Hand has also absented himself since the 24 May and **W. Richards** Deck Hand has resigned …'

- **Contractor for work in female staff quarters** – **Durrants**: 'I submit specification of works required to be done in the female staff quarters at South Wharf. I have asked 3 firms but under the conditions I cannot get anyone but Durrant and Co to put in a price. The difficulty principally is revaccination added to which only one room can be spared at a time and then perhaps the contractor will have to leave off or wait a day or two before going on with another room. I am of opinion Messrs Durrant's price is fair and reasonable. His works are opposite to South Wharf and his men have all been revaccinated for other work on the Wharf.'
- **Need for lattice screen on ambulance shelter to stop people ogling from the street**: 'Complaint has been made by the residents of the houses opposite South Wharf that when patients are being removed from the ambulance to the new receiving room, their removal is quite visible from their houses and that men, women and especially children congregate in the street to watch same and they have come to the Wharf and asked me for something to be done in the matter. I would suggest that a light wood lattice with about 1" mesh be fitted to the side of the covered way facing the road. This will not only prevent people seeing patients but will also prevent the rain from driving in on them in gusty weather and will be cheap.'
- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships since 5 May = 624
  Recovered patients brought back = 842
  Returned home not smallpox = 62 Admitted to Shelters = 211 Died = 6

**June 16, 1902**

- **Swell from passing boat causes steamers to collide:** 'On the 11st inst. a large fishing steamer in passing South Wharf raised such a swell as to cause the "White Cross" to collide with the "Red Cross" to which she was at the time lying secured. This damage has been reported … and is now being made good.'
- **Careless and insolent Master causing damage to steamers: '**I have had occasion to complain of the disgraceful and careless way in which the 'White Cross' has been used by **A Aynge** (temporary hand) who is acting as Master in Charge. Her bulwarks have been forced inward, rails and spurs broken and rent [?], taffrail broken and split in various places and I recommend that A Aynge be given a week's notice, not only for the careless and disgraceful manner in which he has used the boat but when spoken to about it he was very insolent and in a very disgraceful manner told me that I knew what I could do.'
- **Undesirable pierman: '**I have also to recommend that **J Dunn** temporary Asst. Pierman at South Wharf be given a week's notice. This man has been reported to me several times by **Mr Connor** (Wharf Foreman) and has been a great deal of trouble lately and is a very undesirable man for this service.'
- **Appointments and resignations**:
  **Thomas George Barrett** appointed deck hand in place of **J R Jackson** who left the service
  **William Hall** appointed in place of **W Richards** who'd resigned
  **David Murphy** Asst. Pierman resigned
  **William Francis** Deck hand resigned
- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 243 Recovered patients brought back = 558
  Returned home not smallpox = 32 Admitted to Shelters = 58 Died = 5

**July 14, 1902**

- **Benmore sold:** old mooring hulk Benmore was sold to a Mr Price and taken away on 17 June**.**
- **Dodgy master dismissed, and pierman given notice**: '…I on the 17th inst. dismissed **Alfred Aynge** Master from this service and paid him one week's pay in lieu of notice. On the same date **E T Dunn** Assistant Pierman was given one week's notice …'
- **Pierman injured**: 'On the 26 June **F. Leahy** Asst. Pierman doing duty as writer [in] the Medical Officer's office injured his knee and was placed in one of the rooms of A shelter.'
- **Red Cross collides with police pier**: 'On 2nd July the Red Cross (Capt. **W. Kelly** in charge) collided with the dolphin of the Thames Police Pier adjoining North Wharf Pier and slightly damaged same. I have not received any complaint from the station so that I presume it is too slight for any notice to be taken of it.'
- **North Wharf closes**: closed for the reception of patients, and being disinfected.
- **Reduction of timetable and crew, and gender-separated days for discharging recovered patients**: 'In contemplation of the alteration in the timetable for the running of the Steamers (the

4.0pm journey being about to be dispensed with) I have given 4 of the Steamers crews notice that their services will not be required after 19th inst., this will effect a saving of nearly £8 per week. The fore cabins of the SS 'Albert Victor' and 'Maltese Cross' have been disinfected and there is now uninfected accommodation on all the Steamers and if the recovered patients are brought up in them as formerly and the Steamers now running with recovered patients be put off I shall in addition to the foregoing be able to discharge one whole crew, thereby effecting a further saving of over £27 per week viz over £15 for wages and £12 per week for fuel and co. The recovered patients formerly were brought up males on one day and females the next so that they should be separate and when only a few recovered patients were being discharged the males were brought up on Tuesdays and the females on Fridays.'

- **Appointments**:
  **Frederick W Davis** Asst. Pierman in place of **E W Dunn** discharged
  **John B Mummery** Deckhand in place of **F Woodgate** promoted
  **Thomas Scales** Asst. Pierman in place of **D Murphy** resigned
- **Deckhands discharged**: **John B Mummery, William Hall, George William Hough, John A Trowbridge**.
- **Sick list**: **F. G. Leahy**, Pierman (Doctor's Clerk); **W. Woolford**, Mate; **C. Gale**, Deck Hand.
- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 244
  Returned home not smallpox = 34 Admitted to Shelters = 68 Died = 1

**July 27, 1902**

- **Night Pierman delinquent in duties and half-booted**: 'Upon the 19 inst. it was reported to me that about 1.0am that day an ambulance whistle was sounded twice and the gate bell rang once and that then the Night Nurse of the Shelters went to the telephone room when the Night Pierman in charge appeared with only one boot on. Upon my enquiring into the matter the Night Pierman in charge told me that he had a bad foot and that was the reason his boot was off. I told this man that it was not the first report that had been made to me of a similar kind and that I was not at all satisfied with the way in which he performed his duties. The Night Pierman at once tendered his resignation.'
- **Complaints about Wharf Foreman Mr Connor**: 'Upon the 23 inst. Asst. Pierman **George Carlile** made various charges verbally to me against Mr Connor Wharf Foreman and I directed him to put these charges in writing which he did and I forwarded them to the Chairman on 24 inst. and was directed to make an investigation into the same which I have done and find the charges void of substantiation in any way and upon my telling Asst. Pierman Carlile that he had in my opinion not proved the charges made he openly stated that he had been urged to make these charges by the other men and that he had been left in the lurch. I submit the evidence herewith.'
- **Reimbursement for workman incapacitated by vaccination**: Messrs Durrant & Son request reimbursement for wages paid to Robert Barritt [?] while incapacitated from work due to vaccination.
- **Reduction and demotion of staff**: 'I have reduced the staff of the steamers to two crews and have enough spare hands with Capt Livett to form a third crew should one be required. Should a mate or driver be required to run a third steamer they will require to be paid mate of driver's wages at the case may be.'
  Reduction in Ratings -
  **Chas Digby** - Master to Mate **Fred Woodgate** - Master to Mate
  **William Woolford** - Mate to Deckhand **Tom Twin** - Mate to Deckhand
  **William Livett** - Mate to Deckhand **William Lanyon** - Engine Driver to Stoker
  Discharged – Deckhands **John A Trowbridge, George William Hough, William Stall, J B Mummery**
  Resignations -
  Pierman **T J Wadeson**; **George Carlile**; **Fred Williams** Fitter and Electrician
  Promotion – **Targett H J** to Pierman in place of **T Wadeson** resigned
- **Disappearance of George Carlile**: 'George Carlile Asst. Pierman went on leave yesterday Sunday at 10.30am and has not returned. Upon enquiring and after inspecting his quarters it has been found that he has cleared everything belonging to him from the Wharf. He told several of the staff so I am informed that he intended to clear out the first opportunity.'
- **Work needed on roads and paths by receiving rooms**: 'The roadway at South Wharf has not yet been started upon to be made up and the present time is a good one for making up the roads. The paving in front of the Receiving room has been finished some time. The tar path paved path running from the main road to the Blacksmith's shop and to the iron store and lamp room at South Wharf

which was destroyed and covered in when the Receiving Rooms were extended has not been remade. This is required as every place is made so dirty by the loose earth in dry weather and by mud in wet weather.'

- **No of patients** conveyed to the Hospital Ships = 58 Recovered patients brought back = 244 Returned home not smallpox = 9 Admitted to Shelters = 9

**Sept 22, 1902**

- **Insolent pierman fired:** 'On the 20th July **Joseph Jacobs** Asst. Pierman at South Wharf was reported to me for insolence to the Wharf Foreman and for insubordination – this man was suspended by order of the Clerk to the Board and by order of the Chairman he was dismissed the service.'
- **New male staff quarters complete**: 'Upon 6 August … I took over the newly erected single male staff quarters and the new latrine at South Wharf and upon the same date the single staff occupied the quarters.'
- **New staff cottages complete and occupied**: 'On 30 August during my absence on leave the Wharf Foreman took over the new cottages for the married male staff and notice was given to the various officers to occupy the same. With the exception of one house they are now all occupied. I have already written to the Clerk to the Board as to this house and would be glad to know whether the same is to be occupied by the Piermaster or the Wharf Foreman.'
- **Damage from passing steamer**: 'Upon the 3rd inst. owing to the indraught from the P.S. "Oriole" … in passing, damage was done to the stern of the S.S. "Albert Victor" which at the time was lying secured to the dolphins, and upon the 6th inst. the S.S. "Royal Sovereign" … damaged the "White Cross" bulwarks owing to a similar cause …'
- **Coal and gas allowances for new staff cottages, and naming of cottages**: 'The gate porter at South Wharf who is now residing in the new married male staff quarters has applied to me for a supply of coal. Upon reference to the Handbook for this year, I find it is not included in the emoluments. Heretofore it always has been and the previous gate porter was always allowed coal. I also notice in the handbook that coal is not allowed to **Capt Livett** but he has always been allowed coal from his first entry into the Service. I would like to know if coal is to be supplied to these two officers. Capt Livett has always been allowed 6 tons per annum. The former gate porter when in residence lived in the same house as the Medical Officer and afterward the female staff resided in the same house.
  When the old married staff quarters were in occupation the allowance of gas was as follows:

| | Lady Day | Midsummer | Michaelmas | Xmas |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Capt Livett** | 12,000 | 7,000 | 6,000 | 11,000 |
| Engineer | 7,500 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 7,000 |
| Piermaster | 7,500 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 7,000 |

  All beyond these quantities had to be paid for by the occupants of the various houses.
  I would like instructions as to the supply to the new quarters. 6 of the houses are the same size but **Capt Livett's** house is larger.
  I would also like to know if committee desire the gas meter of each of these houses to be taken and recorded daily, the same as the large meters on the Wharf. Also if the committee desire to give these houses any name such as South Wharf Cottages or South Wharf Avenue.'
- **Lamp needed for dark frontage of cottages**: 'The avenue or frontage of the new cottages is very dark at night and to prevent any nuisance being committed it would be advisable to have a lamp fitted to light the place. A good back lamp might be allowed to be fitted on the side of No 321 Rotherhithe Street which faces the houses.'
- **Clearing up after construction work, and fallen timber from Gabriel's timber wharf**: 'The damage to the concrete paving at the head of the pier at South Wharf by the steamroller has been made good by the contractor who has also said that now the works are completed he will clear up the wood shed which was allowed to be used by his workmen for placing material which would have been damaged by being in the open, there being no other place on the Wharf for such purpose during the rush of the erection of the various buildings. I have also written Messrs Gabriel and Son to have the timber which has fallen from their stacks and is now lying against the division wall and the boat and awning shed removed, and to make good the damage timber of same.'
- **Staff discharged**:
  Assistant Piermen – **Carlisle, George; Jacob, Joseph; Hacking, John; Manners, Albert**
  Fitter and Electrical Attendant – **Williams, Frederick** (left the service without giving notice)

Deckhands – **Brown, Wallace; Cook, Alfred James; Peutin, Edmund Lester; Ellis, Henry**
Watchman – **Shoult, Thomas**
Stokers – **Ritson, John; Clark, John Alfred**
Telephone Clerk – **Deeble, Catherine Florence** [North Wharf Piermaster's daughter]

- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 121
  Recovered patients brought back from Long Reach = 387 Returned home not smallpox = 27

**Oct 6, 1902**

- **Need for new blacksmiths forge**: 'The blacksmith's forge at South Wharf which has been repaired over and over again is now entirely worn out and useless. I am asking for a new one …'
- **Pay scale for William Livett: '**William Livett (deckhand) on 21st Sept last had been 1 year in this service. For 9 months of this time he was a mate and upon reduction of staff became a deckhand on the old scale of wages. I would like instructions as to this man being paid the additional 5/- per week increase in wages in accordance with the scale.'
- **New Fitter / Electrical Attendant**: asks to be allowed to engage **J. Church,** formerly a fitter at Gore Farm Hospital.
- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 4 Returned home not smallpox = 2
  Recovered patients brought back from Long Reach = 18

**October 20, 1902**

- **Locks for drawers for female staff**: '…I reported to the Deputy Acting Chairman as to the kind of lock and key with label to be obtained for one drawer for each member of the female staff and as to the best way of having the locks fitted. The Deputy Acting Chairman having approved the same ordered 50 locks and keys at 3s/6d each with labels at 4d each and a master key at 1/- from Messrs Hobbs and Co … I will engage a carpenter (temp) for 4 days to take off the old locks and fit the new in their stead.'
- **Job for Percy Austin on his return from service**: 'With reference to Percy Austin who prior to volunteering for active service in South Africa was telephone clerk at South Wharf. Previously … this man was a clerk at Messrs Pooley & Co Scale Makers. He would not be of any use as a pierman as he would be required to do all kinds of rough work. I had an idea he would make a storekeeper at South Wharf and that the Piermaster might be relieved from the duty of storekeeper and attend solely to his proper duties – but as we have no regular painter on our staff – the difficulty would be as to mixing and preparing the paints for the steamers which the Piermaster is very good at, and I am afraid Austin might not be able to do this. Austin would make a good stewards clerk or station superintendent's clerk and storekeeper, or a storekeeper at a large institution under the Board – I would not mind trying him as Storekeeper is Committee should so decide.'
- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 3 Returned home not smallpox = 2
  Recovered patients brought back = 9 Cases admitted to the shelters = 5

**November 3, 1902**

- **Drunken Pierman**: 'I submit herewith resignation from Asst. Pierman **W J Hooper**. This man came to South Wharf on the evening of the 26th inst. after being on leave in a state of insobriety. At the request of **Mr Connor** (Wharf Foreman) he was seen by **Dr Wanklyn** who pronounced him unfit for duty. I ask to be allowed to engage a man in his stead.'
- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 5 Returned home not smallpox = 3
  Recovered patients brought back = 11 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

**November 17, 1902**

- **Pierman transferred**: **J Walker**, Asst. Pierman, transferred to S. Wharf 'upon my recommendation'.
- **Fitter / Electrical Attendant: 'T Church** was on 6 October appointed temporary Fitter and Electrical Attendant at South Wharf. I ask for this man to be appointed permanently in place of **F Williams** who resigned.'
- **Delays caused by revaccination of carpenter, for fitting locks on drawers:** 'In accordance with the Committee's instructions to obtain a carpenter for 4 days to fit locks to the drawers in the female staff quarters, there has been great difficulty in obtaining a man for so short a period owing to the necessity for revaccination. On the 10 inst. I obtained a man but after revaccination he could not be allowed to go on with the work until the Medical Officer was satisfied that the revaccination was effective. In consequence of this, a start was not made upon the work until the afternoon of the 13th inst. and owing to the state of the man's arm, it will take five days to do the work and not 4 days as

asked for by me. I will have to pay this man's wages from 10th inst. to 19th inst. inclusive. I ask to be allowed to retain this man's services for a further period of 21 days in order to clear off some of the work which has accumulated on the Wharf and Steamers …'

- **Collision:** 'Upon the 13th inst…. the barge "Baden Powell" …. collided with the S.S. White Cross and damaged the taffrail …'
- **Resignation of Engineer: Mr John Thomson**, Engineer of the 'Red Cross' resigned.
- **Sick list: Thomas Church,** Fitter & Electrical Attendant, and **Henry Bird,** Gate Porter.
- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2 Returned home not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients brought back = 8 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**November 30, 1902**

- **Difficulty of revaccination confirmation procedures for workmen**: 'I desire to bring to the notice of the Committee the difficulty under which Contractors labour who undertake work at South Wharf either on the Wharf or Steamers.
  At the present time, a list of all persons who are permitted to go to work at any place on the Wharf or the steamers is sent to the Gate Porter by the Medical Officer, and only the persons whose names are on this daily list are allowed by the Gate Keeper to go beyond the entrance gates.
  Should a contractor require one of his men who has been working on the Wharf or the Steamers for some other work away from the Wharf, and the man be away from the Wharf for say a week or more, this man's return to the Wharf to work, although he has been previously vaccinated by the Medical Officer at South Wharf; he is obliged to wait from 7.0am till about 9.0am, before permission is given for him to go to work.
  Or should a contractor say a boiler cleaner send men to clean a boiler, and these men after being revaccinated proceed with the work which takes about 4 or 5 days to do - upon the completion of the work these men's names are removed from the daily list of those allowed on the Wharf.
  In the course of perhaps another 3 weeks this contractor may be required to clean another boiler and may send the same man or men who have been previously revaccinated to work on that boiler - but because these men's names do not appear on the daily list, they are obliged to wait from 7.0am to about 9.0am and sometimes after, before permission is given for them to go to work; this entails a loss to the contractor, for the men's time must be paid for, and consequently a cost to the Board.
  It may be said that if notice is given that men who have been revaccinated are being sent to work on the Wharf or Steamers, the names of such men would be entered upon the daily list, but it is not always possible for a contractor like Messrs Reeder and Co who employ a great number of workmen and who have nearly all their workmen revaccinated, to be able to give such notice, for at the last moment they may through circumstances be obliged to change the men intended to be sent, and to keep men who have been revaccinated waiting for a couple of hours at the entrance gates, in addition to the monetary loss, is annoying to both contractor and workmen and committee will readily understand that restrictions such as these cause contractors to put in a very much heavier price for their work.
  I would suggest that a book should be kept at the Gate Porter's lodge with the names therein of all who have been revaccinated or who have satisfied the Medical Officer that they are sufficiently protected from smallpox, or that a card board pass with the name on it be given to each man upon revaccination so that it may be presented at the Gates when required.'
- **Problem of workmen being asked to bring their own food:** 'In reference to the instruction recently received by me to the effect, that in future all workmen will be required to bring their food with them to the wharf:
  Contractors will I am sure have great difficulty in getting men to submit to such a restriction which compels them to remain on the wharf from 7.0am to 5.0pm and sometimes later - and those who do will require to be well paid for so doing, in addition they will require some sort of Mess Room with means for cooking their food and someone to look after same. This will all add very materially to the cost of the work and I would be glad to know if this order is to apply to men working on the Machinery on the Steamers and upon deck work other than the hospitals of the steamers.'
- **Problem of access to South Wharf, and request for his wife to be catered for:** 'There being no means of conveyance by vehicle or otherwise to and from South Wharf and as at times one is obliged to wait for from 20 to 40 minutes while the swing bridges at the docks on the road to the wharf are open for craft to go through. In the event of severe weather, I am arranging to sleep somewhere close to the wharf and I ask the committee to allow my wife to be provided with food upon visiting me at the Wharf at the rate laid down by the Managers on page 142 of the Hand Book for Officers wives.' [Item deferred by the committee]

- **Change of Engineers**: **William Sadler** appointed as Engineer, and **John Thomson** resigned.
- **No of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 9 Returned home not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients brought back = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Medical Officer's Report Book 1902-1905

(London Metropolitan Archives, reference: H48/A/05/001)

**November 3, 1902 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Nurses recommended for promotion**: Charge Nurse **Connelly** and 2nd Assistant Nurses **A. Holloway** and **R. Batts,** following the resignation of wardmaid **Rose Wyles** due to ill health.
- **Unauthorised persons on site:** Persons other than staff and patients have been entering the site, even working on infected shelters. He proposes further regulations: 1. temporary workmen or others needing admission to the site should be held at the gate until the Medical Officer has seen him or given prior permission, unless the Gate Porter has previously been informed in writing that the individual is protected against smallpox. 2. No one else may authorise such admission.
- **Unvaccinated coalmen**: '...In connection with the foregoing, I would draw your attention to the practice of the contractor who supplies coal and coke to the South Wharf. The men who bring this for delivery are often unprotected by vaccination and refuse revaccination. This has happened at intervals during the last year and 3 or 4 times in the last few weeks. It would save much delay and inconvenience to the Institution, as well as risk to the non-vaccinated employees during their delay at the Gates, if the Contractors, Messrs Herbert Clarke and Co adhered to the terms of their contract...'

**November 17, 1902 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Catering for contractors on wharf, to avoid them needing to leave the wharf for lunch:** '...I have caused food to be issued to contractors' men in an emergency. The men employed in cleaning and painting the Medical Officers' Quarters and parts of C & D shelters had to sandpaper the walls in order to remove the dirt from the walls. In this process their hair and skin became covered in fine dust necessitating a bath before leaving the premises. The arrangement had been made for them to leave the Wharf three times a day for meals viz at 8 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 30 p.m. Three baths a day being impracticable, arrangements were made for them to mess in the Wharf. The contractor pointed out that owing to the men having to take their baths in his time, he would lose money, since it was not in his contract. He acquiesced fully to the necessity for the precaution and agreed to give the time necessary for bathing if the Managers would provide the necessary food. To this I agreed and obtained the Chairman's approval. The cost of food supplied for the first week is 17s 8d...'
- **Unvaccinated coalmen**: the problem with the coal deliveries has been further investigated and he has found that the majority of the Wharf's suppliers are not abiding by the vaccination clause in their contract. As a result, deliveries are mostly made to the Gate and then moved by hand to the relevant part of the site. Many stores are moved by the female staff and as a result, the nursing superintendent is unable to tackle issues with deliveries such as stale food. He asks that male staff from the River Ambulance move the stores as they are heavy and extensive.
- **Night Watchman's clock**: he suggests this be supplied to the River Ambulance staff to ensure punctual visiting of each part of the Wharf.

**December 1, 1902 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Smallpox admissions**: 'During the fortnight ending at midnight on Nov 30th, 12 cases of smallpox were admitted. One case found to be chickenpox was returned from the Wharf. This increase of 4 cases – there were 4 in the preceding fortnight – is, in my opinion, a warning of more to follow; relying on past experience it is reasonable to suppose that the lowest point of recent quiet season has been passed and that a more active time is before us.'
- **Sick staff:** 'Of staff, two are on the sick list. One of them Assistant Pierman **Moore** is suffering from bronchitis. This, though of a mild type, will unfit him for the service if he does not speedily improve.'
- **Bathing and changing regulations**: 'In accordance with your instructions, I submit my observations on the copy of the Gate Porter's & Bathing Regulations which was forward to me. As they stand they do not appear to be in accordance with the corresponding Local Government Board orders, which, for the sake of clearness of comparison, I have placed on a sheet opposite to the

existing regulations. They appear to bear reference to a time when smallpox is infrequent and to be incomplete for an epidemic period like the present when a medical officer is in residence with full administrative responsibility.

With regard to the Bathing regulations I have appended a draft which would serve as a basis for a set of Rules. They involve some general principles, and if these meet with your approval, the details could then be gone into. These principles are:

1. The appointment of a Bathing Attendant with superior pay and rank.
2. A system of bathing passes.
3. No one to wear outer private clothing when at work in Wharf premises.

Regarding Nos 1 & 2 the Wharf Foreman reports that he is not able to satisfy himself that staff and others take the proper precautions as to bathing and changing before leaving the premises. The present bathing Attendant is an Assistant Pierman and I do not think that his position and pay are equal to his difficult and responsible duties. The object of these regulations being to prevent the carriage of infection elsewhere, the actual disinfecting officers, so to speak i.e. the Bathing Attendant and the Disinfector are important officers. Much of the success of any precautions depends on the individuality of these men. It will not be easy to keep trustworthy and tactful men in these posts without higher pay than the rank and file receive.

General Regulation No. 3 is that now in force for many of the staff and others. It may be said that such regulations savour of a Hospital. But the Wharf is not a hospital inasmuch as patients are not kept there for treatment and are sent off the premises with the utmost despatch immediately a diagnosis has been made. Yet in an epidemic time no sooner are they gone than fresh cases pour in and as fast as the place is emptied, it is filled again. Infection therefore abounds, and from the modern and critical Public Health point of view the Wharf is an infected area. This was the hard fact which had to be faced last winter and may need to be faced again. It must needs be so as long as epidemics continue and they will recur as long as London chooses to dally with vaccination and nurse a disease which in ten days might be stamped out and be made extinct for all time.'

**December 15, 1902 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Resignation of nurses**: 'One Charge nurse and one second assistant nurse and 1 ward maid have resigned. The charge Nurse is Nurse **Connelly**: her leaving is a loss to the service: she acted in the worst of the epidemic as Night Superintendent, a post of much responsibility which she filled with efficiency. She was in charge at North Wharf while that station was open. I testify with pleasure to her trustworthiness and capability.'

***Please also see further below the report dated March 31, 1905 from this same report book, which gives the numbers of male staff employed in April 1902.***

## Borough of Southwark - Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1902 (published 1903)

(Wellcome Library, online catalogue ref: .b18246370)

Page 31

- **Success in containing epidemic:** 'It is only fair to state my appreciation of the splendid work that was done by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and its experienced officers during this epidemic. The extreme care that was shown at the South Wharf with the cases was beyond all praise, and was a very active agent in hindering the spread of the disease.'

# 1902 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Bott**, Walter; **Downs**, William Henry

*No other South Wharf addresses found; most staff were living off site while the new accommodation was being built.*

# 1903

***Smallpox back under control; Dr Wanklyn left.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the year 1903

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1903; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1597)

Page 152-153

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Maltese Cross, Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, White Cross, Red Cross, Conservator.
- **Camp sheathing, boat and mast shed, and workshops:** Mention of the 'camp sheathing' [boards/piles supporting riverbank/embankment] needing to be partly renewed. Plans approved for provision of a boat and mast shed, and workshops for the engineer and carpenter, on the site at present occupied by an old timber gantry, which will be demolished.
- **Dr Wanklyn** ceased to be Medical Superintendent of the R.A.S.; reverted to previous arrangement of Hospitals Committee providing 'expert medical assistance' as required.

Page 207

- **Conveyed 2,335 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 349
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 321
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 34
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1,631

Page 231

- **Smallpox admissions**: 426 patients admitted to the wharves, 349 sent to the smallpox hospital.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1903 Vol. XXXVII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1903)

Page 230

- **Dr Wanklyn's salary**: '...We have to report that we have given Dr. Wanklyn notice that the arrangement whereby he is paid an additional salary at the rate of £200 per annum as long as he continues to discharge the duties of medical superintendent of the River Ambulance Service (Board Minutes, 5th April, 1902, p.259) will be terminated on 25th April next...'
- **Steamboat Engineer J. S. A. Masson appointed**: 'We have to report that we have engaged J. S. A. Masson as engineer (second-class certificate) for the steamboats, at wages of 50s. per week with other emoluments...' [from minutes of 21 March 1903]

Page 313

- **Recommendation of half-way site between London and Dartford**: Outlines the arguments for creating a resting place mid-way between London and Dartford to allow smallpox patients to make the journey in the event of the river not being navigable due to ice or fog. They argue that access to the Hospitals at Long Reach and Darenth can be interrupted at any time by the weather. A resting place will make the use of these hospitals much easier and will add to the comfort of patients on the long journey. They recommend the purchase of 13.25acres in the Bexley Road near Blendon at £240 per acre. (The recommendation is once again lost). [from minutes of 2 May 1903]

Pages 580-81

- **Resignation of Dr Wanklyn and appointment of Dr Frederic Thomson:**
  '... Dr. Wanklyn, who has since 4th September 1901, discharged the duty of diagnosing cases of smallpox at South Wharf, has resigned his appointment as assistant medical superintendent in the hospitals service, and we report that arrangements have been made for Dr. Frederic Thomson,

medical superintendent of the Gore Farm Hospital (which at the present time is empty), to discharge temporarily those duties in Dr. Wanklyn's place. Dr. Thomson will commence his duties from 20th August … and, in the meantime, from 20th of this month, an assistant medical officer from the hospitals service will act in that capacity...' [from report dated 16 July 1903]

Page 616

- **Plans for new boat and mast shed**: Reports that plans for the new boat and mast shed had been drawn up, alongside demolishing the old timber gantry [from minutes of 5 September 1903]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1901-03

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/03/004)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 11, 1903**

- **Drunk deckhand overboard**: 'Upon the arrival of the Steamer ("Albert Victor") at Long Reach on the 26th Dec (Boxing Day) **W Woolford** while engaged securing the after spring on the sponson accidentally fell overboard. After being rescued **Captain Punter** in charge of the Steamer upon seeing the man was of opinion that Woolford was under the influence of liquor. At Woolford's request a Medical Officer was sent for and he ordered the man to be wrapped in blankets. Upon arrival of the steamer at South Wharf **Captain Livett** inspected all of the crew and in his opinion 2 men viz W Woolford and **R Shelton** (deckhands) were under the influence of liquor. These men were taken to **Dr Wanklyn** for his examination after which they were ordered to return to the steamer and remain in the forecastle (the steamer not being further required that day). Both men left South Wharf at the regular hour for the staff apparently all right.'
- **Staff discharged: J Ruston**, Engine driver temp for the Conservator
- **Steamers collided:** as the Red Cross was going alongside South Wharf, due to a technical problem it couldn't reverse and so collided with the Albert Victor, causing damage to the paddle box.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 5 Returned home, not smallpox = 2
  Recovered patients brought back = 10

**February 9, 1903**

- **Male staff numbers – reductions, and minimums required**: 'In accordance with your instructions to submit a report containing suggestions as to reducing the present male staff and as to what I consider should be the nominal male staff of this service in non-epidemic times. Since July last when the number of steamers required to be run was reduced, the services of the following have been dispensed with viz:

  2 Masters 2 Engine Drivers 3 Mates 10 Deckhands 2 Stokers 6 Asst Piermen
  Total = 25

  With the steamers running as at present the following reduction can be made

  1 Master to be reduced to Mate
  1 Mate to be reduced to Deckhand
  1 Engine Driver to be reduced to Stoker
  3 Stokers to be discharged
  2 Deckhands to be discharged

  The minimum staff required should in my opinion be as follows:

  1 Captain 1 Mate 4 Deckhands 1 Engineer 1 Fitter and Electrician 3 Stokers

  The following extra men will also be required so as to fill vacancies in case of illness and to keep the vessels clean and in condition and for day and night watchmen and for keeping the machinery in order and ready for any emergency and for running a second steamer occasionally viz

  1 Engineer 3 Stokers 1 Mate 3 Deckhands 2 Night Watchmen

  Wharf staff required - minimum

  1 Wharf Foreman 1 Storekeeper
  2 Piermen (1 day and 1 night) The night pierman to act as Night Gate Porter
  3 Day Asst Piermen 1 Night Asst Pierman 1 Mess Room Attendant
  1 Charge Room Attendant 1 Gardener 1 Carpenter 1 Disinfector
  1 Day Stoker for the 9 boilers in the buildings on the Wharf

1 Night Stoker for the 9 boilers in the buildings on the Wharf
[In pencil have been added the following:] Omitted 1 Clerk 1 Pierman for Telephone Duty
1 Doctor's Clerk 1 Gate Porter
At North and West Wharves the minimum staff has been reached viz for each 1 Piermaster and 1 man for day duty and 1 man for night duty.

- **Misconduct of Mess Room Attendant**: '**George Moore** Assistant Pierman who was reported to me for misconduct on 6th inst. has tendered his resignation ... This man is the Mess Room Attendant.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 5 Returned home, not smallpox = 5
Recovered patients brought back = 2 Admitted to shelters = 10

**February 23, 1903**

- **Reduction and demotion of staff**: 'In accordance with your direction one week's notice was given to 3 Stokers and 2 Deckhands and they were discharged the service on 21st inst. The following reductions have also been made: 1 Master to Mate, 1 Mate to Deckhand, 1 Engine Driver to Stoker. I ask to be allowed to pay Mates when requested to do duty as Master, Deckhands when requested as Mate and Stoker when requested as Engine Driver. The pay of Master, Mate and Engine Driver as was done previous to the late epidemic.'
- **Fire alarm testing:** Fire inspector Mr Webb visits and tests the staff 'at fire stations both on the wharf and on the steamers.' Fire bells failed to ring – broken wire found and fixed, and Superintendent gives instructions 'for the bells to be tested at 8.30am every day in future.'
- **New pierman: John Amies** [?] 'formerly an able seaman in the Royal Navy' was engaged as Asst. Pierman.
- **Resignations, discharges and demotions:**
Resigned - **George Moore**, Asst Pierman; **William Sadler**, Engineer
All the following were discharged due to reduction of staff -
Deckhands **W Woolford** and **R Shelton**; Stokers **A. James**, **M. Cronin**, **A. Hintry**.
Reductions in Ratings - **Kelly W** from Master to Mate; **Showell F** from Mate to Deckhand; **Hellyer** from Engine Driver to Stoker
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 4 Returned home, not smallpox = 4
Recovered patients brought back = 3 Admitted to shelters = 7

**March 9, 1903**

- **John Masson appointed as Engineer**: ' …John Stewart Anderson Smith Masson has been engaged as Engineer for the Steamers at £2.10.0 per week ... and lodging allowance...'
- **Pierman transferred**: Asst. Pierman **A. E. Paish** transferred from West Wharf to South Wharf in place of G Moore who'd resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Returned home, not smallpox = 2
Recovered patients brought back = 1 Admitted to shelters = 2

**March 23, 1903**

- **Further reductions of staff:** 'In compliance with your instructions the following further reductions and discharges have been made in the staff viz
1 Master to Mate 1 Mate to Deckhand 2 Deckhands and 1 Stoker discharged
This now reduced the staff of the steamers to one crew with the following spare hands viz
1 engineer 4 stokers 1 Mate 3 deckhands And 2 night watchmen
- **Need for wharf foreman: '**With reference to the Wharf Foreman -
Seeing that the number of buildings now upon South Wharf is far in excess of that previous to the late epidemics and that these new buildings are all of wood and corrugated iron and that there are now no less than 10 boilers for use on the Wharf at South Wharf whereas previously there were only 2 and that in consequence of these buildings greater supervision is required and that as I do not reside upon the wharf, unless the Wharf Foreman is retained there would not in my opinion be a sufficiently responsible officer on the Wharf between 5.0pm and 10am the following day. And also on Sundays and when I am absent visiting other wharves or on leave or doing work away from the Wharf. I am very strongly of opinion in order that due care may be exercised in preservation of the Board's property and that discipline and order may at all times be properly maintained on the Wharf that the services of the Wharf Foreman should be retained.'
- **Installation of mains electricity**: 'The Borough Council of Bermondsey which includes Rotherhithe are about to lay electric mains in the streets and the same will I understand be in close proximity to

South Wharf so that shortly the much desired electric light can if required be put on to S Wharf. I submit herewith circular showing charge per unit which appears to be very low.'
- **Clerk's wage increase:** wage rise due for Clerk **J. Roche.**
- **Staff injuries**: 'Upon the 15th inst. Capt **G Livett** in going up to the bridge deck of the "Maltese Cross" injured his knee. He was placed on the sick list and is not yet able to return to duty.' **T Church** Fitter also injured his finger while fitting some new pipes in the female staff quarters.'
- **Staff discharged: A Mahoney** Stoker; **W Collins** Deckhand; **T G Barrett** Deckhand
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 4 Returned home, not smallpox = 0
  Recovered patients brought back = 2 Admitted to shelters = 4

**April 6, 1903**
- **Collision:** 'On the 23rd ult. the barge "Herbert" owned by Mr Jamison of Greenwich collided with the S.S. Geneva Cross when lying moored off South Wharf and damaged the rudder…'
- **Engineer's excess gas usage:** 'The Engineer [**E. Atherton**] living in No. 7 Cottage South Wharf has exceeded his allowance of gas for the last quarter …' Gives reason that due to a defective 'kitchener' he has had to use a gas ring for cooking.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 5 Returned home, not smallpox = 3
  Recovered patients brought back = 0 In shelters = 1

*Reports for 1903 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1903-04

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/005)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**April 20, 1903**
- **Fire drills**: lengthy comments and suggestions about how fire drills should be carried out at South Wharf including on the steamers.
- **Sick list**: **J.S. Masson**, Engineer, and **G. Lucas**, Stoker
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 24 Recovered patients brought back = 4
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**May 2, 1903**
- **Difficulty in getting workmen**: repairs needed to boiler in female staff quarters – he wrote to 4 firms requesting estimates, but only one company was willing to do the job. Of the others, one called to see the work but refused to be re-vaccinated and left the wharf, and subsequently sent an indignant letter. The other companies didn't respond at all.
- **Wage rises: F. G Leahy**, having completed 12 months in the service, would have been entitled to a pay rise, but had changed role from Pierman to Doctor's Clerk – asks if this rise should still apply. **B. R. Padfield**, on completing 12 months as Asst. Pierman also due a wage increase.
- **Sick list: Charles Johnson**, temporary carpenter
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 19 Recovered patients brought back = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5

**May 18, 1903**
- **Collision**: on 10th May the S.S. Gustav-Bogel collided with the Albert Victor and caused moderate damage.
- **Wage rise: John Walker**, entitled to rise on completing 1 year's service as Asst. Pierman.
- **Increase in steamer schedule and staff**: states that the running of the steamers had a few months previously been reduced to two on Saturday-Mondays and occasionally as required to convey new cases, and staff had been reduced accordingly. Now points out that a steamer has been running daily and sometimes twice a day for the last 6 weeks and asks to be allowed to reinstate staff 'until the ordinary running of twice a week is requisite'.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 25 Recovered patients brought back = 9
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0?

**June 29, 1903**

- **Surprise fire drill**: '…Mr Webb Fire Inspector paid a surprise visit to South Wharf - Upon entering the wharf he immediately proceeded to one of the fire alarms and rang same. The first hose was got into play 1 minute after the alarm and the second hose 1 min 20 seconds after - '
- **Doctor's Clerk: F. G Leahy** given one week's notice as Doctor's Clerk, but given option of working as Asst. Pierman, on condition that that his services should be at the disposal of the Medical Officer for clerical work when so required – he accepted this offer.
- **Personal gas allowances exceeded**: No. 2 Cottage occupied by Gate Porter **Henry Bird** and No. 5 Cottage occupied by **Chas Digby**, Mate, plus No. 7 Cottage occupied by the Engineer, all exceeded their gas allowance. Concluded that the allowance was insufficient; 'and I am informed that in order to prevent the occupants exceeding their allowance they are obliged at times to use oil lamps, this I consider dangerous to the property – all the cottages have had incandescent burners fitted by the occupants in order to keep the consumption as low as possible - ' Recommends increased allowance and that it should be regulated at the end of each year.
- **Wage rise: Thomas Scales,** Asst. Pierman, entitled to wage rise on completing 1 year's service.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 21 Recovered patients brought back = 18
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**July 1903** (no specific date given, but signed by the Chairman on 13th July)

- **Sick list: William Hickman**, stoker, and **J. W. Collins**, Deck Hand.
- **Wage rise:** due to **H. J. Targett**, Pierman.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 31 Recovered patients brought back = 20
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 9 Cases admitted to the shelters = 7

**July 25, 1903**

- **Annual leave request**: asks for leave to be granted to **Mr Connor**, Wharf Foreman, 'who has been almost continuously on the wharf since his appointment.'
- **New staff**: **Chas J. Lock** appointed as Asst. Pierman, in place of **W. Davis** who'd resigned. Also **Alfred James** employed as stoker and **Chas J Andrews** as Deck Hand temporarily to cover staff holidays.
- **Wage increase: A E. Parish**, Asst. Pierman, entitled to wage increase.
- **Preparations to sell paddle steamer Conservator:** taken to West Wharf to be temporarily moored at the pier there – recommends this be advertised for sale.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 17 Recovered patients brought back = 21
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 9

**October 5, 1903**

- **Grassing of ashy ground**: Area of ground facing the river in front of the Medical Officer's quarters and C Shelter, covered with ashes to a depth of 3-6+ inches. Recommends that this area be sown with grass seed, after removing the ashes and replacing with earth or clay.
- **Removal of steamer ash**: ash from the steamers had always been deposited in the old saw pit under the wooden shed at head of the wharf. Now that the shed was due to be demolished, he suggests instead that a secondhand barge be purchased and moored off South Wharf for depositing the ashes, and having them removed from the barge as needed.
- **Collision**: on 10th August the barge Renforth collided with the White Cross, doing minor damage.
- **Condemned coal**: barge of coal delivered of inferior quality to that ordered – 'this coal was condemned by me'; was replaced by the contractors.
- **Deterioration in wharf frontage**: camp sheathing and piling at front of wharf in bad condition and needing repair.
- **Proposal to extend wharf into river to be level with neighbouring wharves**: points out that on one side the next wharf projects 39 feet, and the other 75 feet beyond the front of South Wharf 'thereby forming a bay for the mud to accumulate which at times is from 3 to 4 feet deep. By extending the wharf frontage riverwards as suggested, the managers would gain over ¼ acre of grounds, and in addition, the front of the wharf would by the work of the tide be kept clear of mud...' [this was obviously never carried out]
- **Unauthorised landing**: 'Upon the 14th Sept about 8.00pm two men belonging to a barge anchored close to South Wharf landed on the pontoon and walked up the pier before being observed …

Although many times boats have attempted to land passengers at South Wharf this is the only occasion upon which they have succeeded…' They were challenged by the Night Pierman on the Wharf and then seen by the Medical Officer who offered them re-vaccination, which they refused, so he took their names and addresses and allowed them out the gates.

- **Accident**: **Captain Livett** in walking over the gangway from the steamers to the pontoon slipped and fell, dislocating his right shoulder.
- **Staff discharged: C. J. Andrews** Deck Hand and **Alfred James**, Stoker, who had been temporarily employed during staff holidays, were discharged.
- **Gas allowances in staff cottages**: reports the amounts of gas consumed in the male staff cottages, listing the occupants of each:
  No. 1 Cottage: **Captain Livett**
  No. 2 Cottage: **Henry Bird**, Gate Porter
  No. 3. Cottage: **W.G. Punter**, Captain
  No. 5 Cottage: **C. Digby**, Mate
  No. 6 Cottage: **J. Hellyer**, Stoker
  No. 7 Cottage: **E. Atherton**, Engineer
- **Doctor's Clerk fired: Bertholm James Weingaertner** – 'recently engaged as Asst. Pierman for duty as Doctor's Clerk has after 3 months trial proved to be incapable of performing the duty - ' Recommends he be given one week's notice.
- **Wage increases**: the following were entitled to wage increases:
  **William Livett**, Deck Hand, 2 years' service; **Downs**, **H. W.**, Pierman, 3 years' service;
  **J. Church**, fitter / electrician, 1 year's service.
- **Supplies**: list of petty cash payments made include purchases of beer, lymph (multiple mentions), repairs to clocks, potatoes, cloves and ginger, chimney cleaning.
- **Sick list: J. S. Masson**, Engineer, **George Livett**, Master.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 58 Recovered patients brought back = 105
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 11 Cases admitted to the shelters = 26
  (all since 25 July)

**October 19, 1903**

- **Doctor's Clerk: F. G. Leahy** re-appointed as Asst. Pierman for duty as Doctor's Clerk
- **Collision**: steam tug Commodore collided with Geneva Cross and did some damage.
- **Contractors refusing re-vaccination**: two men arrived at the wharf to see about the painting of the buildings, and refusing re-vaccination, left the wharf.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 4 Recovered patients brought back = 13
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 0 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**November 2, 1903**

- **Re-vaccination refusals**: coal ordered but couldn't be delivered as men to unload it wouldn't submit to re-vaccination; had to make alternative arrangements
- **Damage from speeding vessel**: on 28th Oct (?) about 2am a large vessel passed South Wharf 'at such a rate' to cause damage to the Red Cross. Couldn't identify the steamer due to the darkness and her speed.
- **Sick list: George Livett** on 'Light Duty' while recovering from shoulder dislocation, and **J. Barritt,** Deck Hand.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 32 Recovered patients brought back = 3
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**November 16, 1903**

- **Neighbouring projecting wharf frontages make slipway proposal unfeasible**: reports upon his previous suggestion (1886) of installing a gridiron or slipway at South Wharf and explains that it would no longer be feasible. 'Owing to the accumulation of mud in the front of South Wharf due to the erection of a jetty to the front of the adjoining wharf which projects 75 feet beyond the front of South Wharf, I could not now recommend a gridiron to be constructed… this jetty was not in existence when I recommended a gridiron or a slipway to be constructed; it has been built within the last 5 years.'
- **Illness from re-vaccination**: contractors painting the shelters ask for a refund due to one workman being 'disabled through re-vaccination'.

- **Pierman resigns: A. E. Parish**, Asst. Pierman, resigns.
- **Wage increases** for: **Captain William Punter** – for 2 years as Master, and **W. Judge** – 2 years as Asst. Pierman.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 19 Recovered patients brought back = 8
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**November 30, 1903**

- **Examination of wharf frontage**: submits specifications for repairing the wharf frontage, some of which is in very bad condition and bulging outwards; examined the backing and found it to be lime concrete, then for about 144 feet cement concrete, and the remaining 90 feet backed with earth.
- **New Asst. Pierman: Edward Barnes** engaged in place of A. E Paish, 'but I regret to say that since re-vaccination this man has not been able to do any work on the wharf – except as a sort of messenger.'
- **Inspector's visit**: on 26 Nov, Dr Downs, Local Govt Inspector, visited South Wharf.
- **Wage increase**: for **T. Kent** Assistant Pierman (Gardener) after 2 years in service.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 6 Recovered patients brought back = 16
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**December 12, 1903**

- **Work history of Edward Barnes**, **new Asst. Pierman**: '…informed me voluntarily that he had previously been in the Managers' employ as Attendant at the Eastern Amb. Station. Upon enquiry I find such to be the case, he joined in 1897, was 14 months in the service and was then suspended for returning from leave at 10.00pm in a state of insobriety and that he at once resigned – this man has shown no desire for drink during the time he has been in this service, nor has he the appearance of a man addicted to drink, he is a very respectable man and a good worker and I would not like to lose him.'
- **Sick List: Captain Livett** still on Light Duty; Asst. Pierman **Edward Barnes** and Asst. Pierman **Chas Lock** off sick.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Recovered patients brought back = 9
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Medical Officer's Report Book 1902-1905

(London Metropolitan Archives, reference: H48/A/05/001)

**January 12, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Complaints about laundry service**: 'The Nursing Superintendent complains of the bad condition in which articles are returned from the Mead Laundry. Dissatisfaction among the staff is acute and seems reasonable. I am asked very often to inspect articles alleged to be torn, wet or dirty and find most of the complaints fully justified. Staff wear dirty linen or attempt to wash it themselves rather than send it to the laundry and are thus prone to wear infected linen when on leave.'
- **Problem of hot water being unavailable when boiler being cleaned**: 'The inconvenience, mentioned by the Nursing Superintendent, of hot water being cut off periodically and of there being no alternative supply when the boilers require to be cleaned, has been long felt by the Female Staff. On such occasions, their leave is stopped for the time being, because there is no hot water for bathing. Usually the cut off lasts for not more than 48 hours. The boiler will, I understand, require attention before long necessitating the supply of hot water being cut off for a week. I beg to ask that an alternative supply may be arranged before this work is begun.'

**January 26, 1903 - report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Salary increase for nurse**: recommends 1st Assistant Nurse **Pullman** for salary increase.
- **Overalls for contractors**: requests 2 dozen overalls and caps be ordered for the use of contractors working on site, as requested specially by the firms who supply men for cleaning the boilers and engines in the steamboats. 'They state that these overalls are most convenient which their men wear in Deptford Cattle Market on account of foot and mouth disease.'

**February 9, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Salary increase for nurse:** 2nd Assistant Nurse **Lewis**, on completion of one year of service, recommended for salary increase.
- **Staff numbers:** reports on the number of staff he considers are required for the Medical Department in non-epidemic times. 'Assuming a non-epidemic time to be that in which not more than 100 patients are admitted during the year, and that the admission rate is not regular, the number of nurses required is not more than four …' As for domestic staff, he explains that previously about 7 were needed in non-epidemic times, 'But there has been a substantial increase in the work owing to the addition of new wards and staff quarters at North and South Wharves… I do not think that it will be found possible to reduce the number below 12 … As to immediate reduction of staff, there are now 3 charge Nurses, 3 1st Assistants and 6 2nd Assistants, a total of 12. These are in excess of present requirements …' Continues in detail with recommendations, while needing to be prepared for increased smallpox cases. 'Small pox often attains its maximum in the spring, and the present already increase in the provinces points to this happening again.'
- **Fire risk of gas lights**: 'In regard to fire prevention, I should like to make some additional recommendations. I am impressed with the risk of the ordinary gas flame in wooden and other buildings. At the Wharves it is the regulation to have each jet of this kind guarded by a wire globe or glass globe; and I do not see what else could be used. But as guards, such globes are treacherous. The flame in windy weather flares about and is apt to break the glass, leaving a naked flame; and in the case of the wire globes, observations shows that in violent drafts the flame flares out beyond the wire and is capable of setting light to a blind or other article hanging near. At South Wharf in all the wards and the Receiving Rooms incandescent burners have been fitted and answer well: and some have been fitted in other buildings. I recommend that the remaining gas lights at both Wharves be fitted with incandescent burners.'

**February 23, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Salary increase for nurse**: Charge Nurse **Wood**, on completion of one year's service, is recommended for a salary increase.
- **Fire drills**: 'On February 16th, Inspector Webb examined the Fire apparatus and drilled the staff: another visit from him at no distant date would be of great advantage. The Female Staff require more drilling and instruction to bring them to a thoroughly efficient standard. They have a practice drill weekly and occasional alarms, and they show a gratifying improvement in their training. On an unexpected occasion recently, while they were at dinner on the ground floor of their Staff Quarters, an alarm was given of fire on the top floor. The Female Staff were in position with their hose and branch pipe and ready to turn water on to the spot supposed to be alight in 14 seconds.'

**March 9, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Gate Rules**: queries a change in the gate rules. Actual rule isn't explained, but states regarding the former rule: 'This instruction was issued to prevent such accidents, as unvaccinated persons gaining admission, or others carrying away infection, and it has succeeded in its object. The responsibility for such accidents, however they arise, falls on the Medical Officer: he does not shrink from it; but his position is anomalous without commensurate control, because things may be done of which he may be ignorant or disapprove.' Asks if this former regulation can stay in place for the time being.

**March 23, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Hot water boiler for female staff quarters:** additional boiler installed, following problems reported in report of Jan 12.

**April 6, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Investigation by Dr Young into sources of local smallpox cases:** 'Dr Young On behalf of the Medical Officer of Health for the London County Council paid an official visit to this Wharf on March 31st for the purpose of enquiring into whether the South Wharf may have been the source of any of the cases of small pox which have occurred in the neighbourhood.'
- **Fire inspection:** 'The Fire Inspector visited the South Wharf on April 3rd and inspected the fire appliances. He also held a series of fire drills in the presence of the Chairman on shore and on the steamer. The rescue work was carried out promptly and efficiently.'

**June 15, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Nurse changes**: Charge Nurse **Bradman** left to work at Bridge School, Witham; Charge Nurse **Barber** transferred to replace her. Charge Nurse **Bennett** on her annual leave.
- **Asst**. **Pierman H. G. Leahy as Doctor's Clerk**: 'As to Assistant Pierman H.G. Leahy, who was promoted temporarily on May 5th 1902 to act as Doctor's Clerk, I recommend that he revert to his original position and wages and that his services be available for the Medical Department as before when the work requires it. The work and conduct of this man have been first class.'
- **Summerhouse for Nurses:** 'In the matter of a summer house or tent which, on behalf of the Nurses, the Nursing Superintendent appeals in her report, I should like to add my support to a request which I believe engages your sympathy. The female staff in the confined limits of the Wharf have no opportunity for exercise or taking the air except by going on leave. There is no opportunity for tennis, croquet or other outdoor recreation. Their health suffers in consequence: and I am certain that if a tent or similar structure could be erected on the river front, so that they could sit out of doors in their spare time, the monotony of their surroundings would be relieved somewhat and their health benefit materially. Prices of tents are submitted to you.'
- **Detention of uncertified sucklings at South Wharf**: 'In the matter of the detention of uncertified sucklings at South Wharf, the passage dealing with such patients in my annual report runs as follows:- "*Such infants are pure contacts, and are isolated for 10 days and upwards at the Board's expense. Many do not develop smallpox and are returned home. The separation of infant from mother, necessary for the health of both, formerly took place at the Hospital: now it takes place at the Wharf: logically it should be made at the patient's home, and the infant dealt with by the local authority like any other contact. During the year 1902, 33 such cases were detained at the Wharf, the average period of detention being 11 days.*"
  There are, it seems to me, only two ways of dealing with such cases; one is not to remove the uncertified sucklings at all; the other is, having admitted them, to retain them in the Managers' premises till smallpox is declared or averted. The other course, which experience shows to be impracticable, is to return them from the Wharf immediately after admission.'
- **Dr Wanklyn's resignation:** 'Since your last meeting I have tendered my resignation of the post of Assistant Medical Superintendent under the Board, upon my election to the post of Senior Assistant Medical Officer to the new Epileptic Colony of the London County Council. My work under your Committee being thus terminated, I should like to be allowed to say with how much regret I leave my work in the service of the Board. In referring to it, I may quote from my first report to you when I began the work. It ran thus: The principles which I keep constantly in view are "To despatch out of London with the utmost rapidity and expedition all smallpox cases. To separate and return promptly all cases not suffering from smallpox." Throughout the epidemic I have subordinated everything to the attainment of these objects. It is satisfactory to be able to record the low number sent in error to the Hospital; and furthermore that of the thousands of smallpox cases admitted, the number detained at the Wharf for more than a few hours was only 2 in every 100.
  Another part of my duty, and a very important part, has been the avoidance of giving any ground of complaint to the numerous critical persons with whom we have to deal. An epidemic gives abundant openings for attacks on our methods. To return nearly 1,000 cases upon the hands of the eminent consultants and others who have sent them is a delicate matter. I have always endeavoured to forestall criticism rather than wait to meet it after it has arisen. The complaints which have been made have been few, and in no case substantiated.'
- **Request for his salary level to be maintained, due to workload of epidemic**: '... On March 10th 1903, it was resolved that my Medical Superintendency should terminate and my salary revert from £500 to £300 per annum. In April small pox increased, and admissions are now higher than since August 1902. On the expiry on April 25th 1903 of my term of office, I was selected to continue at the Wharf. My duties differed in no respect from those performed throughout the epidemic. With the increase in the work the Medical Officer had to take the lead: I found that it was impossible to divest myself of the responsibilities clinical and administrative which fell to me as Medical Superintendent in the epidemic. In these circumstances therefore and in view of the services which I am continuing to render the Board, I hope that the Committee will be able to take into favourable consideration the question of continuing my salary at the rate viz £500 per ann., previously in force. I should also like to ask for a record of my services to the Board during the past 2 years.'

**June 29, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Surprise fire drill:** the Fire Inspector Mr Webb paid a visit to South Wharf and 'gave a surprise alarm. An ample staff was on the scene and water turned on within 1 minute 35 seconds.'

**July 13, 1903 – report by Dr W M C Wanklyn**

- **Nursing cover:** details of the nursing superintendent's sick leave, and her cover by Charge Nurse **Farrow** and Miss **Foster**. He also asks if Charge Nurses **Jones** and **Hancock** can stay rather than being transferred, as they 'are now to some extent trained in small pox work: their work is good: and to change them at a time of threatened recrudescence like the present would be, I believe detrimental to your patients and service.'
- **Annual leave and leaving date**: '…I ask permission to take my annual leave from July 22nd to September 2nd, the latter being the date on which my service terminates.'
- **Separating mothers from infected babies**: 'Regarding the uncertified cases recently admitted, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that one of them was a woman known to be in good health and not suffering from any disease. She was brought on account of her reluctance to part with her suckling who was certified to have smallpox. But she told me that had she known the baby would be weaned at once, she would not have come. I have had similar statements in other cases. Experience shows that the separation of infant from mother, necessary for the health of each, is welcomed by the mother when the matter is explained to her, and the babies, in such cases are the better for being weaned. This explanation could be made by the Ambulance Nurse at the time of removal: and the uncertified person could be dealt with at once by the proper authority without first going through the process of being carried to the Wharf, disinfected and carried back again. This process is irritating to the local authority and expensive for the Managers. For the Borough or parish, having once disposed of a troublesome individual, is not pleased to find it thrown back on its hands. And the Managers, who have to feed, wash, disinfect and carry back such cases have an undue burden, which in a busy time when cases are multiplying, seriously hampers their service.'
- **Complaints when returning non-smallpox cases**: 'In order to carry out the principle of detaining at the Wharf as few cases as possible, I have always made a practice of returning such cases as soon as possible, after the patient has been attended to and the necessary disinfection performed: I understand this course has your full approval. But occasionally it leads to strong, if groundless complaints, as in the case of Ada Wells recently returned to the parish authority of Southwark. Should such cases not be returned at once, the expense of maintenance arises; in 1902 this amounted to not less than 363 days. In such cases, I believe it would be better to isolate them at the Hospital when practicable, for the Wharf seems hardly suitable for the isolation of incurable patients whom it may be necessary to keep under observation for 10 days or a fortnight. But I believe the most practical plan would be not to remove such patients at all.'

**October 5, 1903 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **Captain Livett's shoulder dislocation**: 'Captain Livett fell on the gangway leading from the pontoon to the boats on the 21st inst., and dislocated his right shoulder joint. He is progressing favourably.'
- **Unvaccinated explosives instructor**: 'Mr Chapman, Instructor of Explosives, visited here today. I offered him vaccination and explained the risks but he refused vaccination. I therefore gave him permission, under protest, to instruct the explosives.'

**November 2, 1903 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **New smallpox cases:** 'The cases having come from a number of districts and from the nature of the cases, it is not improbable that an increase in the incidence of Smallpox may result. I accordingly wrote to the Clerk on the 27th inst. suggesting that an Assistant Medical Officer should be kept in readiness to come out at a few hours' notice…'

**December 14, 1903 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **Informing of diagnosis**: 'I append a new form for informing the certifying practitioner of corrected diagnosis. I do not consider it desirable to make this form apply to South Wharf in as much as the Medical Officer is I take it only called upon to say whether a patient admitted here is suffering or is not suffering from Smallpox.'
- **New stretcher:** 'The Superintendent and myself have now ….[?] the new Stretcher ready for use and I propose using it on the first suitable opportunity. When I have tested its use between the South Wharf and Long Reach Hospital I would like it sent to the South Eastern Ambulance Station with instructions to use it for Smallpox cases in preference to other stretchers in order that some conclusion as to its practical value may be come to. I tried it in the ambulance but the sliding centre found in the Ambulance was not sufficiently wide for the stretcher to run over without jolting ...'

## The vaccination problem in 1903 and the impracticability of compulsion by Alexander Paul (1903)

(Wellcome Library, online catalogue ref: .b2135635x)

Page 90

- **Effect of South Wharf on smallpox risk to neighbourhood:** 'But a more important testimony is that offered by Dr. Orme Dudfield in an argument for the use of the ambulance steamers to convey fever and diphtheria patients to the country. Anticipating the objection that it would not be right to expose the sufferers to the risk of catching smallpox at the South Wharf Shelters, Dr. Dudfield said (the italics are not his) :-
  "I have indisputable authority for saying that there has been no spread of smallpox in the neighbourhood of the Shelters due to the transit or detention of patients. The immediate vicinity has been singularly free from smallpox; freer, indeed, than many other parts of the Borough of Bermondsey, although within the last few months upwards of 8000 patients have passed through the Shelters. Not long since some 140 workmen were employed in erecting an extension to the Shelters, at a time when 80 cases per diem were being admitted, and although they were necessarily brought into close proximity to the sick and were *generally unprotected by* vaccination, only one of them fell ill - about a week before their work ended; and of him all that could be said was that it was not known whether he had contracted the disease *there or elsewhere*. The Shelters hold 25 patients and on one occasion, fog having stopped the river traffic, 120 patients were detained therein, and on the steamers, without ill-effect in the locality. Barges constantly anchor close to the Shelters, *but I cannot learn of complaint having ever been made of any spread of disease to the crews*."'

# 1903 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Bott**, Walter; **Downs**, William Henry; **Wadeson**, Thomas; **Gardner**, Frank

*No other South Wharf addresses found, though staff had moved back onto the site into the new accommodation, as stated in the 1903 report books above.*

# 1904

***Moderate number of smallpox cases; hospital ships sold; Superintendent Charles Thomson retires, Chief Officer Clement Sullivan starts***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the year 1904

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1904; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1598)

Page 12

- **Hospital ships disposed of**: the three hospital ships were sold at auction on 30th November 1904.

Page 81

- **Management of R.A.S.** transferred to the Hospitals Committee (from the Ambulance Committee which had managed it since 1884).
- **Passenger numbers to date**: Noted that from 1884 to the end of 1903, the number of passengers carried on the steamboats was 97,074 (25,628 being smallpox patients) - all without accident.

Page 213

- **Smallpox admissions**: 497 patients received at South Wharf, 437 transferred to Joyce Green Hospital. 4 patients died at the wharf – 1 from smallpox, the others from other illnesses.
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

Page 191

- **Conveyed 1,656 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 437
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 418
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 90
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 711

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1904 Vol. XXXVIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1904)

Page 23, 28, 95, 223, 393, 562

- **Hospital ships sold**: Decision to close and sell the hospital ships (Atlas, Castalia and Endymion) since Joyce Green Hospital, opened in January 1903, had replaced them. There were some objections to their sale due to the risk of spreading the disease. Disinfection was arranged, and they were sold on 30 November 1904 at public auction for £8,045 [from report dated 10 Dec 1904]

Page 187

- **Retirement of Charles Thomson, Superintendent**: Mr C. Thomson resigns his appointment as superintendent of the River Ambulance Service and asks for a further 5 years to be added to his actual period of service for superannuation purposes. [from minutes of 19 March 1904]

Page 225

- **Enquiry about apparent plans to make shelters more hospital-like**: '... The Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Bermondsey, dated 14th April stating that he has been informed that it is proposed to effect such alterations at South Wharf as to make the buildings more of the character of a smallpox hospital than a temporary shelter for patients, and asking whether the Board do intend to make any changes, and, if so what...' [P. 270 30th April 1904 General Purposes Committee confirm there are no such plans]

Pages 351-52

- **Management of the River Ambulance Service and replacement of superintendent:**
  '…The Board (19th March, 1904) having transferred to us [the Hospitals Committee] "the control and management of the River Ambulance Service, and all the officers and servants thereof, and of the wharves, landing stages, and ambulance vessels, except so much of the original site of the West Wharf as now forms the site of the Mead Ambulance Station", we have prepared for consideration a scheme for taking over the service and for its future working, and report as follows :-

  The Board's smallpox arrangements are necessarily interwoven; and with a view to facility of working, it is our opinion, subject to such orders and regulations as may be sanctioned by us from time to time, the control of the Service should be vested in one officer, and that this officer should be the Medical Superintendent of the Smallpox Hospitals, or his authorised deputy.
  It will not be necessary for a medical officer to be permanently stationed at South Wharf. The course of smallpox admissions and indications generally must necessarily decide when a medical man should or should not be resident there.
  As regards general staff arrangements, it is our judgement that as the rise or fall of smallpox admissions or other circumstances make it necessary either to expand the staff arrangements or to contract them, such expansion or contraction should be regulated from the centre of the smallpox organisations at Joyce Green, subject as before indicated to our authority. The staff required should be supplied by Joyce Green, to which place they would return when no longer required on river ambulance work, and thus would be set up an automatic working, and a principle of linking up the whole service together, from which economies in many ways ought reasonably to be expected.
  As the Board are aware, the **superintendent of the River Service (Mr. Charles Thomson) has resigned, and the question of appointing a successor has to be dealt with**. Whoever is appointed must be subordinate to and under the control of the Medical Superintendent or his authorised deputy, and we do not consider that the circumstances require the successor to be a principal officer. We advise that the services of a responsible man capable of undertaking duties such as are discharged by a steward of a Fever Hospital, as well as the superintendence of the steamers and matters immediately connected therewith, should be obtained. He should be an Accounting Officer and give security, and should have, we think, the qualifications of a marine engineer.
  In order to attract good men, we think the salary should be at the rate of £200 per annum, rising by £10 annually to @250 per annum with the emoluments of furnished house or furnished quarters, rations, attendance, firing, light, and washing; and the appointment should be subject to three months' notice on either side.
  The question of the officer's title arises. It will be confusing the use the word 'Superintendent' as heretofore, and we think he should be called **'Chief Officer'**...'
  [from minutes of 11 June; see also pages 360 and 371 for further discussion]

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- **Superannuation of Mr Charles. Thomson**, **Superintendent:** ongoing discussions about his request for a further 5 years to be added to his superannuation:
  '…in consideration of the peculiar professional qualifications for the position of superintendent of the River Ambulance Service possessed by Mr. Charles Thomson, which have rendered it unnecessary for the Managers to employ outside professional aid in designing, contracting and altering their ambulance steamboats with their incidental marine machinery, and which have enabled them to dispense with the annual surveys of their vessels by the Board of Trade surveyors, and having regard to the services rendered by Mr. Thomson under special circumstances attending the inauguration of the River Ambulance Service, the Local Government Board be recommended to sanction five years being added to Mr. Thomson's actual period of service under the Board, in computing the amount of superannuation allowance to be paid him...' This proposed amendment of 5 additional years was not agreed. [from minutes of 1 October 1904]

Page 529

- **Paddle steamer 'Conservator' sold** for £83 [from minutes of 29 October 1904]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1903-04

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/005)

**Reports by Charles Thomson, Superintendent of the R.A.S., to the Ambulance Committee:**

**January 11, 1904**

- **Repayment to incapacitated workman:** a foreman shipwright working on one of the wharves, after being vaccinated, was incapacitated from working for 4 weeks; his company requests a repayment.
- **Conduct of Asst. Pierman: '**I submit herewith a statement [not enclosed] by **Mr Connor**, Wharf Foreman relative to a report as to the conduct of Asst**.** Pierman **Thomas Scales**.'
- **Sick List: Captain Livett** – on Light Duty; Stoker **William Witton**; Asst. Pierman **T. Scales**; Asst. Pierman **F. Leahy**; Deck Hand **F. Showell** – tonsillitis.
- **Pierman knocked down by horse:** 'Asst. Pierman **F. Leahy** who does duty as Doctor's Clerk was during a fog knocked down by a cab horse when passing from Blackfriars Station to the Chief Offices with the daily returns from the Medical Department.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 22 Recovered patients brought back = 26
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0?

**February 8, 1904**

- **Intoxicated Pierman**: 'Upon the 3rd inst. **Chas Lock** and **John Walker** Assistant Piermen at South Wharf left the wharf at 7.30am without leave, they returned at 10.15am, the former quite sober and the latter in a state of intoxication. I desired Doctor Thomson to see Asst. Pierman Walker and he (Dr Thomson) was of opinion that Walker was drunk and unfit for duty. I therefore suspended Walker, but as Asst. Pierman Lock had tendered his resignation on the 2nd inst. I allowed him to go to his duties. Upon the same day at 2.35pm Asst. Pierman Walker again left the Wharf, although warned by the Gate Porter not to do so, and returned at 3.25 …. [?] drunk, when he was refused admission. Upon the 5th inst. Asst. Pierman Walker came to the Wharf and asked to be allowed to remove his personal belongings and to be paid his wages. His belongings were handed to him and the wages due to the date of his suspension was paid him.'
- **Collision**: on 5th Feb the barge Arthur collided with the Red Cross while at her moorings and caused some damage.
- **Sick List: Captain Livett** still on light duty; **J. Masson**, Engineer.
- **Increase in wages:** due to **J. Allen**, Asst. Pierman, and **A. Howard**, Pierman.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 8 Recovered patients brought back = 9
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**February 22, 1904**

- **Sick list:** Engineer **J. Masson** off sick with influenza.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 8 Recovered patients brought back = 5
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 6

**March 5, 1904**

- **Repair to wharf frontage**: work on repair of South Wharf proceeding satisfactorily; an additional land tie pile has been fitted.
- **Wage increases:** due to **J. McMahon**, Asst. Pierman, and **F. G. Leahy**, Asst. Pierman.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 15 Recovered patients brought back = 4
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 0 Cases admitted to the shelters = 3

**March 21, 1904**

- **Sick List**: Captain **William Punter** off sick with gout in the foot. Mate **William Kelly** doing duty as Master in the meantime. **Captain Livett** still recovering from shoulder dislocation – is now able to do his duty in every way except unable to climb the upright bridge ladders. Doctor Thomas informs him that it will be about 6 weeks before he's able to do so.
- **Death of patient**: on 16th March a patient died at South Wharf; body taken to the Eastern Hospital.
- **Steamer schedule**: steamer had been running every day in the last fortnight, and for 8 of those days, 2 journeys made a day.
- **Wage increases**: due to **J. Roche**, Clerk; **E. Hayter**, Asst. Pierman; **C. Denny**, stoker;

**W. Hickman**, stoker; **G. Spencer**, stoker; **G. Lucas**, stoker; **S (?) Brown**, stoker; **F. Woodgate**, Deck Hand; **C. Gale**, Deck Hand; **G. R. Guin** [?], Deck Hand.

- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 39 Recovered patients brought back = 8
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4 Cases admitted to the shelters = 2

**April 18, 1904**

- **Steamer schedule and crews needed**: the Ambulance Committee asked him to report on what reduction could be made in the staff of the steamers – he points out that on almost every day during the last month a steamer has been required to run twice daily to Long Reach and he doesn't see how any reduction can be made to the staff without detriment to the service.
- **False claim of damage**: 'Upon the 23 March I received notice from the Chief Offices that Mr Gobbett barge owner of Poplar claimed for damage to his barge "Floss", alleged to be done by the P.S. "Albert Victor"- upon enquiry I found that the "Albert Victor" had touched the barge "Floss", but the Captain was of opinion that no damage had been done and therefore did not report the circumstance. Upon examining the barge "Floss" on the 28th ult. at the Albert Docks, it was evident that no damage had been done. The owner was informed accordingly. He tried very hard to make out that his barge was damaged and leaky, but was informed that when his barge was inspected she was quite tight, there being no sign of leakage, and that any claim made by him for damage to the barge "Floss" would be resisted. Nothing further has since been heard of the matter.'
- **New Asst. Pierman**: engaged **Herbert Henry Ashby** as an Asst. Pierman (temporary) to replace **Chas J. Lock** who'd resigned in Feb.
- **Wharf Foreman leaves**: **P. Connor** discharged on March 25.
- **Sick list**: includes **Edward Barnes** (diarrhea). **Captain Punter** returned to duty after being off sick with gout.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 139 Recovered patients brought back = ?
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 12 Cases admitted to the shelters = 62

**May 2, 1904**

- **Repairs to front of South Wharf**: work completed, by Messrs Chafen Newman.
- **His illness, and praise for Capt. Livett and Mr Atherton**: 'I desire to bring to your notice the valuable assistance for the past 2 years during my illness that I have received from Capt. Livett and Mr Atherton, Engineer. Capt. Livett has always kept the steamers in good order and the running has been regularly kept going without the slightest hitch whatever, and it is due to Mr Atherton, that beyond the periodical surveys which are necessary about every 18 months, that so little has been required to be expended in repairing the machinery of the steamers, and I would be glad if Committee would be pleased to take into consideration the work done by these officers with a view to some acknowledgement of their services.' [his 'illness' isn't previously explained/mentioned]
- **Sick List: Capt. Livett** – discharged from light duty on April 26 (i.e. back to full duty). **J. Barritt**, Deck Hand, off sick with influenza.
- **Pay increase: B.R. Padfield**, Asst. Pierman, due a pay increase.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 28 Recovered patients brought back = 56
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 6 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0?

**July 7, 1904**

- **Sick List**: Stoker **New** off sick with rheumatism.
- **Workman incapacitated by vaccination**: contractors of wharf frontage repairs claimed extra payment for one of their workmen who had been incapacitated for 9 days through vaccination.
- **Discharge and resignation of stokers**: 'Night Stoker **Brown'** no longer required, so discharged with one week's notice. **George Spencer**, Stoker, resigned – had got a job as engine driver on one of the river steamers.
- **Accumulation of mud**: 'Since the middle of the river had been dredged by the Thames Conservancy last winter, the mud has gradually increased under the bottoms of the steamers in the vicinity of the mooring dolphins, so that at low water the vessels now take the ground.'
- **Criticism of Stoker Hickman**: '…Owing to the thoughtlessness of Stoker Hickman, the air pump trunk of the Maltese Cross was damaged while the vessel was on passage from Long Reach to South Wharf…'

**October 12, 1904** (addressed to the 'Sub Committee'; final report by Charles Thomson)

- **Caulking and repairs to steamers, and more workmen disabled by vaccination**: caulking and repairs to decks of Red Cross and Geneva Cross carried out. The contractors made a claim for wages paid to men who were disabled by vaccination. He points out that shipwrights and caulkers are not paid by the day, but by the amount of work done – caulkers being paid by the number of hundred feet caulked per day, 'the wages varying, a good man sometimes earning from 12/- to 15/- per day'.
- **Work on Chief Officers' Quarters**: contractors commenced converting the offices to Chief Officers' Quarters, and converting the temporary male staff quarters to offices.
- **Coal from hospital ships**: a barge with 141 tons of coal arrived at South Wharf from the hospital ships and was placed under the old timber gantry, for use on the steamers.
- **Reduction in staff, and role of Night Pierman**: recommends reduction in staff, by demoting/transferring some current staff and discharging 7 of those in more casual positions. Points out that this will leave just one member of staff on night duty - the Night Pierman, who will need to attend the gate as Night Gate Porter and will also need to answer the phone.
- **Sick list: H. Targett**, Pierman; **H. Down**, Night Pierman, **H. Ashby**, temp. Asst. Pierman.

*Reports for 1904 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1904-07

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/006)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the Hospitals Committee:**

**November 3, 1904** (Mr Sullivan's first report)

- **New Chief Officer Mr Sullivan's introduction**: 'In accordance with your directions I joined your river ambulance service at South Wharf on the 1st inst. and took over the steamers, buildings, stores etc at South Wharf…' Continues by describing how he has been inspecting the site and the steamers with Mr 'Thompson'. Proposes detailed survey work on all vessels.
- **Pierman's pay query**: '**Harold Targett**, Pierman, would not sign the wages book for the wages due for week ending Oct 22nd – 29th. He said he would not have his wages until he knew the committee's reply to his letter asking to be paid whilst off duty sick from Oct 20th to 27th.

**November 24, 1904**

- **Testing of life belts**: amongst the maintenance and surveying he reports on, he also describes testing the life belts, by floating them in fresh water for 24 hours with a weight of 15 pounds attached. 'A large number …failed to float with 12 lbs..' ; requests 50 new life belts to be supplied.
- **Sick List**: **J. New**, Stoker, and **C. Gale**, Deckhand. Mentions that J. New is 63 years old and has been in the service for 12 years since 26 May 1886 and has applied for superannuation allowance.
- **List of staff discharged: W. Bott**, Watchman, **W. Hickman**, Stoker, **J. Webb**, Disinfector, **G. Guin (?)**, Deck Hand, and four Asst. Piermen: **J, Kent, B. Padfield, E. Barnes, H. Ashby.**
- **Staff demotions** [presumably due to reduction in staff]:
  **W. Punter** from Captain to Mate, **C. Digby** from Mate to Deck Hand, **H. Horton** from Deck Hand to Watchman. **W. Witton**, stoker, now doing the duty of **J. New**, stoker, and **G. Lucas**, stoker, placed on night duty to look after heating the boilers, reducing the volume of staff by 2.

**December 8, 1904**

- **Accumulation of mud around wharf**: had spoken to superintendents of neighbouring wharves about accumulation of mud 'I must say there seems a desire for united action being taken in this matter by all concerned.'
- **Workman affected by vaccination**: received a claim from the contractors of the recent building works on the offices, for loss of time of one of their men 'owing to vaccination'.
- **Request for outdoor clothing**: 'As my duties carry me outside and on the river I have requisitioned in requirement book 1 Overcoat and 1 Mackintosh which I assume is in accordance with the regulations Metropolitan Asylums Board.' [note in margin: 'Not approved']
- **Resignations: J. New**, stoker.

- **Discharges: W. Judge**, Asst. Pierman, discharged on reduction of staff.
- **Sick List**: **C. Gale**, Deck Hand; **J. Church**, Fitter & Electrician; **G. Livett**, Master; **J. Hellyer**, Stoker; **C. Denny**, Stoker.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Medical Officer's Report Book 1902-1905

(London Metropolitan Archives, reference: H48/A/05/001)

**January 11, 1904 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **Staff illness:** Pierman **Leahy** suffering from slight synovitis of his left knee; Deck Hand **Showell** suffering from tonsillitis.

**February 8, 1904 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **Salary increase for nurse**: recommends Assistant Nurse **Pullman** for salary increase.

**April 18, 1904 – report by Dr Frederic Thomson**

- **Master Punter with gout**: 'Master Punter was invalidated from March 14 to March 27, he suffered from gout.'

**December 9, 1904 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Dr Ricketts takes over from Dr Frederic Thomson**: 'I have to report that I started my duties in the River Service on Dec 5th and that I paid my first visit to South Wharf on the 7th. Dr Thomson left the Wharf on the 6th.'
- **Change of Nursing Superintendent**: 'Nurse **Turner** the Nursing Superintendent left the service on 30th Nov. There is only one officer at Joyce Green who would be suitable to assume control of the female staff at South Wharf viz Nurse **Worseldine** temporary night superintendent. I believe the most satisfactory plan would be for Nurse Worseldine's appointment in the smallpox service to be made permanent and for her to be placed for the present at South Wharf …'
- **New cook**: 'The cook at South Wharf having left, I recommend that her place be filled by the transfer of **Eliz. Williams**, at present Asst. Cook at the Foundation Hospital, in the same capacity to the Smallpox service. Williams was formerly asst. cook at Joyce Green and has made application for the vacancy at the Wharf.'

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service Sub-Committee Minute Book 1904-05

London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1062

**August 25, 1904**

- **Superintendent off work: Charles Thomson** off work for a few days with a bad leg.

**September 16, 1904**

- **Accumulation of mud at South Wharf**: detailed report about this problem.

**September 26, 1904**

- **Recruitment of Chief Officer**: 267 applications received in response to advertisement.

**October 21, 1904**

- **Keeping accounts and issuing provisions**: Mr Thomson states that this work is currently done by Miss **Turner**, but would in future be done by the new Chief Officer.
- **High rates of illness of male staff – suggestion they be given board**: Mr Thomson ' …stated that he was of opinion that the question of the male staff being catered for by the Managers should be considered, as he had noticed that there was more illness amongst the resident male staff than there should be.'
- **Review of wages and emoluments of male staff**: the Clerk was instructed to prepare a scheme to bring the wages and emoluments of the resident male staff at the wharf as near as possible on a level with the resident male staff at the smallpox hospitals.

- **Accumulation of mud**: reply received from the Thames Conservancy saying that they were unable to undertake the dredging work.

**November 3, 1904**

- **Catering for resident male staff**: board to be added to the emoluments for resident male staff, in exchange for a pay deduction of 8 shillings a week, affecting the Piermaster, Storekeeper and Piermen.
- **New Chief Officer Mr Sullivan starts:** commenced duty on 1st November, and visited North and West Wharves on the 2nd. His quarters at the wharf weren't ready and he had to take lodgings outside in the meantime.
- **Disinfection of letters etc**: the medical officer reported the he had made arrangements for letters and other articles to be disinfected by formaline vapour.

**November 25, 1904**

- **Mud accumulation**: further discussion about this problem at the wharf.
- **Change of nurses**: Charge Nurse **Anderson** commenced duty on Nov 8, replacing Asst. Nurse **Gregory** who'd been transferred.
- **Stoker New sick and to be retired**: Dr Thomson states that stoker New was suffering from heart disease and bronchitis and should be superannuated, being aged 63.
- **Successful fire drill**: time from the alarm sounding to the water on was 1 minute, 50 seconds.

**December 9, 1904**

- **Lost clothes**: Patient Jessie Hutchens had written enquiring about some clothing of hers which had been received at South Wharf but not arrived at Joyce Green – no trace of it found at South Wharf.

# 1904 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Bott**, Walter; **Downs**, William Henry; **Targett**, Harold; **Gardner**, Frank
**Wanklyn**, William; **Connor**, Patrick; **McMahon**, James
**Padfield**, Benjamin Robert; **Allen**, Thomas; **Howard**, Albert Edward

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Livett,** George James Robert
2 South Wharf Cottages: **-**
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Punter,** William George
4 South Wharf Cottages: **-**
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby,** Charles
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Hellyer**, James

# 1905

***Minimal smallpox cases; new boat shed and workshops built***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1905

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1905; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1599)

Page 195

- **Conveyed 798 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 51
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 57
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 121
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 569
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

Pages 125, 136

- **Boat and mast shed and workshops**: Reference to the provision of a boat and mast shed and workshops at South Wharf. Listed as a contract entered into during 1905; professional advisor [architect] T. W. Aldwinckle and Son, contractor B. E. Nightingale.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1905 Vol. XXXIX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1905)

Page 90

- **Matron / supervision of female staff:** 'In our opinion it will be convenient for administrative purposes if the matron of the Smallpox Hospitals were also to supervise the female staff of the River Ambulance Service. Transfers and re-transfers of staff between the two places are often desirable, and will be more conveniently arranged if the persons transferred remain under the control of the same matron...' [Matron was Miss H Wacher] [from minutes of 1 April 1905]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1904-07

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/006)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the Hospitals Committee, and from 16th March, to the River Ambulance (Sub-) Committee:**

**January 11, 1905**

- **Delays caused by fog:** on Dec 19th a steamer with patients was delayed till the following day due to dense fog. On eventual arrival at North Wharf, 'the fog came in so thick that the vessel was detained there for 2 hrs 10 min before being able to proceed on her journey. Leaving there however during a clearance at 1.30pm she arrived at her destination at 2.50pm, 3 hours after high water and too late to land the patients this not being effected till 10.30pm of that night…' The steamer was then detained there overnight and didn't return till 1.15pm the next day, due to fog. Asks about paying the staff overtime for the 3 nights, as they were 'continuously employed' during this time.
- **Damage caused by swell from passing vessel:** damage to Maltese Cross caused by a swell created by a large passing vessel, which hit it as it was moored alongside pontoon.
- **Sick list: J. Hellyer**, Stoker and **J. Masson**, Engineer. Hellyer suffering from …….. [?] and was inpatient of Metropolitan Hospital.
- **No. of patients** sent to Joyce Green = 15 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 4

**February 3, 1905**

- **Collision at North Wharf**: on Jan 15 the French steamer Caravellas of Havre collided with North Wharf, smashing the flagstaff in half and doing damage to the 'shelter house'.
- **Colour scheme of the steamers**: 'With a view to improving the appearance of the River Ambulance Steamers, I ask for permission to change the colours of yellow and stone colour, as now painted on the several parts, (ie) paddle boxes, bands around the funnel etc, by substituting white in its stead, by this being a much better paint to wash at all times. I am of the opinion, the change will add greatly to their appearance as smart and well kept vessels.'
- **Disposal of ash from steamers**: points out that previously the ash from the steamers was deposited under the old boat shed, but with this space no longer being available, proposes a second hand barge be procured and kept moored there and then towed away to be emptied. Calculates there is 12 tons of ash per month to get rid of.
- **Resignation**: Pierman **Leahy** resigned. Proposes to transfer Asst. Pierman **Wells** from West Wharf to fill his place.
- **Stoker back at work: J. Hellyer**, Stoker, returned to work after being off sick and in hospital.
- **New workshops and boat shed**: contractors started the work of pulling down the timber gantry for the new boat shed and workshops.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2

**February 13, 1905**

- **Disposal of coal and employment of redundant staff**: to help clear a site for the storage of coal and helping in its removal, he temporarily employed 4 former staff of South Wharf who'd recently been discharged due to reduction in staff – **W. Judge, S. Brown, G. Spencer,** and **J. Kent**.  'I find that these men were out of work and have been casually employed by the Bermondsey Boro Council at 5d per day…'
- **Staff news:** proposes to appoint stoker **Hellyer** as an engine driver to temporarily fill that position; Asst. Pierman **G. Wells** transferred from West to South Wharf; Engineer **E. Atherton** discharged.
- **No. of patients** sent to Joyce Green = 1  Admitted to shelters = 2

**March 2, 1905**

- **Stores, and hearth tiles**: provisions and linen stores transferred from female staff quarters to 'the store at the top of the old stables'. Tiles fitted to hearth of fireplaces in C Shelter, Nurses' Sitting Room etc.
- **Mud accumulation**: owing to mud accumulation 'the steamers when lying alongside the pontoon, are aground for a period of ¾ of an hour, before and after low water.'  Proposes that another pontoon be moored alongside the current one.
- **Complaint about conduct of J. Church**: 'I have received a letter of complaint from Miss **Worseldine** Nurse Superintendent, relative to the conduct of J. Church, Fitter & Electrician (letter herewith) – on bringing this matter before J. Church, as to the words complained of namely – "Can't you be spoken to the same as anybody else" – in the presence of Miss Worseldine his reply was "It's a falsehood."'
- **Staff changes**: **S. Brown** appointed as stoker temporarily to replace **Hellyer** who'd been temporarily promoted.  **H. Ashby** appointed as Asst. Pierman to replace **Wells** who'd been transferred to West Wharf.  **W. Kelley**, Mate, off sick for 6 days. Pierman **Howard** due for a pay increase after completing a further 12 month's employment.
- **No. of patients** admitted to South Wharf = 10  Recovered patients brought back = 6
  Deaths at South Wharf: 1

**March 16, 1905**

- **Leak in roof of female staff quarters**: serious leak due to cracks developing in the lead roofing.
- **Pay increase for Clerk: Mr Roche** entitled to pay increase after another 12 months' service.

**March 30, 1905**

- **Pontoon maintenance**: reports that the pontoon at South Wharf has been in use 18 years and hasn't been docked for repairs in all that time – recommends this be inspected and repaired.
- **Engineer Mr Atherton leaves**:  vacated No. 7 staff cottages on 28th March.
- **Sick list**: **J. Masson**, Engineer – off for 5 days with influenza, not paid for this time yet because he was off sick for 9 days in January – asks whether he is to be paid during his current sickness.

- **Pay increases**: due to the following staff due to their length of service – **G. Lucas**, stoker; **C. Denny**, stoker; **F. Woodgate**, Deck Hand, **C. Gale**, Deck Hand.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 12 Recovered patients brought back = 2
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 5

**April 13, 1905**

- **North Wharf Pierman caught taking coal**: 'On Weds 5th inst. at 9.45pm **H. Hawkins**, Night Pierman at North Wharf was stopped by a Detective in Brunswick St Blackwall and questioned as to the contents of a bundle he was carrying. In reply he stated it was coal and that he obtained it from North Wharf, whereon Hawkins was taken to the Waterside Police Station, Blackwall, and detained. I communicated with Mr Duncombe Mann and was instructed by him to prosecute on behalf of the Board, the result being Hawkins was brought before Mr Dickenson the presiding Magistrate at the Thames Police Court at 4.30pm and charged with stealing 20 lbs of coal the property of the Managers Metropolitan Asylums Board.
  Hawkins in defence said his coal was what he had saved from the coal used in the change rooms on the wharf, he having let the fire go out to save this coal to give to a sick man, whereon Mr Dickenson discharged him saying he did not think it was taken with the intent of "stealing". On arrival at South Wharf, I at once wrote these particulars to the Clerk of the Board and stated that in view of the fact alone that Hawkins was absent from duty, I had suspended him, pending the receipt of further instructions from the Clerk to the Board.'
  Transferred **H. Ashby**, Asst. Pierman at South Wharf, to fill Hawkins' place at North Wharf, and awaited instructions on whether Hawkins should be kept on and if his wages should be paid. 'As a check on these night men in the future, I would recommend that Detector Dial Clocks, be supplied for their use, both at West and North Wharves, similar as in use at South Wharf.'
- **Old stables used as store**: mentions that the old stables are now used as a provision and general store, in a report about the steps being worn out and needing replacement.
- **Blue bricks**: 2000 left-over blue bricks were currently at West Wharf – asks if these could be transferred to South Wharf for use there.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 4 Recovered patients brought back = 7
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2

**May 11, 1905**

- **New Engineer: A. Forbes**, newly appointed as Marine Engineer, due to finish work at the Park Hospital and start at South Wharf on 16th May. Therefore **J. Hellyer** who'd been temporarily employed as Engineer was 'reduced to stoker' and **J. Brown**, Night Stoker, made redundant.
- **Sick list: J. Allen**, Asst. Pierman, with sciatica and taken to Long Reach Hospital for treatment.
- **Staff changes: J. Gardner**, employed as Asst. Pierman; **H. Hawkins**, Pierman discharged [see April 13 1905 for the reason]
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 14 Recovered patients brought back = 8
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3

**May 25, 1905**

- **Damage to steamer from drifted timber**: the Albert Victor was damaged when it settled at low water alongside South Wharf, because of timber which had become adrift from Gabriel & Sons timber wharf next door, indenting some of its plates. Gabriel & Sons agreed to pay for the repairs.
- **Staff annual leave**: asks for permission to grant staff their annual leave; mentions that Captains, Engineers and Piermasters get 14 days, and all other staff 10 days.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Recovered patients brought back = 6
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**June 19, 1905**

- **Sewing machine**: in the female staff quarters in need of thorough repair or renewal – 'this machine has been in use for over 10 years, and has been repaired by the staff from time to time but not effectively, the parts being too delicate for their manipulation.'
- **Barge stuck under pier**: on 8th June the barge Lord Roberts 'whilst proceeding under the pier brow at South Wharf became fast, owing to her deck load not clearing the underside of Pier and remained fast for a period of 3 hours, on becoming free with the falling tide, the barge collided with the wooden dolphin, smashing one diagonal strut and starting others…' No permanent damage done however.

- **New Carpenters and Engineers Workshops**: building work mostly completed and keys handed over by the contractors on 31st May.
- **Sick List: J. Allen** returned to duty (after being in hospital with sciatica).
- **Damage caused by speeding vessel**: the P.S. Koh-i-noor passed South Wharf 'at such rate of speed that the indraught caused by her, has damaged the ... "Maltese Cross" and "White Cross"…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 5 Recovered patients brought back = 8
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 3 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**July 3, 1905**

- **Damage caused by speeding vessel**: the steamer "Belle" 'passed South Wharf, at such rate of speed that the draught and wash from her, caused the breaking of the mooring bollard on the sponson deck of the "Geneva Cross" and started the mooring bollard on pontoon…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**July 17, 1905**

- **Damage caused by the L.C.C.'s speeding vessels**: on July 4 at low water, the P.S. Chaucer 'passed South Wharf, at such rate of speed, that the wash and indraught from her caused damage to the "Maltese Cross" and "Red Cross" … While in communication with the Clerk to the L.C.C. [owners of the speeding vessel] I drew attention to the necessity of their steamers' speed being reduced when passing South Wharf and thus avoid further damage to the River Ambulance Steamers, and in reply have received 2 letters with reference to same. Letters herewith.' Then on the 11th July further slight damage was done by the Purcell, also owned by the L.C.C. 'passing S. Wharf at excessive speed the wash causing damage to the "Maltese Cross" by tearing up the mooring bollard…'
- **Staff updates: F. Woodgate**, Deck Hand, resigned. **H. Targett**, Pierman, due an increase in wages, after completing 12 months of service.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**August 2, 1905**

- **Damage caused by speeding vessel**: on 20th July the P.S. Oriole 'passed by South Wharf at an excessive rate of speed, which resulted in doing damage to the "Maltese Cross" and "White Cross"….'
- **Holiday cover**: asks for permission to proceed on his holiday of 3 weeks. 'In accordance with former practice, I propose placing **Capt. Livett** in charge of wharf staff, with **Mr Roche** acting as accounting officer, during my absence.'
- **Staff changes: R. A. Livett**, Deck Hand, appointed in place of **J. Woodgate** who'd resigned.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 2 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**September 11, 1905**

- **Damage caused by another L.C.C. speeding vessel**: 'On Aug 30th the L.C.C. P.S. Turner passed South Wharf at an excessive rate of speed causing the Maltese Cross to collide with the "Red Cross" thereby damaging the paddle box of the former vessel.' [See July 17 1905 for previous problems with the London County Council's speeding steamers].
- **Wheeled litters**: 'These are now complete and ready for use … 14 litters at West Wharf, 6 litters at South Wharf. At North Wharf 6 stretchers but no wheel litters…'
- **Sick list: W. Witton**, Stoker, off sick for 3 days.
- **Increase of pay**: due to **J. Church**, Fitter and Electrician, after completing another year's service.
- **Domestic and nursing staff changes**:
  Resigned - Wardmaids **L. Pooley, S. McCarthy**, **R. Cunningham,** and **L. Edmonds.**
  Transferred to South Wharf - Wardmaids E. **Broad**, **A. Aylett, E. Dack**; Charge Nurse **K. Miles.**
  Transferred from South Wharf - Wardmaids **C. Youll** [**Yuill**] and **E. Batchelor**, Charge Nurse **K. Miles**, Supt Nurse **A. Wallingford** and **E. Money [?]** 1st Asst. Nurse.
  Sick **-** Wardmaid **Carr** – send to Long Reach Hospital for treatment
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients brought back = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 0

**October 9, 1905**

- **Reduction in staff**: proposes a reduction in staff to one crew, due to few smallpox cases and the fact that all the painting work that the crews had been kept busy with was now complete. If an outbreak of smallpox was to occur, 2 crews would again be needed.
- **Staffing changes: R. Livett**, Deck Hand – discharged.
  Transferred from Long Reach to South Wharf - **M. Stubbington**, 1st Asst. Nurse.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0
  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Cases admitted to the shelters = 1

**October 23, 1905**

- **Staff discharged or demoted due to reduction in staff:**
  **J. Church**, fitter and electrician; **W. Twin**, Deck Hand; **C. Gale**, Deck Hand; **C. Denny** and **G. Lucas**, Stokers; **H. Ashby**, Asst. Pierman. **W. Kelley** was reduced in rank from Mate to Deck Hand.
- **L.C.C.'s dispute about liability of damage**: 'A communication has been received from the L.C. Council stating they cannot admit liability with reference to the damages to the R. A. steamers caused by the wash from their steamers, as duly reported by me. I have forwarded to the Thames & Mersey Ins. Co, who have the matter in hand…'
- **Sick list: C. Denny**
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**November 6, 1905**

- **Damage from another L.C.C. speeding steamer:** 'On Oct 24th the London County Council P.S. "Marlow" passed this wharf at an excessive speed the indraught causing damage to the Maltese Cross…'
- **Chimney sweeping, and staffing of North and West Wharves**: chimney sweeping to be carried out by wharf staff, except at West and North Wharves where 'a difficulty arises in carrying out this work there, owing to the staff being limited to 1 by day and 1 by night, they would not be available for these duties.'
- **Mr Kelley's son with scarlet fever**: 'W. Kelley, Deck Hand, No. 4 Staff Cottages, has reported to me that his son Percy Kelley aged 6 was removed to the Park Hospital on Saturday afternoon 4th inst. suffering from Scarlet Fever and that the house was disinfected out by the Sanitary authorities, yesterday afternoon 6th inst.'
- **No. of patients** = none received or returned.

**November 20, 1905**

- **Chimney sweeping**: done by wharf staff; asks for permission to pay the staff for this extra work, for which they get an extra allowance.
- **Sick List: W. Livett** absent from duty suffering from a cold.

**December 4, 1905**

- **Notice boards on piers**: points out that notices with the following wording are exhibited on the dolphins, but the lettering is now faint and they need replacing.
  'Metropolitan Asylums Board
  Notice
  No vessel or craft to be moored to this Pier or Wharf
  No person is allowed to land at this Wharf without the authority of the Board.
  By order W. F. Jebb Clerk to the Board'

**December 18, 1905**

- **Sick List: C. Johnstone**, Carpenter 'certified suffering from sickness and cardiac debility...'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Medical Officer's Report Book 1902-1905

(London Metropolitan Archives, reference: H48/A/05/001)

**January 12, 1905 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Nursing Superintendent**: **Miss Worseldine** is transferred from Joyce Green on 4th Jan.
- **New cook: Elizabeth Williams** transferred as Asst. Cook from the Fountain Hospital on 19 Dec.
- **List of repairs needed**: 'The fireplace in one of the wards of C shelter is out of repair and requires new tiles in the hearth. A few tiles are missing from the other fireplaces. The block flooring in C shelter is badly buckled. Several of the clocks require repair; these might be sent away for that purpose as soon as I can make arrangements for their disinfection.'
- **Disinfection methods**: 'I have noticed that the disinfector is not ordinarily in use and that letters are habitually disinfected by formalin vapour. From experiments which I have made myself, I am justified in saying that this disinfection by formalin is inefficacious.'
- **Staff - delegation of authority:** 'I am dissatisfied with the method of delegation of authority in staff subordinate to the Chief Officer. This officer is absent all night on occasions, and habitually for 2 or 3 hours every evening. In his absence his authority appears to rest in **Livett**, the master, who however is himself non-resident. Livett too habitually signs the male staff pass lists. In my opinion, Livett should be in control of all the crews, and his authority should end there. Between the Chief Officer and Livett, exercising authority, when required, over all the rest of the male staff, I think there should be an assistant steward who should take entire charge in his absence of the Chief Officer. The Assistant Steward should be resident, and he and the Chief Officer should not be absent from the Wharf at the same time. To make this change economically I would suggest the transfer of the present clerk to one of the hospitals and the transfer of an assistant steward to the Wharf. As a temporary measure I would recommend that quarters for the assistant steward be found in the medical officer's house. To this end I would recommend that a bath be fitted up in one of the rooms in that house, and I would suggest that that be done before any further steps are taken to give effect to the recommendations which I have made.'

**February 14, 1905 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Engineer ill: Atherton** suffering from 'ill health', asks Dr Turner to examine him.
- **Vaccination of workmen**: 'In connection with the execution of the contract for the new coal shed, I have arranged with Dr Turner to attend at the Wharf when necessary to vaccinate the workmen employed. Dr Turner has reported to me that the Clerk of Works employed by the architect was not in his opinion sufficiently protected against Smallpox, not having been vaccinated for 20 years. The man objected to be re-vaccinated, and Dr Turner therefore gave instructions that he was not to be employed at the Wharf.'

**March 3, 1905 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Death of patient at South Wharf, and dealing with bodies**: 'The corpse of the patient who died at the Wharf was removed to the Eastern Hospital mortuary. The patient was dying when admitted, and a post-mortem examination was made at the Wharf to ascertain the cause of death. The examination was made under some difficulties as there were no post-mortem instruments at the Wharf, or other facilities for that purpose. If the present system of disposing of corpses continues, I would suggest that post-mortem instruments are purchased. I doubt however whether it is the most suitable practice to send the bodies from the Wharf to the fever hospital mortuaries. Most deaths at the Wharf are from Smallpox; and it would seem to be logical course to send those bodies to the mortuary at the Smallpox Hospital. I would suggest to the subcommittee that in default of a mortuary at South Wharf, the bodies of all patients dying there, from whatever cause, should be sent down the river on a suitable …….[?] on one of the ambulance steamers.'
- **Wardmaid resignations: E. Payne** and **Annie Noble** resigned.
- **Male staff, wages and accommodation**: 'With reference to your instruction to report as to the rationing of the male staff, I would like to point out that it is germane to this matter to enquire what male officers should be in residence at the Wharf, what is the maximum number of such officers likely to be employed at one time and whether it is possible for such a number to reside and to be catered for on the premises. As the proposal involves an alteration to the wages scale, I would suggest too that the opportunity should be taken to effect any other alteration to this scale which may appear to be desirable on other grounds; for instance there appears to be no good reason why

porters and piermen should be paid differently at the smallpox hospitals and in the river ambulance service…the whole matter should be the subject of a more extended reference.'

**March 17, 1905 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Reprimand for fitter Mr Church: '**I have seen fitter Church with reference to the complaint made by Miss **Worseldine**. He had no defence to make beyond saying that he did not clearly remember what had passed, and he expressed his regret. I reprimanded him.'
- **Disinfection machine**: 'As the 'Geneva Cross' will require to be disinfected before being docked, I propose that she be sent down to Long Reach to be disinfected by one of the Clayton machines now in use at Joyce Green. The smallpox hospitals subcommittee have under consideration the question of purchasing one of the Clayton machines for systematic use in disinfecting the hospital wards; and I should like to point out that it would be a great convenience if the machine could be transported to and fro for use also at South Wharf. I would suggest that the subcommittee should consider whether arrangements can be devised to make this course practicable.

**March 31, 1905 – report by Dr F F Ricketts**

- **Male staff – numbers, accommodation on wharf, wages and job descriptions: '**From information furnished by the chief officer, I find that the maximum of male staff employed during the year 1902 occurred during the month of April. Excluding North and West Wharves, the number at that time employed in the service was 68. Of that number 13 lived on the premises at South Wharf and 55 lived out; but of the latter a certain number lived in the staff cottages adjacent to the Wharf. The number 68 was made up as follows.

| | Living Out | | Living In | Living Out |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Masters | 5 | Superintendent's Clerk | - | 1 |
| Mates | 5 | Telephone Clerk | - | 1 |
| Deckhands | 13 | Engineers | - | 2 |
| Drivers | 3 | Fitter | - | 1 |
| Stokers | 11 | Stokers in shore buildings | - | 3 |
| Watchmen | 2 | Wharf Foreman | 1 | - |
| Gate Porter | 1 | Piermaster & Storekeeper | 1 | - |
| | 40 | Piermen | 2 | - |
| | | Asst. Piermen | 9 | 4 |
| | | Watchmen | - | 2 |
| | | Carpenter | | 1 |
| | | | 13 | 15 |

It is obvious that without very extensive building operations all these servants could not reside at the Wharf. At the same time, though such distinctions are not made at the smallpox hospitals, I think a line may be drawn between the duties of different officers, according as they bring them into more or less intimate contact with infection. The first list (40) includes those who are engaged in navigation or care of craft; and in addition the gate porter, whose duties are not of a very infecting character. The second list includes those whose work lies wholly or in part amongst the shore buildings, and all those persons should if possible live inside. The total number of officers whom it would be desirable to accommodate on the premises would therefore be 28.

The sleeping accommodation at the Wharf consists at present of 10 cubicles in the permanent male staff building, 7 cubicles in the temporary hut (at present used at workshops), and in the office block 1 bedroom which is at present occupied by the piermaster; a total of 18. There are 7 staff cottages. It seems to me that these might also be counted as a part of the Wharf residential accommodation, if access to them could be obtained without going out into the street. But at present most of them are in the occupation of men who do not come in the infected list. They are occupied as follows: 1 by the engineer, 1 by the master, 2 by Mates, 1 by a deckhand, 1 by a stoker, 1 by the gate porter. I understand that the reason for this allocation was that the crew might be on the spot if an emergency boat were required at night. There would however appear to be no good reason why more than one Mate, and why the gate porter, should occupy cottages, or why one should be allocated to a stoker if a stoker were already in residence in the staff quarters. I would suggest that it would be better to accommodate in the cottages the following: 1 Master, 1 Mate, 2 Engineers, 1 Fitter, 1 Carpenter, 1 Deckhand.

This arrangement would increase the sleeping accommodation available for the infected staff from 18 to 22. There would remain a shortage of 6. The institution of the present offices has diverted

from its original purpose accommodation for four servants; and if this were available the shortage would be so small as to be negligible.
Assuming that there are 24 or even 22 persons who live at the Wharf and are not provided with cottages, the question arises whether there exists sufficient mess and cooking accommodation for such a number. Two at least of the 24, namely the clerk and the foreman, may be assumed to have accommodation apart. Of the remaining 22 the watchman and one of the stokers would be on night duty. There would remain 17 to be provided for by day. The present mess room would with difficulty accommodate that number; and as there is no separate sitting room, no doubt the quarters with a full staff would be very confined. The kitchen in the female staff block could easily cook for 18 or 20 additional men or even more. It would be highly desirable that the navigating staff should not have to pass in and out of the Wharf for their meals. But the mess room accommodation is insufficient to adopt any other plan.
The above remarks apply to the conditions which would exist with a maximum staff. The present strength of the infected staff, that is to say those officers employed in the shore buildings, is 16. If the cottages were put to the use suggested earlier in this report, and if the present workshop reverted to its original use, all these men could be accommodated on the premises, and could be catered for in the present kitchen and mess room.
These changes in the circumstances of the staff would call for some adjustment of the wages scale. There are however some other alterations in that scale which I would suggest as desirable to bring it more into harmony with that in force at the fever and smallpox hospitals. It will perhaps be convenient to take the different officers seriation.

***Superintendent's clerk***

There is no reason why this office should differ in its conditions and nomenclature from the similar one at the hospitals. If the clerk lives in, which I have no doubt he should, I think he should be paid precisely as the clerks are paid at the smallpox hospitals. The present wages are £84.4s - £104; the value of the wages and emoluments of the clerks at the smallpox hospitals is £90-100. **Mr Roche's** wages at present falls between these latter figures.

***Piermaster and Storekeeper***

The term piermaster at South Wharf is an anomaly, the pier being one of the places with which the piermaster is least concerned. The man who holds the office is a general factotum and is in charge of the porters who work about the wharf. He also keeps the stores. He is not a particularly competent officer and in my opinion is a good deal too highly paid. In the event of a vacancy as piermaster occurring at one of the other wharves, I would recommend his transfer, and an alteration in the nature and terms of the office. I may mention that by the hand book, this officer should receive only unfurnished quarters, whereas he enjoys furnished quarters. His wages are 40/-. He is not at present entitled to rations, and I would recommend a deduction of 9/- from his wages if he receives them.

***Piermen***

I do not see that there is much difference between the duties and responsibilities of the pierman at the Wharves and at the smallpox hospital. In this service the wages for non-residents are 29/- to 32/- with washing and uniform; at the smallpox hospital 18/- with full emoluments valued at 12/-, total 30/-. I do not see why the two scales should not be made equivalent by adjustment in one service or the other. The piermen employed at South Wharf should live in and have 12/- deducted from the total wages decided upon. I should like to point out that it has been the practice to appoint piermen for other work than piermen's duties. The object appears to have been to give a deserving officer higher wages. There are at present 3 piermen at South Wharf, but only one is required for pierman's duties. I do not think this practice is quite right and I would recommend that it is discontinued.

***Assistant Piermen***

These men are general porters except in name. I would recommend they be called porters and receive porters' wages. The present wages are 23/- to 25/- with lodging, washing and uniform; or 27/- to 29/- if not resident. I would recommend that the wages be 15/- with full emoluments as at the smallpox hospitals, and against 14/- at the fever hospitals. In the case of non-resident porters at other wharves, the wages would be 27/-.

***Gate keeper***

This man gets 26/- with cottage and gas. If unprovided with lodging, he is allowed an extra 4/-; making a total wage of 30/-. This is exactly equivalent to the wages at the smallpox hospitals, except in the case of the man who is also in charge of the telephone exchanges. I have mentioned that there appears to be no sufficient reason why this man should not live out; but I would suggest

that he should be provided with his meals on the premises, for which a deduction of 8/- might be made from the 30/-.

***Night Watchmen***

The duties of these men differs somewhat. One is employed on the craft and he might live out like the navigating staff. The other is employed on the pier and around the river front. I think he should live in. At present both are non-resident and receive 30/-. At the smallpox hospitals, the equivalent wages are 32/-. The effect is that at the Wharf the pierman gets more than the night watchman (29/- to 32/- against 32/-) and at the smallpox hospitals the night watchman more than the pierman (32/- against 30/-). I think there should be an adjustment in both cases in one service or the other. On the whole it seems to me that the nightwatchman's work is both more responsible and less congenial and should be the better paid. A watchman's living in would of course suffer a deduction of 12/- from the total wages.

I may mention that at present a man paid as pierman does the work of night gate porter and nightwatchman of the wharf buildings, work properly the duty of a nightwatchman. This is one of the instances where a man does one kind of work and is paid for another kind.

***The Carpenter***

gets 46/- with no emoluments. I have suggested that he should live in a staff cottage (unfurnished) in which case he would get the additional emolument of gas. It would be necessary to decide what pecuniary deduction those emoluments should be equivalent to.

***The Engineers***

The wages are 60/- with unfurnished cottage and gas, and 60/- without emoluments respectively. I have suggested that the 2nd engineer should also live in a staff cottage; in which case his wages according to the scale would drop to 50/-.

***The Fitter***

Wages 39/- to 42/- with no emoluments. This is low for a fitter according to the scales in force at the hospitals, but the work at the wharf is not very responsible, and the officer is not of the best. If given the emoluments of an unfurnished cottage and gas, a dedication from his wages would need to be fixed.

***Stokers***

Wages 32/- to 34/- without emoluments. This is rather less than the value of the wages and emoluments of 2nd class stokers at the smallpox hospitals which are reckoned at 35/-. The Engineer in Chief approves the wages paid to the stokers; but I should like to point out that the river service scale is peculiar in that there is only one grade of stokers, whereas there is a very considerable difference in the duties. Assuming that the wages are suitable for the navigating stokers, I would suggest that they are too high for the shore stokers who attend to the circulating boilers etc, and do work which is performed by 4th class stokers at the smallpox hospitals drawing equivalent wages of 31/-. It is these men who I suggest should live on the premises. It is true that occasionally they may be called upon to take the place of a navigating stoker; but so do the 4th class stokers at the hospital take the duties of the 2nd class stokers, and a similar remark applies to any subordinate officer. I would suggest that the shore (resident) stokers should get 23/- with full emoluments like the 4th class stokers.

***Navigating staff***

With regard to the deckhands, the man who lives in a staff cottage gets 30/- and gas compared to the others who get 34/- and live out. One of the Mates who now occupies a staff cottage, I have suggested should live outside. According to the scale his wages would thereupon go up from 37/- to 42/-. I do not quite understand how these monetary additions or dedications are arrived at. Apparently for the same thing (viz unfurnished cottage and gas) the allowances in respect of different officers are 10/- (engineer and master), 5/- (mate), and 4/- (stoker, deckhand and gate porter).

Wages of the master are 55/- to 60/- with a cottage and gas or 65/- to 70/- without. I would suggest that a difference be made between the senior master **Livett** and other masters from time to time appointed. Livett always has, and especially in busy times, other duties than those of master. He is (under the chief officer) the head of the navigating staff, and his services are made use of accordingly. I would suggest that he be called senior master, and that other masters should be paid 5/- less, viz 50/- to 55/- with a proper addition if not resident.

In the existing scale all the officers with the exception of the clerk and the gate porter, are allowed the emolument of **washing**. As a matter of fact, only those men who live in the staff quarters take advantage of it. The chief officer tells me that men who are not resident, even those who live in the

staff cottages, prefer to get their washing done at home. I would suggest therefore that this emolument be discontinued except in the case of men living on the wharf premises.'
[All the above recommendations are summarised in a table which follows - not transcribed here]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service Sub-Committee Minute Book 1904-05

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1062)

**January 12, 1905**

- **Testimonials signed**: for Miss **Turner**, Nursing Superintendent, Asst. Pierman **Judge**, and Asst. Nurse **Gregory**.
- **Patient's lost clothes**: further correspondence with patient Jessie Hutchens and her lost clothes 'asking for particulars of the clothing lost by her and the value she puts upon it'. [see Dec 9, 1904]
- **Clocks needing repair**: clocks to be 'sent away for that purpose as soon as he could arrange for their disinfection.'
- **Storage for Chief Officer's supplies**: Dr Ricketts 'reported that at present the Chief Officer Mr **Sullivan** kept his grocery and linen in the female staff block, and suggested that they should be kept elsewhere.' Suggests the room above the old stables.
- **Delegation of authority**: Discussion of Dr Ricketts' query about delegation of authority [see Medical Officer's Report Book, Jan 12, 1905, as below]. The committee recommended that the Asst. Steward at Joyce Green, Mr Peake, be transferred temporarily to South Wharf, and that Mr **Roche** be transferred temporarily to Joyce Green as Steward's Clerk, and that the Chief Officer be instructed to delegate his authority to the Asst. Steward in his absence. But no action to be taken as to the fitting of a bath.
- **Wages and titles for male staff**: Dr Ricketts reports that the wages and titles of 'male servants (other than the crews) appear to be unnecessarily different from those at the hospitals and suggested that no fresh appointments should be made under the present scale'. [Approved]
- **Engineer Mr Atherton's defence**: Mr Atherton provided a report, as per their request, explaining why the coal bunkers of the Geneva Cross had 'got into such a bad state'.

**February 3, 1905**

- **Accusation of neglect of Engineer Atherton**: Mr Atherton's report about the neglect of the coal bunkers [see above, Jan 12, 1905] had been considered by the Engineer-in-Chief, who concluded - 'that he could not find any extenuating circumstances to satisfactorily account for the neglect to note the defects before the arrival of the Chief Officer; and that the engineer apparently only considered it necessary to look for defects when a general survey was made… Even had the late River Ambulance Superintendent remained in charge of the steamers it should not have been his place to have found out the defects recently called attention to, as such naturally come under the jurisdiction of the Engineer in Charge of the Steamer. I have just had brought to my notice also the fact that a main steam stop valve on the "Maltese Cross" was noticed to be passing steam and when Engineer Atherton was asked what was the matter, Mr Sullivan informs me that he (Atherton) remarked that there was a flaw on the casting. When Mr Sullivan pointed out that [a] certain fibrous covering had been put round to protect the so-called flaw it was stated to be only of a very slight nature and would be examined when the general survey took place. To shew the fallacy of such a procrastinating policy, when the valve was taken asunder the flange was found to be broken in four separate pieces and a serious accident might have occurred when steam was up. I consider it shews a very serious neglect of an Engineer's duty to allow the main steam stop valve to be in such a state without reporting it to the proper authorities, and the man who could pass such a state of things, or who has not sufficient initiative to find out for himself the exact nature of affairs, shews a very great want of thoughtfulness for the lives of other people.'
The Chief Officer Mr Sullivan and Engineer Atherton attended this meeting –
'Atherton was questioned and stated that he could not accept responsibility for the actions of the late Superintendent (Mr Thomson) and that he had inspected the bunkers of the "Geneva Cross" and called the Superintendent's attention to them four years ago. He further stated that he had had no time to attend to the bunkers as he had the greater part of Mr Thomson's duties to perform for the last 10 years. With regard to the defective valve on the "Maltese Cross" he stated that he had been instructed by Mr Thomson to have the valve wrapped up and the "Maltese Cross" was not usually run by him.'

After discussion, 'and as Mr Atherton's explanation was not considered satisfactory' he was given one week's notice 'dispensing with his services'.

- **Medical attendance of cases being removed between midnight and 9am**: Dr Turner, Medical Superintendent of the South-eastern Hospital, stated that as he was no longer based at that hospital he wouldn't be able to attend cases between those hours. Dr Ricketts made the suggestion that for cases being removed at these hours, the Ambulance Station removing the patient 'should at the same time send an ambulance cab to the nearest fever hospital for an Assistant Medical Officer and that both ambulances should drive to the wharf. On arrival at the wharf should the case not require medical attendance the Assistant Medical Officer could return and leave the patient under the care of the nurse at South Wharf. The Medical Officer going to the wharf need not diagnose the case but simply go there in case [the] patient is very ill.' This suggestion was approved.

**February 14, 1905**

- **Patient compensated for lost clothing**: Miss Jessie Hutchens was compensated with the sum of 9/3 for the loss of her clothing at South Wharf. [see Dec 9, 1904]
- **Plan to swap Steward and Clerk deferred**: decided not to proceed at present with the 'interchange' of Mr Peake, Asst. Steward at Joyce Green, with Mr **Roche**, Clerk at South Wharf.
- **Payment to North and West Wharf Piermasters' wives:** the piermaster's wives were paid for 'looking after the men's quarters'. The Clerk reports that the payment at North Wharf was more because the piermaster's wife there did all the washing, whilst at West Wharf it was sent down to the smallpox hospitals to be done there.
- **Dismissal of Engineer Atherton**: the Chief Officer asks about payment of wages to Atherton and when he should vacate his staff cottage, and encloses a medical certificate stating that Atherton was suffering from angina pectoris and would 'not be able to work amongst machinery again, or to do any laborious work.' Atherton had also sent a letter 'apologising for his behavior before the sub-committee on the 3rd instant … and giving an explanation as to why the bunkers of the "Geneva Cross" had got into such a bad state, and as to the main steam stop valve of the "Maltese Cross", and asking for clement treatment on account of the state of his health.' After discussion, it was resolved 'That Engineer Atherton be informed that the sub-committee are willing to regard the medical certificate submitted by him on the 9th instant as resignation of his office on that date on the ground of ill health, with a view to his claiming his pension …'
- **Painting of steamers**: further to Mr Sullivan's suggestion of a new colour scheme for the steamers, it was decided not to make any change at present. [see Superintendent's Report Book 1904-07, Feb 3, 1905]
- **Chimney sweeping**: the chimney of the stove in C Shelter had smoked very heavily on 8th Feb due to an accumulation of soot, and the fire had to be put out. There was no record as to when the chimneys were last swept, so this was arranged to be done, and a register was to be kept in future recording when the chimneys were swept.

**March 3, 1905**

- **Engineer Atherton's leaving**: had been medically examined by Sir Hugh Beevor who 'was not prepared to certify that the attacks of illness from which Atherton suffered caused "permanent incapacity" or were due to "permanent infirmity"'. Atherton had been informed of this, and 'thereupon submitted four medical certificates', which had been sent to Sir Hugh Beevor, who now recommended that 'the Board act on the opinions expressed in such certificates.' Atherton was 'to be given reasonable time in which to vacate the cottage he occupied and that he was not be charged for rent, gas, and water from the date he left the service.'
- **Work clothes for Chief Officer**: further to **Clement Sullivan's** request for an overcoat and mackintosh, it was found that 'under the terms of his appointment he was not entitled to uniform.'
- **Post-mortem examinations**: **Dr Ricketts** reported on the lack of accommodation at South Wharf for making post-mortems, 'and suggested that in default of a mortuary at South Wharf, the bodies of all patients dying there, from whatever cause, should be sent down the river on a suitable bier on one of the ambulance steamers.' (Suggestion to be referred to the Clerk of the Board).
- **Petition about mud accumulation**: Following Mr Sullivan's report on the mud accumulation problem at South Wharf, it was resolved that a petition be drafted to be presented to the Thames Conservancy and that the owners of neighbouring wharves be invited to sign it.
- **Pierman leaves after his first night at West Wharf**: **W. Judge** was appointed as Asst. Pierman and sent to West Wharf to take the place of E. Hayter who was leaving that day, 'but after one night's duty Judge said the post did not suit him and left'.

**March 17, 1905**

- **Disposal of bodies of patients dying at South Wharf**: it was agreed that further to Dr Ricketts' suggestion, bodies could be sent down on an ambulance steamer, 'except in the case of persons dying a "sudden" or "violent" death, when the bodies are to be remain at the disposal of the Coroner.'
- **Engineer Atherton's leaving**: superannuation allowance claim submitted. Atherton still occupied No. 7 Cottage, and was to be given one week's notice to vacate the premises.
- **Matron to R.A.S.:** It was agreed that the Jurisdiction of the Matron of the Smallpox Hospitals, Miss Wacher, was to be extended to include the River Ambulance Service.
- **Mr Sullivan's father's illness, and Dr Ricketts' complaint of not knowing staff changes**: 3 days' leave was granted to Chief Officer Mr Sullivan 'owing to his father's illness'. 'The Medical Superintendent [Dr Ricketts] subsequently mentioned that he was not aware of Mr Sullivan's absence until he happened to go to the wharf and that he was frequently unaware of staff changes until he received instructions from the Chief Office'. Mr Sullivan was therefore instructed in future 'to report at once' to the Medical Superintendent all staff matters and changes.
- **Applications for vacancy of engineer**: 117 applications received in response to advertisement.

**March 31, 1905**

- **Engineer Atherton finally leaves**: Engineer Atherton had been given permission to stay on at No. 7 Cottage until 29th March, due to the road at South Wharf being under repair. Mr Atherton had sent a letter stating he had vacated the cottage on the 28th.
- **Applicants for Engineer vacancy**: shortlisted applicants were interviewed at this meeting; all 4 committee members voted for **Mr Andrew Forbes**, to be transferred from the Park Hospital.
- **Committee visits West Wharf**: arranged for the White Cross to convey the members of the Sub-Committee from Temple Pier to West Wharf, to inspect the work that needed to be done there. [The results of their visit are reported in the minutes of April 7, 1905.]
- **Payment of Masson while off sick with influenza**: the Sub-Committee agree to pay his wages while off 5 days with influenza; the Chief Officer had asked their instruction, as Masson had been off sick 9 days in January.

**April 14, 1905**

- **Matron Miss Wacher takes charge**: had taken over her duties at South Wharf, but had no report to submit at this meeting.
- **Wardmaid off sick: Bessie Gradburn** [?] was due back from leave on the 1st, but didn't return until the 6th on account of illness.

**May 12, 1905**

- **Accommodation for Chief Officer's wife and family**: Mr Sullivan applies for permission to have his wife and family live with him at South Wharf and for suitable accommodation to be provided. The Sub-Committee weren't able to offer him anything.
- **Mr Sullivan's absences**: **Dr Ricketts** reported that the Chief Officer Mr Sullivan 'had been absent from the wharf for the night on eight occasions during the past four weeks'. He also made reference to some absences from the wharf during daytime. (Dr Ricketts had previously also reported some dates when Mr Sullivan was absent).
- **Matron Wacher asks for more domestic staff:** Matron Wacher attended the meeting and reported that she found the present staff at South Wharf 'insufficient to keep the buildings in a proper condition' and suggested an additional 2 wardmaids – this was approved.

**May 26, 1905**

- **Temporary building licenses**: the licenses for the two shelters, which were classed as temporary buildings, had expired – it was decided to apply to extend these licenses.
- **Chief Officer's absences**: a return was submitted showing 'the time of the Chief Officer's leaving and returning to South Wharf daily for the month ended 15th instant. This return having been considered it was decided to take no action.'
- **Dr Rickett's recommendations for male subordinate staff**: his report was still being considered, and other opinions were being sought.
- **Salary increase:** for Miss **Worseldine**, Superintendent of Nurses.
- **Stoker left:** temporary stoker **S. Browne** left on the 15th.

# 1905 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Bott**, Walter; **Downs**, William Henry; **Targett**, Harold; **Gardner**, Frank<br>**McMahon**, James; **Padfield**, Benjamin Robert; **Allen**, Thomas<br>**Howard**, Albert Edward; **Scales**, Thomas |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Livett,** George James Robert |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Atherton**, Edward |

# 1906

***Minimal smallpox cases; uneventful year except for two staff deaths.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1906

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1906; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1600)

Page 213

- **Conveyed 709 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 27
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 27
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 18
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 637
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

Page 241

- **Smallpox admissions**: 27 smallpox sufferers admitted to smallpox hospitals; no deaths – 'the type of disease prevailing being remarkably benign'.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1906 Vol. XL

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1906)

Page 177

- **Annual leave for Chief Officer C.E. Sullivan**: annual leave for the Chief Officer set at 4 weeks.

Page 293

- **Proposal of discontinuing River Ambulance Service**: Motion that the General Purposes Committee be instructed to consider and report as to the advisability of discontinuing the River Ambulance Service and arranging for the transport of future smallpox patients by road. The motion was put to the vote and carried. [from minutes of 8 December 1906]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1904-07

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/006)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 1, 1906**

- **Carpenter C. Johnstone still off sick**: had been off sick since Dec 11, and in-patient at Guy's Hospital. 'As there is every possibility of this man being absent from duty for some time …' he asks to temporarily engage another carpenter to get work completed in the meantime.
- **Christmas Meal**: gives expenditure for 'Christmas Fare' at South Wharf; includes mention of turkey.
- **Pierman resigns: A. Howard**, Pierman, tenders his resignation.

**January 15, 1906**

- **Death of carpenter Charles Johnstone**: 'I beg to report the decease of Charles Johnstone late carpenter in this service. He was an inpatient of Guy's Hospital, having been admitted there, suffering from cancer, to which he succumbed on the 3rd inst. All tools and effects at this wharf the property of deceased have been forwarded to Mrs Johnstone and wages at the rate of half-pay were paid up to 3rd inst.; in accordance with instructions received from the Clerk to the Board, (receipts for same being obtained in each case) I may state this officer entered this service June

1886 and Mrs Johnstone is enquiring if there is anything due to her late husband "as he was not insured nor in any club"'.

- **Sudden death of Pierman Henry William Downs**: 'I also regret to have to report the death on the 4th inst., of another Officer of this Service, Henry William Downs, Pierman, who was here performing his duties that day the 4th inst., being engaged with Piermaster **Gardner** & Asst Pierman **McMahon** "tarring down" the woodwork of the dolphins till 4.30pm during which time according to the statements of Gardner & McMahon [the] deceased seemed very lively and quite in his usual state of health, no complaint being heard from him whatever. At 5pm deceased went to tea and afterwards told Pierman **Targett** he felt sick, which he thought was due to sitting with his back to the fire whilst at tea, but felt all right again afterwards and left the wharf at 7pm quite in his customary manner. Next morning 5th inst. 11.45am I received a note from Mrs Downs stating – "I am heartfelt sorry to have to inform you. Mr Downs passed away suddenly tonight"…. An inquest was held on deceased … the medical evidence being … that the cause of death was a dilated heart and syncope.'
- **Temporary carpenter**: appointed **Chas Johnson**, who'd worked for the R.A.S. for 6 months in 1903 [not to be confused with Charles Johnstone, deceased carpenter who he is replacing!]
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**January 29, 1906**

- **Necessity of carpenter at South Wharf**: argues the need for a carpenter at South Wharf, with the piers, dolphins, shelters and buildings at all 3 wharves all needing maintenance as well as the 5 steamers needing constant attention.
- **New Asst. Pierman: E. H. Jasper** temporarily employed to replace deceased Pierman Downs.
- **Sick List: W. Lanyon**, stoker.

**February 12, 1906**

- **New temp. carpenter**: **Chas Johnson** who was temporarily employed as carpenter, found a permanent position and left, so **J. Allison** engaged temporarily.

**March 12, 1906**

- **Gardening**: 'With a view to improving the soil for gardening purposes at South Wharf, I ask for power to purchase about 15 loads of manure… I also make application to purchase selected seeds …. from Messrs Sutton, Reading.'
- **Nurses' piano**: the piano in the Nurses' Sitting room required tuning and the pedal repairing.
- **Pay increase for Clerk: Mr Roche** entitled to pay increase after completing another year's service.
- **Piermaster in hospital: F. Gardner** detained at Long Reach Hospital for treatment (not specified).
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2

**March 26, 1906**

- **Visitor from Peru**: on 16th March Dr Savoreria [?] of Peru visited and was shown around South Wharf and the steamers, 'and expressed himself as highly pleased with the arrangements in connection with the reception and despatch of patients.'
- **Sick list: F. Gardner**, Piermaster and Storekeeper.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 6

**April 23, 1906**

- **Pay increase**: due to **J. Gardner**, Asst. Pierman, on completion of 12 months' service.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1

**May 21, 1906**

- **Sun awning on front of Medical Officers' House**: found to be beyond repair; requests a new one.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**June 18, 1906**

- **Lighting in the steamers**: requests more modern lights be fitted to the hospital sections of the steamers, as the current ones are 'obsolete and when in use emit a noxious smell… The Geneva and Red Cross are lighted by electricity, but oil lights are carried in case of breakdowns etc.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2

**July 16, 1906**

- **Ship's boats**: two 'ship's boats' delivered, built for the steamers Albert Victor and Maltese Cross.
- **Mouse-damaged stores**: asks for certain stores to be written off the books – 15 lbs oatmeal and 10 lbs semolina – 'these goods have been over-run with mice … it being impossible to issue these goods for consumption they ultimately remain in hand thus causing delay and inconvenience at each stocktaking. I may add since the stores have been under my control, all this class of provisions are stored in tins to avoid any loss or damage similar…'
- **Damage caused by speeding vessel**: on 11th July the steamer Lapwing 'passed by South Wharf at such rate of speed that the wash from her caused damage to the White Cross…'
- **Holiday cover**: asks to proceed on his annual leave on 9 August 'and in accordance with former practice I propose placing **G. Livett – Master** – in charge of wharf and steamers with **Mr Roche**, Clerk, acting as accounting officer during my absence.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**July 30, 1906**

- **Staff pay when temporarily promoted**: in the past it has been the custom when temporarily promoting staff to fill in for others away on annual leave or illness, for them to be paid at the rate of the 'higher office'. But new rules brought in from April 1906 mean they aren't paid at the higher rate if it's to cover annual leave or for a period of less than one week. Asks for guidance on this.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**September 24, 1906**

- **Maintenance of dolphins**: recommends general repair needed to dolphins, pointing out it was over 20 years since these were erected, and no thorough general repair had been done since.
- **Screen to Receiving Room**: 'Extension of Screen to the Receiving Room, S. Wharf – The work entailed in the erection of this screen has been carried out by the staff at this wharf.'
- **Sick list: J. Masson**, engineer.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**December 3, 1906**

- **Stippling of windows**: stippled surface of windows on D Shelter entirely worn away; asks to re-do this, and whether to use ordinary paint or frosting varnish.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**December 17, 1906**

- **Turkey for Xmas**: '3 prices have been obtained for the supply of turkey required for Xmas fare...'
- **G. Livett, Master, sent to hospital**: 'In accordance with instructions from Dr F Ricketts, G. Livett, Master, was send to S. Eastern Hospital on the 11th inst. for medical examination by Dr Turner.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

# 1906 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Downs**, William Henry; **Targett**, Harold J; **Gardner**, Frank<br>**McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas; **Howard**, Albert Edward<br>**Scales**, Thomas |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Livett,** George James Robert |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |

# 1907

***Minimal smallpox cases but increase in fever –***
***North Wharf temporarily opened for Scarlet Fever patients;***
***Master George Livett retires; change in accommodation arrangements***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1907

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1907; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1601)

Page xii

- **Fever and smallpox**: abnormal amount of infectious disease, esp. scarlet fever, throughout the year. Total no. of fever and diphtheria patients admitted by M.A.B. = 32,169 (6000+ more than any previous years). Smallpox largely absent however.

Page 162

- **Smallpox cases**: only 2 smallpox cases admitted over the year. 13 non-smallpox cases received at South Wharf.

Page 191

- **Conveyed 877 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 458 (456 of which were fever patients)
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 2
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 5
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 412
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1907 Vol. XLI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1907)

Page 129

- **Proposal of discontinuing R.A.S.**: '...Conveyance of smallpox patients by river - We recommend -
  (a) That the reference to the General Purposes Committee of 8th December, 1906, to report on the advisability of discontinuing the river ambulance service and arranging for transport of future smallpox patients by road be, as hereby, discharged...' [from minutes of 8 June 1907]

Pages 146-7 (in appendix inserted inbetween these page numbers)

- **River Ambulance staff job descriptions**:
  Two sets of Staff Regulations are inserted in full within the minutes - for nursing staff, and for wharf/receiving station/navigating staff. Includes full job descriptions for all roles. (Too long to transcribe - please see the original document). [from minutes of 22 June 1907]

Page 155

- **Renewal of South Wharf Dolphins** – 'It is 23 years since these dolphins were erected, and during this time no renewals have taken place or repairs been effected. The Chief Officer … finds a large proportion of them decayed and otherwise defective, in many instances, timbers though outwardly appearing sound and solid, being eaten up with dry rot. It will be essential for the major portion of the dolphins, from about half-tide mark upwards, to be renewed. We submit plans and specification, which have been prepared by the Chief Officer … for the necessary repairs, the cost of which Mr. Sullivan estimates at £700...' [from minutes of 6 July 1907]

Pages 179-80

- **River Ambulance Service - Male staff wages and accommodation, and charging of rent:** The Hospitals Committee reports on its consideration of which members of staff should be in residence and how best to provide the necessary accommodation. The problems were complex as the available accommodation was limited, the desirable changes would mean adjusting officers' wages which were found in turn to be inconsistent and full of anomalies. With detailed reports from the medical superintendent Dr. Ricketts and the Accountant, the conclusions are:
  '...(a) *South Wharf - Accommodation for male staff* - We have approved of certain proposals whereby those officers whose duties are in connection with the shore buildings shall be resident. These proposals involved the reversion to its original use as an office block of the building occupied by the chief officer **(Mr. Sullivan**), and we have sanctioned him being paid, during our pleasure, the monetary value of his emoluments, and approved of his occupying, at a rent to be fixed by the Finance Committee, the first of the row of seven staff cottages which are contiguous to but outside the wharf premises. It has been the practice to allow certain members of the navigating staff to reside in these cottages in order that a boat's crew might be readily available in the event of an emergency. We propose to continue this practice without material change, the officers occupying the cottages being as follows - chief officer, master, mate, deck hand, engineer, stoker and gate porter. We think, and the Account concurs, that it would be desirable that the occupation of a cottage should no longer be counted as part of the emoluments of an officer, but that a rent should be charged in each case…
  It will be observed that two of the tenants of the cottages will be an engineer and a stoker. These tenants differ from the rest in that their duties will take them at times into the shore buildings - the engineer to effect small repairs to the fittings, and the stoker to assist him or to attend to the circulating boilers. We think that it may reasonably be held that such employments might expose these men to infection, and that, consequently, it is undesirable that they should pass in and out through the public street to get to their cottages as they do at present. The chief officer would be in the like case. We therefore suggest that direct communication should be established between the Wharf premises and the cottages occupied by these three officers, this communication to be under the control of the gate porter. We submit a plan showing the positions of the two additional entrances proposed...'
  (b) They propose to abolish the existing wage scale for the R.A.S., to make the Smallpox Hospitals scale applicable, with certain necessary additions, and to add a special scale for navigating staff. They propose adding the posts of Chief Officer's clerk, Wharf Foreman, Piermaster, Cleaner, Assistant Pierman, Messenger and Ship's Carpenter to the Smallpox Hospitals' scale. The cleaner (female) receives no food, washing, lodging or uniform whilst the male staff all receive board, lodging, washing and a uniform, with the exception of the Clerk who gets no uniform and the Piermasters who do not receive any food. The Piermasters at North and West Wharves get unfurnished accommodation.
  The proposal for navigating staff includes uniforms for all, but other emoluments - food, washing and lodging – to be restricted to the leading and second engineer. (There is only one engineer on staff at present). The new scales should be applied to everyone except the piermasters who are all nearing retirement. [from minutes of 3 August 1907]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Superintendent's Report Book 1904-07

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/03/006)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 14, 1907**

- **Collision:** on 2nd Jan the sailing barge Clara collided with the White Cross and Albert Victor while moored at South Wharf, damaging both. Collision reported to the Receiver of Wrecks at Custom House, 'the statement being made by **W. Punter**, Mate., R.A.S. as being a witness to the collision.'
- **Retirement of George Livett, Master, and replacement:** 'With the retirement of G. Livett Master of Steamboat in this service the post of Master will become vacant...' Asks for their instructions, as the former procedure was to promote the Senior Mate to Master, and Senior Deck Hand to Mate. Under this system, **W. Punter** who was currently Senior Mate would be promoted to Master, and **W. Kelley** who was currently Senior Deck Hand would be promoted to Mate. 'Both of these men

have held the post of Master in this Service on previous occasions. I submit return of service of W. Punter, who joined as a Mate 1887, and W. Kelley who joined as Deck Hand in 1883.' 'I submit letter from G. Livett, asking for a number of years to be added to his superannuation allowance.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**January 28, 1907**
- **Frozen and broken water pipes**: on 25th Jan the water pipes of the hot water boiler for the Medical Officer's House were found frozen and cracked; the water in the supply tank escaped and damaged the ceiling of the office 'which has fallen away to the extent of 6 feet by 4 feet.'
- **Pay increase for Asst. Pierman Jaspar**: on completing 12 months' service.
- **George Livett retires**: Master George Livett left on Jan 26th., on a superannuation allowance.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**February 11, 1907**
- **Collision**: on 1st Feb the barge Rhine collided with the White Cross whilst moored at her berth at South Wharf, doing slight damage.
- **Promotions**: **W. Punter**, Mate, promoted to Master, and **W. Kelley**, Deck Hand, promoted to Mate.

**February 25, 1907**
- **Special smallpox conveyance**: 'I beg to report that on the 16th inst. a patient alleged to be suffering from Small-pox, was brought from Greenwich Hospital to the wharf and … was placed on board the Port of London Sanitary Authorities Launch "Closho" [?], (then lying at South Wharf) for conveyance to their own Hospital in the vicinity of Gravesend.'
- **Staff badges**: 'With the last clothing and uniform contract it is laid down by the Contract Department that instead of embroidered badges as hitherto for staff uniform caps, they are to be abolished and metal detachable letters substituted in their stead. As it is important that the Masters of Steamers should be distinguished from the crew, I ask for Committee to consider the advisability of retaining the badges in the case of Masters uniform, it being in my opinion an aid to discipline and good management.'
- **Accommodation for painters at wharf**: painting work at the wharf to be carried out by direct labour - 'I am therefore at present employed arranging for sleeping accommodation on the steamer Red Cross and dressing accommodation in B shelter for this staff of men (approximately 40 all told).'

**March 11, 1907**
- **Painters working at wharf**: the cleaning and painting work was underway, with 1 foreman, 24 painters and 10 labourers currently working at the wharf. 'Of this number 6 are employed on the cottages outside the wharf, they are not catered for and receive 8 ½ painters and 7d labourers per hour. 29 being employed inside receive painters 7 ½, labourers 6 ½ per hour with free board and lodging, the wards (2) of B shelter being used as Dress Rooms and the Steamer Red Cross for the purpose of lodgings. The regulations as to bathing and changing have been strictly complied with and I am able to report as the result of the first week's working that these men are quiet, orderly and amenable to discipline.'
- **Pay increase for clerk Mr Roche**: on having completed another year's service.
- **W. Lanyon, Stoker, off sick with bronchitis:** 'In connection with this case I would state that Lanyon was assisting to unload a delivery of coal at this wharf 6pm [on] 6th inst. and complained to other members of the staff on finishing of not feeling well, and the spitting of blood, he did not come in for duty next morning, the medical certificate being sent also accompanying letter... The circumstances of discharging this coal arose through the Contractors having telephoned to say that both their men who were vaccinated and on the free list were laid up and they were unable to deliver the coal, upon which I replied that they should send fresh men here and get them vaccinated, but in this instance I would try and discharge this coal if received before 4pm with the staff employed here (this having been done in former instances) …'

**March 25, 1907**
- **Collision**: 'I beg to report that about 2.15am of the 15th inst. the Barge "Spree" … collided with the "Albert Victor" then lying at her moorings, doing serious damage to the Port Paddle box, Deck Houses and Paddle Wheel…'
- **Injured painters**: 'On the 13th inst. C. Secker [?] Painter employed in the staff cottages at this wharf sprained his ankle, through treading over a recess formed in the floor for a door mat to lay in, and

on being viewed by Dr Byles was sent home in a conveyance from the G. Eastern Ambulance Station at noon of that day. He returned to his work next morning 14th inst. 6.30am. Also on the 13th inst. C. Woodgate and S. Hughenden, Painters, slipped from a trestle staging whilst painting (A) Shelter. Hughenden had his shins slightly scraped and continued on with his work, but C. Woodgate being somewhat shaken, was off duty and warded in (A) Shelter till the 15th inst. when he returned to his work.'

- **Painters on site**: lists the numbers of men currently engaged on the painting works – 1 foreman, 24 painters, 14 labourers, '33 being inside hands and catered for, 6 outside on staff cottages.'
- **Sick List: W. Lanyon** off since March 7, returned to duty March 25.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Admitted to shelters: 1

*Reports for 1907 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1907-10

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/001)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**April 8, 1907**

- **Death of child at South Wharf**: 'On the 3rd inst. a child aged 1 year 7 months, admitted from Marylebone the day previous, died at South Wharf. The body was taken by the steamer "White Cross" to Long Reach for interment on the 4th inst.'
- **Collision**: 'On Wed 3rd inst. 11.15am the Barge "Prince Edward" … collided with the R.A.S. "Red Cross" damaging the starboard paddle box…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1 Died at South Wharf: 1

**April 23, 1907**

- **Grass**: requests ½ bushel of lawn seed from Messrs Sutton & Co, Reading, 'for the purpose of improving the grass plots at this wharf, which have been damaged during the recent painting work.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**June 3, 1907**

- **Dolphins at South Wharf**: submits plans for renewal of dolphins at South Wharf; erected over 23 years ago, with no major renewals or repairs since. Describes their current condition in detail.
- **Body found in river**: 'On the 15th May 4.0am Night Watchman **Horton** observed a male corpse floating by the wharf and on the body coming in contact with the paddle wheels of the "Geneva Cross", secured same and handed it over to the River Police, an inquest was subsequently held, which Horton attended, when the body was identified and an Open Verdict returned.'

**June 17, 1907**

- **Camp-sheeting of wharf**: surveyed the camp-sheeting attached to the front of the wharf to ascertain if some defect in this was causing subsidence of the boat shed. Found it to be in sound condition, but for several 'small apertures between the planking which permit of a slight drainage taking place at low water…', but insufficient to cause any scour that might be causing the subsidence. Proposes as a preventive measure the planking be lapped with 2" deals, and the whole of the camp sheeting to be given two coats of coal tar. Points out also that extensive repairs were carried out in 1904 'which resulted in the renewal and repair of the whole camp sheeting in question and the piles attached thereto.'
- **Boat shed adjusted**: roof raised 'to a true level' and adjustments made to compensate for the subsidence.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**July 15, 1907**

- **Visitors**: on July 10, Sir R. Hemsley and Dr Geil [?] visited South and North Wharves and went to Long Reach on the White Cross. On the 11th, the Rev. G.W. Pope visited South Wharf.

- **Stoker W. Lanyon recommended as Engine Driver:** now that the Engineer **Forbes** is employed at Joyce Green, he recommends W. Lanyon, Stoker, as Engine Driver of the launch White Cross, 'he being the senior hand and has previously served as Engine Driver for a number of years.'

**July 29, 1907**

- **Chief Officer's accommodation**: 'In connection with my occupying No. 1 Cottage in lieu of my present quarters and the matter receiving Committee's favourable consideration, I would ask to be instructed as to the earliest date that I may be allowed to take up my residence there. Further owing to the lack of facilities for washing at this house (no copper or drying found) I ask for the privilege of having my household linen washed at Joyce Green on payment of the usual rates.'
- **Chief Officer's Accident**: 'On the 13th inst. whilst descending a ladder, the bottom skidded and I fell somewhat damaging my hand and leg, but not sufficient to incapacitate me from duty.'
- **Sour milk**: 'On the 25th inst. owing to the milk supply (14 pints) turning sour and unfit for use, 3 pints were purchased from outside, the contractor being notified that he would be debited with the extra cost and also was requested to replace the remaining 11 pints…'
- **Promotion of W. Lanyon**: promoted from Stoker to Engine Driver of launch (White Cross).

**September 9, 1907**

- **Transfer of offices, and Chief Officer moves into staff cottage**: 'I beg to report the work of transferring the location of the offices at this wharf from their present site to the quarters formerly allotted me, as now being taken in hand…' Requests the telephone line be moved accordingly, and details the carpentry required to convert this block into sleeping quarters. 'On August 5th I took over occupation of No. 1 Cottage and from that date ceased to enjoy the emoluments as formerly, and … have had the yard paved with the condemned blue-bricks brought from West Wharf.'
- **Stoker Hellyer's child with scarlet fever**: 'On the 8th ult. a child of Stoker Hellyer, occupier of No. 6 Cottage was removed to the Brook Hospital suffering from Scarlet Fever, the Sanitary Authorities subsequently disinfecting the premises.'
- **Repair and renewal of dolphins**: work commenced on 19th August.
- **No. of patients** taken to Joyce Green = 1

**October 7, 1907**

- **Move and conversions of offices**: 'I beg to report the transfer of the offices at this wharf from the Temporary Quarters, to the building formerly used by me as residential quarters...' Old offices now being converted into cubicles for staff. Clerk to occupy his old quarters. Asks for use of an ante-room part of the office block for a bath and change room, with a door leading to the yard of his cottage, 'thus allowing of my bathing and changing without coming on the wharf again…'
- **Preparations for the use of North Wharf for scarlet fever patients**: on 4th Oct 'preparations were made for opening North Wharf for the admission of patients…' Describes the preparations, disinfection, cleaning etc, the plan for the Waiting Room to be used as a Nurses' sitting room, etc. 'For the conveyance of patients between North Wharf and Long Reach it is arranged to use the steamers "Albert Victor" and "Maltese Cross", both being handy and serviceable boats…'
  'I submit list of changes, promotions and engagements that will be required to form the crews of 2 extra steamers being run from North Wharf to Long Reach, that is with a small-pox crew, 3 crews in all.

| Name | Rating | Promotion |
|---|---|---|
| **W Kelley** | Mate | Master |
| **C. Digby** | Deck Hand | Master |
| **F. Showell** | Deck Hand | Mate |
| **W. Livett** | Deck Hand | Mate |
| **W. Lanyon** | Engine Driver of Launch | Engine Driver |
| **J. Hellyer** | Stoker | Engine Driver |
| **C. Denny** | Stoker | Engine Driver of Launch |

  Fresh Engagements:
  1 Mate, 7 Deck Hands, (4) 2 Stokers (2 stokers were engaged on the 4th inst.),
  3 Asst. Piermen for North Wharf.'
- **Fire at Barnards Wharf**: 'On the 16th Sept an extensive fire occurred at Barnards Wharf adjoining South Wharf – all due precautions were taken by me at this wharf, but happily the fire was overcome without damage to the Managers' property.'
- **Sick List: E. Jaspar**, Asst. Pierman.

- **Supt. Nurse Worseldine**: mentioned in the context of petty cash payments.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0

**October 21, 1907**

- **New staff engaged for North Wharf, for conveying Scarlet Fever patients:** 'In connection with the opening of North Wharf and the conveyance by steamer of Scarlet Fever patients to Long Reach, I beg to report having engaged the following staff (temporarily) for the proposed running of 2 steamers on Monday 14th inst… [Lists all new staff employed, as well as all the promotions listed in the previous report, as well as **W. Brown**, promoted from Deck Hand to Mate].
- **Apparent change of plan for North Wharf and staff**: 'On the 15th inst. as a result of an interview, with the Chairman of the Hospitals Committee, these promotions ceased on the 16th inst., the men reverted to their former offices, the time engaged on increase of pay being 3 days only. In accordance with instructions received the whole of the temporary staff engaged for Scarlet Fever preparations ... were given 1 week's notice on Sat 19th inst. to terminate their engagement on the 26th inst.; meanwhile these men are being usefully employed…' Describes the maintenance work on the steamers and North Wharf that they are assigned.
- **Barge of coal for North Wharf steamers**: 'On it being arranged for 2 steamers to run from North Wharf and sever their connection with South Wharf I ordered a 40 ton barge of steam coal to be kept at North Wharf for bunkering purposes …'
- **Scarlet Fever service starts at North Wharf, and wage rates change:** 'Orders having been received last night to commence the service from North Wharf, the Albert Victor was despatched at 10am to be in readiness, this day 22nd inst., the Maltese Cross following later. I have again made the promotions requisite for the manning of these vessels as previously reported, increases of pay commencing from today 22nd inst. In connection with the adoption of the revised scale of wages for the River Service, I desire to place before Committee, that in my opinion this is a very inopportune time to effect the reduction in wages as laid down, and would suggest for to maintain the efficient running of these steamers, the temporary hands engaged, be retained at the rate of wages they received on joining the service…. The permanent staff being all promoted are not effected at present and will only be so in their reverting to the former positions.'

**November 3, 1907**

- **Drunk Deck Hand at North Wharf**: 'On the 29th Oct 3.30pm **J. Facey** Deck Hand (temporary) of the "Albert Victor" applied for admission at North Wharf and in the opinion of the Piermaster was the worse for drink and was refused admission, he however persisted in ringing the bell, so on admission the Piermaster called Dr Cameron's attention to him and he pronounced him unfit for duty and told him to go off the wharf being advised to come to South Wharf and see me, this was not done by Facey but the next morning 10.30am during my visit to North Wharf he called and asked for what money was due him, he was advised to call 9am next day, 31st Oct and on my interviewing him, he again asked for what money was due him and stated that he was not the worse for drink. I told him I was unable to pay him till the case had been put before the Managers, but would let him know their decision as early as possible. Meanwhile on the 31st Oct to prevent any derangement of the Service, I engaged G. Lawrence as Deck Hand to fill this man's place… I would ask therefore if Facey's services are to be retained, or dispensed with, (which later course I strongly recommend) … He in addition to being the worse for drink, having broken his leave and was very disrespectful in his manner.'
- **Staffing at South Wharf**: 'Since the opening of North Wharf, I have been left at South Wharf with 1 Master, 1 Mate and 1 Deck Hand for a smallpox crew, as I thus have no provision for ……[?] relief of Sunday duty, I ask for permission to engage a Deck Hand temporarily…'
- **Delay caused by fog:** 'On the 31st ult. the steamer "Maltese Cross" left North Wharf 6.50pm in clear weather for Long Reach, during the passage down fog came in so dense as to stop all traffic, compelling the Captain to anchor and later make fast to a mooring buoy in Barking Reach, remaining there till 10.20am the next morning, arriving at Long Reach 11.35am.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases sent home = 1
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** taken to Long Reach = 229

**November 18, 1907**

- **Oilskins**: reports on oilskin coats at South Wharf. Notes there are also 24 Crats ??, 7 pairs of leggings and 24 Sou-Westers. The oilskins were received originally in 1902, but had hardly been used - staff explained that they weren't waterproof 'and therefore of no use for the purpose

intended'. On examining them he finds 'that these oilskins are what is termed "badly cured", the oil never having properly dried, resulting in these garments remaining sticky, with portions of the paint and oil adhering to one another, thereby being totally unfit for use as a protection against water…'

- **Staff in army and navy reserve**: 'In connection with the employment of reservists in this Service, I …[?] to state the number employed at the present time is 3, all belonging to the Fleet Reserve, whose drill consists of 1 week per annum, or 2 weeks at any one time in 2 years. One of the men **E. Jasper** has been in this Service nearly 2 years and has done one period of training i.e. (1 week) which was carried out during his term of annual leave … The other 2 men have not performed any training during their employment here, being temporary hands only, engaged for Scarlet Fever work at North Wharf.'
- **Conversion of offices into cubicles**: work completed on 6th November, to convert the previous offices into cubicle accommodation.
- **Completion of work to dolphin**: repair and renewal of dolphin completed on 7th Nov.
- **Deficient soap delivery**: '… 4 doz tablets of toilet soap were received from the contractors … which on being weighed was found deficient in weight to the extent of a ¼ oz each tablet … This firm was communicated with and informed the bulk would be rejected, whereupon 4 tablets were forwarded to make up the deficiency in weight…'
- **Notice given to Scarlet Fever service crews**: notice given to temp. staff employed on the Scarlet Fever service at North Wharf '… unless it was deemed necessary to run the steamers after Sat 23rd inst. with scarlet fever patients, their services will be dispensed with on that date. Notice was also given to permanent staff promoted, as to their reverting to their former positions on the 24th inst.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Long Reach during the fortnight = 0
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** taken to Long Reach in the fortnight = 201

**December 2, 1907**

- **Closure of North Wharf Scarlet Fever Service**: closed for the reception of scarlet fever patients on 23rd Nov. All temporary staff discharged, stores and bedding etc returned, steamers and buildings disinfected, and permanent staff 'reduced to their former ratings'. Some staff retained temporarily, and with the help of some South Wharf staff, employed to carry out the fumigation, for which they 'pasted up all possible sources of leakage, and after a thorough fumigation, removed all paper from windows, doors and apertures...' Also employed them on painting work in the steamers.
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases sent home = 1
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** taken to Long Reach during the fortnight = 26
  **Total number of scarlet fever patients** conveyed from North Wharf**:** 456

# 1907 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Targett**, Harold J; **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James<br>**Allen**, Thomas; **Scales**, Thomas; **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Livett,** George James Robert |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Forbes,** Archibald |

# 1908

***Only one smallpox case all year;***
***new wage scale, conditions and accommodation arrangements for staff.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1908

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1908; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1602)

Page 171

- **Conveyed 814 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 1
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 1
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 13
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 799 (including workmen engaged in building works at the smallpox hospitals conveyed to and from Long Reach each week).
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

Page 184

- **Smallpox admissions and other infectious diseases**: Only one smallpox sufferer admitted to smallpox hospitals during year; otherwise 192 scarlet fever patients treated at Joyce Green Hospital. 7 other patients admitted to South Wharf were diagnosed with other disorders, mostly chickenpox.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1908 Vol. XLII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1908)

Page 9

- **Completion of repairs to dolphins** at South Wharf, by Chafen & Newman.

Page 14

- **Revised wage scales for subordinate staff** to come into operation on 26 Jan 1908

Page 37

- **Additional entrance**: expenditure sanctioned for provision of additional entrance from officers' quarters at South Wharf. [from Works Committee Report dated 5 Feb 1908]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1907-10

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/001)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 13, 1908**

- **New wages scale, and changes of working conditions:** queries this, the interpretation of it, and how some staff will be affected, e.g. the Piermaster – the new contract only allows 10 days annual leave, rather than 14 days with the previous system – '…as these Piermasters are a rank above the ordinary subordinate officer, I would recommend this distinction be recognised and the 14 days continued.' Also points out that the Piermasters' wives at North and West wharves are employed as cleaners, to clean the quarters of the nightwatchman. 'With the advent of the new system, the Nightman becomes non-resident, therefore it will be no longer necessary to retain their services…'

- **Wages for W. Lanyon, Engine Driver**: 'In connection with the Wages Scale I beg to bring to your notice Engine Driver of Launch W. Lanyon, this man joined the service in 1884 as Engine Driver @ £2.10.0 per week and uniform, and has had a varied career as Engine Driver and Stoker according to the requirement of the Service. He has a total period of approximately 8 years as Engine Driver, and on coming under the new scale, I recommend that he starts at the maximum wage …. and uniform.'
- **Baking tins:** required for use in the kitchen of the female staff quarters.
- **Christmas Fare:** reports expenditure for Christmas Fare, including a 13lb turkey.
- **Sick List: F. Showell**, Deck Hand, off 6 days, and **T. Scales**, of 9 days.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Non-smallpox cases sent home = 1

**January 27, 1908**

- **New wages scale – response of staff**: all male staff informed of new wages scale – '…no expression of dissent has been received other than from Asst. Pierman **Jaspar** who being a married man was unable to accept the terms and gave a week's notice… The Piermaster's wives at North and West wharves were also notified of the termination of their appointments as cleaners, but owing to their failing health, the notice has been formally withdrawn in each case.'
- **Change of occupation of staff cottages**: '… I am able to report the vacation of the staff cottages by the tenants under notice and the occupation thereby of each cottage by the tenants in accordance with the re-arrangement as laid down by new regulations, with the exception of Engineer **Masson** who has been unable to take up possession owing to the illness of his wife, but has advised me of so doing early this week.'
- **Repair of clocks**: 'There are a number of clocks (12) belonging to the various quarters and shelters on this wharf out of repair…' Asks for permission to get prices for their repair.
- **Housing for Nightwatchman Targett at North Wharf**: suggests providing accommodation for Nightwatchman Targett (previously Pierman at South Wharf) 'who is married with one in family' at North Wharf for nominal rent, also saving the R.A.S. from paying for the house cleaning.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**February 10, 1908**

- **Illness of West Wharf Night-watchman G. Weeks**: was taken seriously ill while on duty – 'stricken with paralysis down the whole of the right side, and it being a dangerous case, advised his removal to hospital at once…' Taken to West London Hospital.
- **Employment of Piermasters' wives**: further to previous reports on the termination of the North and West Wharf Piermasters' wives (Mrs Deebles and Mrs Connor) employment as cleaners, they were both 'certified as medically unfit for further duty' and arrangements made for them to receive superannuation.
- **Rejection of meat delivery**: 'On Jan 31st the meat supplied by the contractor to this Service J. Wolsey, was found to be short in weight 1 lb, far from clean, and not at all of first class quality; I therefore rejected the whole of the supply and called on the contractor to furnish a supply in accordance with conditions of contract, which was done by him at a later period throughout the day.'
- **Wage rise:** due to **W. Punter**, Master.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**March 9, 1908**

- **Ill nightwatchman discharged**: **G. Weeks**, Nightwatchman at West Wharf, previously struck down ill, notified his appointment would cease. [See report, Feb 10 1908]
- **New staff entrances**: work begun on new staff entrances to South Wharf on 28th Feb.
- **Sick List: W. Kelley**, Mate.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**April 6, 1908**

- **Damage to South Wharf frontage**: on 2nd April, the steamer Ariel of Oskarshamn (Sweden) when taking up her berth at neighbouring Gabriel's Wharf, made fast to one of the mooring rings on the wharf front '…and as the weight increased on the hawser it resulted in the breaking of the iron stock embedded in the front of South Wharf.' Messrs Gabriel agreed to repair the damage.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Non-smallpox cases sent home = 1

**June 1, 1908**

- **Stoker Witton's children sick with scarlet fever**: 'On the 25th, 28th and 31st May respectively 3 children of Stoker Witton who resides at No. 5 Staff Cottages were removed to the Park Hospital suffering from Scarlatina. [scarlet fever] Disinfection has since been carried out.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Detained in shelter and sent home without smallpox = 1

**June 15, 1908**

- **More of Stoker Witton's children sick**: 'On the 2nd and 10th inst. 2 more of Stoker Witton's children were removed to hospital from No. 5 Staff Cottages, suffering from Scarlatina (scarlet fever).'
- **Catering for South Wharf staff**: mentions, in relation to the difficulty of getting South Wharf staff to cover holiday at North and West Wharves, that 'the men at both North and West Wharves "live out" and are not catered for, whereas the staff at South Wharf are catered for…'
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Cases admitted but sent home without smallpox = 1

**July 13, 1908**

- **Resignation of Asst. Pierman Gardner**: left on 11th July.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Cases admitted but sent home without smallpox = 2

**July 27, 1908**

- **New Asst. Pierman**: **E. J. Purser** employed**.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**September 8, 1908**

- **Pontoon painting**: completion of the work to paint the interior of the pontoon.
- **Flour weevils**: 'Of the provisions for staff for the week ending Aug 22nd, 10lbs of flour was found to be bad and quite unfit for use, owing to the prevalence of weevils. This flour had been a long time in stock and was all that remained of a ½ sack received on April 27th last.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**October 5, 1908**

- **Steamer accident**: 'On the night of the 9th Sept the "Geneva Cross" on coming to her bed with the falling tide, suddenly took a sheer on the mud owing to being blown out of her true position with the high wind prevailing at the time and broke a link in the bow mooring chain which resulted in the following damage being done…' [3 items of damage listed]
- **Refusal of contractor to be vaccinated**: Mr Pearson from Rosebery Ave, Finsbury, a potential contractor for the painting work pending at the wharf, visited to inspect the work '…but as he objected to go to the South Eastern Hospital for vaccination purposes, and refused to be vaccinated if a doctor was on the premises, and also refused to wait while telephone communication was made with the S. Eastern Hospital he was not allowed admission to the premises.'
- **Requirements for Scarlet Fever service from North Wharf**: he attended a meeting at the Chief Offices to give 'full particulars as to the requirements necessary for the running of two of these steamers, for the conveyance of Scarlet Fever patients from North Wharf to Long Reach if called on. I then submitted list of promotions and engagements necessary to form two complete crews, and a time stipulation of 48 hours' notice.'
- **Cholera preparations**: 'On the 21st Sept. the staff at this wharf were engaged in the preparation of North Wharf for the reception of cholera patients, and 2 men were sent to North wharf to scrub the female staff quarters out, also the wards, which was completed on the 23rd Sept.' [No further reference to conveying cholera patients – unclear as to whether this was ever done]
- **Sick List: W. Witton**, Stoker, off from Sept 15-24.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Cases admitted but sent home without smallpox = 1

**October 19, 1908**

- **Collision**: 'At 1.50am on 10th inst. the steamer "Agga" of Bergen on leaving Barnards Wharf, collided with the R.A.S. "Red Cross"...' Did several bits of damage.

**November 2, 1908**

- **Damage from speeding vessel**: '…on the 21st ult. the steamer Batavier II of Rotterdam passed South Wharf at such rate of speed that the swell caused the "Geneva Cross" to take a shear at her moorings and break her starboard hawse pipe and indent plate etc.'
- **Porter with poisoned hand**: 'On the 23rd ult. Night Gate Porter **Allen** was unable to come on duty, by reason of a poisoned hand, he was treated that day by Dr Bykes and on the 24th was conveyed to Joyce Green Hospital for treatment.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0

**November 16, 1908**

- **Collision**: on Nov 10th the barge Lossie whilst being towed past South Wharf collided with the Albert Victor, White Cross and Red Cross, doing damage to all three of them.
- **Sick list: J. Allen** returned to duty, after his 'poisoned hand'. [See Nov 2 1908]

**November 30, 1908**

- **Turkey for Christmas**: obtained estimates for the supply of turkey for 'Xmas fare at this institution'.

**December 14, 1908**

- **Sick list: J. Masson**, Engineer
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Detained in shelter but sent home without smallpox = 1

# 1908 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Targett**, Harold J; **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas **Scales**, Thomas; **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest; **Jasper**, Ernest Henry |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Forbes,** Archibald |

# 1909

***Minimal smallpox cases;***
***mud accumulation around pier becoming a problem for the steamers.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1909

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1909; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1603)

Page 173

- **Conveyed 873 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 15
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 10
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 19
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 829
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

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- **Smallpox admissions**: 15 smallpox patients admitted to Joyce Green Hospital; 2 deaths. 12 other patients admitted to South Wharf suffering from other diseases.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1909 Vol. XLIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1909)

Page 193

- **Proposals for improved bathing and changing accommodation for female staff**: current arrangements deemed unsatisfactory; **Dr Ricketts** recommended rearranging the existing accommodation and increasing it by using part of the ground floor of the night nurses' dormitory (including the waiting room) and the building of a box room. Plans submitted, estimate £350. If carried out, a waiting room would need to be provided elsewhere – they propose using part of B shelter. [from Hospitals Committee report dated 30 Sept 1909] Plans subsequently approved – see P. 209, no. 13 Local Government Board letters.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1907-10

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/001)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 11, 1909**

- **Two collisions and an accident on the White Cross:** on 28th Dec the barge Queen of Colchester collided with the White Cross at North Wharf, and on Jan 4 the barge Dart also collided with the White Cross, doing slight damage. On the 30th Dec Piermaster **Deeble** of North Wharf slipped on the deck of the White Cross due to ice 'and has since been incapacitated from duty.'
- **Xmas turkey:** reports expenditure on a 21 ¼ lb turkey.

**January 25, 1909**

- **Barge stuck under West Wharf pier**: on Jan 12, the barge Windermere 'collided with the Pier Brow at West Wharf, thence grounded and remained fast underneath, it being ebb tide at the time, the Pier Brow came down on the barge, which resulted in a portion of brow decking being uplifted…' Damage made good, and no structural damage resulted.

- **Wardmaid pay rates for smallpox and scarlet fever work**: 'I have an application from the Matron with respect to Wardmaid **Louisa Whetstone** who was transferred from Joyce Green Hospital Oct 1907 to South Wharf on Scarlet Fever pay (ie) £20.10.0 per annum and is now requesting to be placed on the Small Pox rate (ie) £22.10.0 per annum…'
- **Pay increase: W. Punter**, Master, entitled to pay increase on completing another year's service.
- **Sick List: Piermaster E. Deeble** of North Wharf returned to duty after his slip on the deck, having been off between Dec 31 and Jan 26.

**March 22, 1909**

- **Staff uniforms**: sent to Dr Ricketts a list of the uniforms as supplied to the male staff, 'with proposals as to winter clothing and name of office on collar and have also suggested some new departures which I think desirable owing to the special nature of the work at this wharf.'
- **Wardmaid K. Moorden** [?] left the service.
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Joyce Green = 2  Cases sent home without smallpox = 1

**April 5, 1909**

- **Messenger J. Rainer on military duty**: requested 6 days leave to attend at Chatham to perform his annual drill in the Fleet Reserve.

**May 3, 1909**

- **Sick list: W. Lanyon**, Engine Driver, off sick with pneumonia.

**May 17, 1909**

- **Damage to mooring and rope**: on 8th May the steamer Thomas Haynes of Grangemouth, on leaving Gabriels Wharf adjoining, did damage to a mooring ring on the wharf front and carried away a rope from the Maltese Cross.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0  Cases sent home without smallpox = 1

**June 14, 1909**

- **Unauthorised vessels in front of South Wharf**: wrote to P.L.A. about the 'accumulation of unauthorised craft in front of South Wharf, and on the 24th ult. the Harbour Master visited South Wharf and I am pleased to report effected a clearance of the boats and barges that were monopolising the wharf frontage.'
- **Front gates damaged and repaired**: entrance gates repaired and repainted, after being damaged by the bread contractors' hand cart.
- **Change of Pierman**: Asst. Pierman **Purser** resigned; replaced by **G. Edwards**, 'late of H.M. Service, holding an exemplary discharge.'
- **Concerns about new wages scale**: 'In connection with the new Wages Scale now to be enforced, there are several changes introduced that vitally affect this service – deeming it advisable that there ….. [?] alterations should be brought to your notice…it being my opinion that these changes will disturb and detract from the efficiency of this particular service.'

**July 12, 1909**

- **His own child sick with diphtheria**: 'On the 2nd July one of my children aged 6 years was removed from my quarters suffering from Diphtheria and conveyed to the South Eastern Hospital for treatment.  Disinfection being proceeded with later on, under my direction.'

**July 26, 1909**

- **Inches confused for feet**: on ordering two sheets of lead for the Deck House of the Albert Victor, 'I regret to report that owing to a clerical error made by the Clerk when entering the requirements in the book, 2 sheets of lead 24' x 6' were requisitioned when 2 sheets of lead 24" x 6' was the quantity required.  The error being that one stroke thus ' denoting feet was placed over the 24, instead of two strokes thus " denoting inches.  As this escaped my notice, delivery was made at the Gate on the 21st when upon examination it was found to be in excess of the quantity required…'
- **Deck Hand W. Livett attends inquest**: had 3 ½ hours leave on the 19th to attend an inquest.

**September 6, 1909**

- **Damage to piling**: '…on Aug. 20th the "Geneva Cross" on coming to the ground at low water took a sheer on the mud and in so doing started and damaged the pile holding the travelling irons by which the vessel is kept moored...' Survey showed the pile needed to be renewed as well as the broken iron work.
- **Pierman taken to hospital**: On the 6th of Sept G. Edwards, Asst. Pierman, 'complained of feeling unwell and unable to continue at duty, after my consulting Dr Swainston, he was removed to the South Eastern Hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Cases sent home without smallpox = 1

**October 4, 1909**

- **Pierman returns from hospital:** Asst. Pierman **G. Edwards** returned to duty on Sept 13 after having been at the South Eastern Hospital. [See Sept 6, 1909]
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Long Reach = 1

**October 18, 1909**

- **Accumulation of mud at South Wharf**: 'Taking advantage of it being "Low Water" during the Committee's visit to South Wharf, I would like to draw the Managers' attention, to the accumulation of mud in the vicinity of South Wharf. This matter was reported by me in 1904, and … I obtained the co-operation of the proprietors of the neighbouring wharves … in signing a petition to the Conservators of the River Thames, asking that steps be taken to remedy the matter, in reply to which the Conservators briefly stated they could take no action in the removal of mud etc. As the vessels alongside the pontoon are now aground for over 2 hours at Low Water (Springs) and over 1 hour at (Neap) tides, coupled with the risk of a vessel sliding when taking the ground at her moorings, I again bring these facts to your notice, with the proposal that the attention of the new Port of London Authority be drawn to the great increase of mud here and that some action be taken for its removal.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** taken to Long Reach = 2

**November 1, 1909**

- **Bath and change room accommodation**: the Chairman of the Hospitals Committee and Dr Downes, S.G.B. Inspector, visited South Wharf regarding this.
- **Wardmaid E. Aylett taken ill:** '…was conveyed to Long Reach by the White Cross, for medical treatment at Joyce Green.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Cases sent home without smallpox = 1
  Detained in shelters = 1

**November 15, 1909**

- **Mud accumulation at South Wharf**: reply received from P.L.A that they 'decline to undertake the removal of the increased deposit of mud at South Wharf.' Makes some alternative suggestions, but this paragraph has been crossed out and marked 'cancelled'.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 4 Cases sent home without smallpox = 1

**November 29, 1909**

- **Dis-equipment of North Wharf**: male staff were engaged on the 'disequipment of North Wharf, all the furniture and effects on loan from South Wharf and Joyce Green being packed where requisite and subsequently transferred to South Wharf and Long Reach…'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1

**December 13, 1909**

- **Barge stuck at West Wharf pier**: on 1st Dec the barge Tyne collided with West Wharf pier and remained fast until 2.45am the following day, doing damage to the pier brow and wharf frontage.
- **Sick list: T. Scales**, Foreman Porter.
- **Management of West Wharf**: received phone call from Mr Jones of the Ambulance Dept, 'proposing to take over the management of W. Wharf from the 26th inst. I would therefore like to be instructed if the W. Wharf is to remain under my supervision for upkeep and repair, etc.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 1

**December 26, 1909**

- **Collision**: on 9th Dec the barge Percy did slight damage to the Geneva Cross.
- **Curtains for female staff quarters**: received instructions to fit curtains to the staircase windows of the female staff quarters.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2

# 1909 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas<br>**Scales**, Thomas; **Roche**, James |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |

# 1910

***Minimal smallpox cases; new staff changing and bathing accommodation***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1910

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1910; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1604)

Page 107

- **Staff bathing and changing facilities**: mention of provision of additional staff bathing and changing accommodation at South Wharf

Page 163

- **Conveyed 457 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 7
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 11
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 37
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 402
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

Page 199

- **Smallpox admissions**: 7 patients admitted to Joyce Green Hospital during year; all recovered. 3 other patients admitted to South Wharf not suffering from smallpox.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1910 Vol. XLIV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1910)

Page 161

- **Additional staff bathing and changing accommodation**: estimates given, totalling £400.

Page 224

- **Telephone** bell and indicator ordered, 'to prevent a recurrence of a difficulty which has recently been experienced in communicating with South Wharf at night'.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1907-10

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/001)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 10, 1910**

- **Wardmaid Aylett recovered**: had been sent to Joyce Green Hospital 'for medical treatment' on Dec 28, returned to duty on Jan 8.
- **Pay increase:** due for **W. Punter**, Master.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 3

**January 24, 1910**

- **Piermaster Gardner's birth certificate**: obtained his birth certificate as requested by the Clerk of the Board, verifying his date of birth as Jan 23, 1847.

**February 21, 1910**

- **Accommodation for painters**: painting work about to commence – the painters were to be accommodated at the wharf and 'their rations are to be provided by the Board. Asks for permission to employ a Messman 'for the purpose of attending on these men, both as to their meals and sleeping accommodation.'
- **Fatty bacon**: 'On the 14th inst. the bacon supplied by the contractor Mr G. Leurney [?] was rejected, it being excessively fat and not suitable for our requirements, it was satisfactorily replaced later in the day with a supply of leaner bacon quite up to Contract conditions.'
- **Visit from Captain St Vincent Nepean**: on 12th Feb visited South Wharf.
- **Sick List: J. Masson**, Engineer and **W. Kelly**, Mate. **W. Witton** returned from sick leave.
- **Gale damage**: in the gale on Feb 20 roof slates were blown from the Medical Officers' Quarters.

**March 7, 1910**

- **Tainted meat**: meat supplied by the contractor was found to be 'unclean and tainted' and was rejected, but replaced satisfactorily.
- **Painters accommodated at wharf**: painting and cleaning work had commenced, with 12 men being boarded at the wharf.
- **Enamelled number plates for wards**: required in order the distinguish the wards in D Shelter and the Receiving Room – submitted price details.
- **Report on depth of water at South Wharf**: 'In connection with the copy of **Captain St Vincent Nepean's** report, on the depth of water at South Wharf, which was handed me at the last meeting, I would like to make the following observations. That on the 12th Feb, the tide at low water was 1'-6" to 1'-8" higher than the tide at low water on the 13th, 14th and 15th Feb. That the figures recorded are only those of the maximum water to be found…' [etc].

**March 21, 1910**

- **Piling fixed:** work of renewing the damaged pile at the lower dolphins was completed.
- **Visit from Captain St Vincent Nepean**: on March 13 he made another visit to South Wharf.

**April 4, 1910**

- **Collisions**: on 31st March the barge Joseph collided with the Geneva Cross and slightly indented the port bow plate. And on 1st April 'owing to the high wind blowing, the White Cross on coming to her berth, took a shear and broke off 2 stanchions of her handrailing.'

**April 18, 1910**

- **Deckhand overboard**: 'On the 5th inst. **W. Livett**, Deckhand whilst assisting in raising [a] small boat from the water, on to the wharf frontage, by hand crane, slipped from [the] boat and fell in the river, he was immediately rescued, and after taking a hot bath and receiving a dry change of clothing, he resumed duty being none the worse for the immersion.'
- **Thomas Scales' brother ill**: Foreman Porter Thomas Scales was granted leave of absence on April 14 and didn't return until the 17th – a telegram was received stating "Unable to return, sickness at home" – later explained his brother was ill.

**June 14, 1910**

- **Resignation of J. Rayner, Messenger**: whilst on leave he sent a letter of resignation 'stating that owing to the death of his father he was unable to resume his duties etc at the wharf.' Proposes engaging an Asst. Pierman to take on these duties.
- **Resignation of Kitchenmaid K. Johnson**: left on 25th of May.
- **Upholstering of bedding**: requisitioned Darenth Asylum for 4 mattresses to be re-carded and re-ticked and for 1 mattress and 1 bolster to be reduced in size and re-ticked.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Cases sent home without smallpox = 2

**June 27, 1910**

- **Kitchen range in male staff quarters**: kitchen range cracked and broken and 'entirely unfit for use'; obtained estimates for a replacement.
- **New Asst. Pierman: E. Lake** employed on June 27.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 3

**July 12, 1910**

- **Retirement of Master W. Punter**: on having reached the age limit of 65. To replace him, proposes promotions, i.e. of **W Kelly**, Mate to Master, **C. Digby**, Senior Deckhand to Mate, and **F. Showell**, Deck Hand to Senior Deck Hand. '**W. Kelly** joined the service 1883 and has held the post of Master on two previous occasions. Age: 53. **C. Digby** joined the service 1893 and has held the post of Mate on 5 occasions. Age 37.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Cases sent home without smallpox = 1

**September 5, 1910**

- **Collisions**: on Aug 25 the barge *Albany* collided with the White Cross, damaging the rails and stanchions. On Aug 26th and Sept 2nd respectively the Red Cross received damage to its sponson and curtain board when the barges *Martha* and *Jason* collided with it when moored at North Wharf.
- **Female staff bathing accommodation**: work began on altering the female staff bathing accommodation. The workmen were accommodated at the wharf and a messman employed 'to attend to the men's messing and sleeping accommodation whilst living in'.
- **Promotions and Staff Cottages: W. Kelley** on being promoted to Master commenced occupation of no. 7 staff cottages (at 9s per week rental) as vacated by **W. Punter** who'd retired. **F. Showell**, Senior Deckhand, took over occupation of No. 4 Cottage (at 7s per week rental).
- **Sick stoker: Chas Denny,** Stoker, off work 4 days with diarrhea.
- **New deckhand: Frederick Charles Fainton** employed as Deck Hand.

*Reports for 1910 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1910-14

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/002)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**October 3, 1910**

- **Damage to steamer**: 'On Sept 22nd the Geneva Cross took a shear on the mud at low water and carried away the bow moorings, doing damage to same and stern gangway…'
- **Furniture for staff quarters**: gives list of furniture needed for the male and female staff quarters at North and South Wharves - '11 chests of drawers, 9 washstands, 25 chairs, 35 soiled linen baskets, 6 bedside lockers (patients), 4 hanging mirrors, 17 swing mirrors. Mr Ricketts has advised me that all the above articles can be transferred from Long Reach…'
- **Repair of laundry baskets**: states that 11 laundry baskets are in need of repair - asks if this can be undertaken at Darenth Asylum.

**October 17, 1910**

- **Collision**: 'On the 16th inst. slight damage was done to the "Albert Victor"s bulwarks by the barge "James"…'

**October 31, 1910**

- **Gardening, and manure from ambulance station stables**: requests 8 loads of virgin soil to be distributed over the flower beds. Also requests manure for the garden, and having enquired with the ambulance stations regarding disposal of manure from their stables, proposes an arrangement with them to send over 2 loads a week.
- **Collision**: 'On 25th Oct the barge "Truth" …. collided with the White Cross, doing damage to the rails and stanchions etc…'

**November 14, 1910**

- **Washroom crockery needed**: the furniture previously requested from Long Reach had been received, 'however to make these quarters ready for occupation an outfit of crockery ware must be provided, consisting of 1 doz. Ewers, 1 doz wash basins, 1 ½ doz soap dishes and covers.'

**December 12, 1910**

- **Collision**: 'On the 4th inst. the barge "Will" owned by W. Sparks, Limehouse, was adrift in the river and collided with the Maltese Cross doing damage to the port, bow etc…'
- **New bathing and change room accommodation**: on the 9th December this work was completed, having taken 16 weeks and 4 days – twice as long as the contract period.

# 1910 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas<br>**Scales**, Thomas; **Roche**, James; **Rainer**, John Poynter |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Witton**, William |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson,** John |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |

# 1911

***Brief increase in smallpox – otherwise minimal; mud accumulation around pontoon becomes an increasing problem***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1911

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1911; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1605)

Page 68

- **Motorised ambulances**: '...The substitution of motor for horse traction was completed at the Eastern station...and at the South-Eastern Station...'

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- **Conveyed 497 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 61
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 50
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 21
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 365
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross and Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1911 Vol. XLV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1911)

Page 93

- **Accumulation of mud on South Wharf foreshore**: Detailed report on the ongoing mud problem – 'For some years the mud on the foreshore in the vicinity of South Wharf has been greatly increasing, and the question of dealing with it has been under our consideration from time to time…' In 1905 a petition signed by the M.A.B. and other wharf owners was presented to the Thames Conservancy, who replied that 'they did not see their way to do so' [the dredging] themselves. In 1909 'our attention was drawn to the inconvenience caused by this accumulation' especially if there were to be another epidemic; the PLA were asked to deal with it, but declined to, though stated they could arrange for it to be carried out at the M.A.B.'s expense (the M.A.B. having obtained an engineer's report estimating £750 for the dredging work required). The M.A.B. decided not to pursue this at that time. 'The chief officer [**Mr Sullivan**] now informs us that the mud has lately considerably increased, and has prepared a return for the times that the "Albert Victor" (the steamer at present being used for conveying patients to Long Reach) has been aground daily from 1 to 6 March, these times varying from 1 hour 55 minutes to 3 hours 20 minutes. This might lead to considerable delay in the transmission to Long Reach of patients and might even necessitate their remaining at South Wharf till the following day. The immediate cause of the recent increase is, we understand, the erection by the Port of London Authority, within the last two years, close to South Wharf, of a jetty which forms a screen and diverts the current from the foreshore towards the centre of the river. This has the effect of causing slack water at the wharf and a consequent increase in the rate of accumulation of the mud.' The PLA informed them 'that they have no duty or liability to clear mud from frontages', so it was recommended that the PLA 'be asked to arrange forthwith for the removal, at the Managers expense, of the mud in the vicinity of the pontoon at South Wharf'.

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- **Further consideration of the need for dredging mud around wharf:** as the PLA was about to undertake extensive dredging works which 'would have material effect in reducing the accumulation at the Managers' pontoon', it was decided not to proceed with dredging at South Wharf yet but to

wait to see the effects of this, and in the case of another smallpox outbreak, were assured by the PLA that the necessary dredging could be arranged at short notice.

Page 197

- **Superannuation of William Lanyon**: consideration of superannuation allowance of Mr Lanyon, engine driver of launch, about to retire at 65 after 26 years of service, having been appointed in 1884 as engine driver.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1910-14

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/002)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 23, 1911**

- **Fittings for new bathing and change rooms**: requests a list of fittings, including 15 enamelled number plates for lockers, tubing for curtain rods, curtain hooks, bath-room chairs, mirrors etc.
- **Land Registry inspector**: on 11th Jan an inspector from the Land Registry visited to take measurements and particulars of the staff cottages.
- **Nurse Grissell**: enquiry about her pay.

**February 6, 1911**

- **Collision**: 'On 30th Jan the barge Favourite … collided with the "Maltese Cross" and damaged the paddle box …'
- **Petition about mud accumulation**: '…a petition was received from Messrs Burt Bolton & Haywood, timber merchants, re the accumulation of mud on the river frontage in this neighbourhood … and a request was made for the Managers' support.'

**February 20, 1911**

- **Repair of dolphins at North Wharf**: states these dolphins were erected in 1884, 27 years previously, and details their defective condition and proposes plans for their repair.
- **Sick list: W. Livett** off for 5 days with bronchial catarrh.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 3

**March 6, 1911**

- **Preparations for influx of patients**: cleaning and painting of C shelter completed, and received patients into it the following day. Prepared list of staff promotions and appointments necessary should a 2nd steamer need to be put into use.
- **Death of patient at wharf**: 'On Feb 28th a patient named Rosina Oakley who was admitted from Mile End Infirmary Feb 25 died at the wharf 6am and the body was removed to the South Eastern Hospital for interment the same day. I have 1 wedding ring the property of deceased in my possession and ask for instructions as to its disposal.'
- **Mud accumulation**: 'In connection with the accumulation of mud at South Wharf, I submit a return of the time [sic] the "Albert Victor" (the steamer used for the conveyance of patients) has been aground and entirely unavailable for the transport of patients during the past week, this vessel is moored outside the pontoon and at dead low water spring tides, is dry at the forward end from the inside Paddle Box right round to the outside Paddle Box, and as will be seen by the return is aground at the most vital time of the day namely from 8 to 10. I have purchased 2 ordnance maps (herewith) and marked out Low-water mark, ordinary spring tide on the 2nd inst., by reference it will be seen that the low water mark has receded 150 feet since 1896 (ie) 15 years. I laid these particulars before Mr Duncombe Mann yesterday afternoon and as a result he is of opinion that there is nothing else for it but to dredge and he will communicate to the Committee accordingly.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 47 Transferred to Brook Hospital = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned home = 5 Deceased = 1

**March 20, 1911**

- **Lull in admissions**: 'Owing to the lull in admissions to the wharf during the past fortnight, I find it will not be necessary to engage the 2 relief hands…'
- **Grass cutting machine**: 'As the grass cutting machine here is out of order and requires new cutters I have obtained an estimate for the supply of new cutters…'
- **Deceased patient's wedding ring**: 'The wedding ring the personal property of Rosina Oakley (deceased) was sent to the Guardians of Mile End Union on the 15th…' [see March 6, 1911]
- **Supplies**: petty cash payments include deliveries of cream, bread, milk, fish, lymph, and meat.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 9 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 4 Detained in shelter = 1

**April 4, 1911**

- **Visit by Medical Officers:** on March 31 ten medical officers visited South Wharf and were then conveyed to Long Reach by steamer.
- **Nurses transferred:** Asst. Nurses **Shea** and **Hill** were transferred to Grove Hospital, and Asst. Nurse **Hubbard** was transferred to the Brook Hospital.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Transferred to South Eastern Hospital = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 3

**May 1, 1911**

- **Damage to steamer**: 'On the 1st April the Maltese Cross on coming to her berth took a shear on the mud which resulted in breaking the port mooring bollard…'
- **New staff uniform regulations**: 'I submit herewith particulars of the manner in which the new uniform regulations affect the staff of this service. The main points of objection being:
  Winter or summer uniform is to be issued only once in 9 months, the effect of this will be that the winter uniform will be worn in the summer and summer uniform in the winter, this being essentially a waterside industry. I ask that the old system of issue once in 6 months may be continued.
  Master of Steamer Serge is to be provided now instead of blue cloth, serge not being a suitable material for carrying the gold distinguishing stripes on the arms, it would be preferable to continue the blue cloth. No overcoat is now allowed he Masters. Overcoats are to be provided in the Store but it is not desirable in the interests of discipline, that the Master should be allowed a similar coat to the Night Watchman. It is observed that in the case of the "Exmouth" overcoats have been added to the Scale Master of Brigantine and Stoker inclusive.
  Gate Porter A frock coat is to be provided for the Gate Porter similar to the large hospitals, but as the actual gate duties here are comparatively very light, he is held responsible for the upkeep of the garden and grounds of the wharf. A frock coat would be unsuitable for this work and would recommend him receiving the same uniform as the Night Gate Porter. (New Scale).
  Carpenter and Fitter No uniform is now allowed by the new scale, by the old scale these artisans were provided with overalls and uniform, their duties taking them to the centres of infection [I] would recommend uniform being retained.'
- **Resignation**: Kitchen Maid **K. Burke**.
- **Sick List:** Engine Driver **W. Lanyon**.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 2 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 2

**May 29, 1911**

- **Order for flags**: submits estimates for flags required, i.e. 1 set of Commercial Code Signal Flags, 2 Union Jacks, 1 White Ensign, and 1 St George, and also estimates for hiring flags for 2 days.
- **Rejected meat**: '…the meat supplied by J. Wolsey, Contractor, was rejected, being stale and maggoty. It was removed and satisfactorily replaced.'

**June 12, 1911**

- **Testing of new patient trolley**: new 4-wheeled stretcher trolley tested – 'At South Wharf an adult was placed on the trolley, as from the ambulance door, then taken to the receiving room and conveyed down the Pier-Brow at dead low water, with the greatest convenience and safety, the patient thus being in no way disturbed from leaving the ambulance till placed on the steamer.' It was further tested at Joyce Green, and Dr Ricketts made suggestions on its design.
- **Supplies delivered**: petty cash payments include vegetables and fruit, and ice from Carlo Gatti.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**June 26, 1911**

- **Retirement of W. Lanyon and promotion of J. Hellyer**: W. Lanyon, Engine Driver, was due to retire on August 1st upon reaching the age limit. Proposes that J. Hellyer, currently employed as stoker, be promoted to Engine Driver of Launch to replace him. 'Hellyer has been in the service of the Board for 16 years, 2 years of which he was employed as Engine Driver when occasion required. He is a capable and qualified man and [I] can recommend the appointment.'
  Points out that Lanyon's case is similar to that of **W. Punter**, Master of Steamer who was pensioned the previous August. 'Lanyon was engaged 25th Dec 1884 as Engine Driver @ £2.10.0 per week, but owing to the reduction of staff from time to time, has had to serve as Stoker (34s) and Engine Driver of Launch (39s) for the past 5 years. In Punter's case a sufficient number of years was added to make the amount of pension equal to the sum that would have been obtained if employed for the whole of the last 5 years at the rate of his original engagement.'
- **Work clothing**: requests 6 duck suits for Piermen and Asst. Piermen, and 8 dungaree suits for Engine Room staff.
- **Resignation of nurse**: Asst. Nurse **E. Woolhouse**

**July 10, 1911**

- **Child of Mate sick with scarlet fever**: 'On the 22nd June one of the children of C. Digby, Mate residing at No. 3 Staff Cottages, was removed to the South-Eastern Hospital suffering from Scarlet Fever. Disinfection was carried out by the Local Authorities.'
- **Transfer of nurse: A. Tow**, Asst. Nurse, transferred to the T.S. Exmouth Infirmary.

**July 24, 1911**

- **Collision**: 'On the 11th inst. the steamer "Dicky" collided with the Albert Victor, doing damage to bulwarks and stanchions etc…'

**September 4, 1911**

- **Vermin found in staff cottage**: while the cleaning and painting work was being carried out at the staff cottages '… my attention was called to the existence of vermin in the bedroom of No. 5 Cottage, occupied by Stoker **Witton**, upon my visiting the room I drew Mrs Witton's attention to the fact, who in explanation stated it was due to her recent illness. I thereon telephoned the circumstances to Dr Ricketts, suggesting fumigation which being approved, Sulphur fumigation was carried out forthwith to all the rooms, with the exception of kitchen and scullery.'
- **Work accident**: 'On Aug 3rd whilst Night Watchman Russell was washing down the decks of the steamers, he trod on the hose coupling and being barefooted injured his ankle. Russell was off duty in consequence, from the 3rd to 19th August suffering from sprained ankle. The accident was reported under the Workmen's Compensation Act … full pay was granted for the whole period of absence (ie) 16 days.'
- **Pay increases: W. Kelly**, Master, **C. Digby**, Mate, and **F. Fainton**, Deckhand, all due pay increases on completion of 12 months' service.
- **Resignation of William Lanyon:** retired on superannuation on July 31. **J. Hellyer**, Stoker, promoted to Engine Driver of Launch to replace him. [See June 26, 1911]
- **New garden seats**: 3 garden seats for use on the wharf were received.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 2

**October 2, 1911**

- **Stoker Witton moves out of his cottage**: 'On Sept 9th Stoker Witton was given notice to vacate No. 5 Cottage and on the 16th he left the cottage and handed over possession, during the ensuing week fumigation was carried out, the skirting boards released in all rooms and 2 distinct fumigations performed, thence finally scrubbed out. In view of this house being occupied by a new tenant, I would ask for Committee's consideration, to this house being cleaned and painted internally …'
- **Sick List: F. Fainton**, Deck Hand, sick with diarrhea.
- **New staff: W. H. Hobbs** employed as Charge Stoker, and **E. Palmer** as Wardmaid.
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**October 16, 1911**

- **Rental of staff cottages, and staff changes for North Wharf**: mentions that at South Wharf, the staff cottages are rented at 7s per week, in a report about accommodation for the new North Wharf Piermaster; describes the pay and 'emoluments' received as part of the job, costs of washing etc. Gives basic employment details of the men concerned, **H. Targett** being recommended for Piermaster at North Wharf, and **J. MacMahon**, Pierman at South Wharf, recommended for Nightwatchman at North Wharf. 'H. Targett, entered the Exmouth as a boy, was Captain's Clerk there for the last 2 years and has held various offices in the River Service since 1901. J. MacMahon joined this service Mar. 1902 as Asst. Pierman and promoted to Pierman 1908 a total of 9 ½ years, is married and a reliable man for the post.' Proposes then to promote Asst. Pierman **G. Edwards** to Pierman at South Wharf.
- **Inspection by Managers**: on 12th Oct the White Cross went to Temple Pier and returned to South Wharf with Mr Benson and Mr Bevan, Managers, who inspected the steamers, buildings and plant.
- **Nightwatchman ill**: 'On the 16th inst. **J. Allen** Night Watchman was sent to the South E. Hospital, for medical treatment, and upon examination by Dr Cameron was found to be suffering from Erysipeles in the face and on Dr Cameron's instructions, Allen is now warded in A Shelter, South Wharf.'

**October 30, 1911**

- **Ground surface outside staff cottages**: currently covered with gravel, propose to tar it over to make it a more solid surface.
- **Cleaning and painting of staff cottages**: completed, and No. 5 Cottage being worked on to be ready for occupation by Stoker **Hobbs**.
- **Nightwatchman recovered**: nightwatchman **J. Allen** returned to duty after being ill with Erysipeles.
- **Dredging**: 'In connection with the promised dredging of the River in the neighbourhood of South Wharf, a dredger owned by the Port of London Authority commenced work last Friday 27th inst. and is now dredging about 300 yard from South Wharf.'
- **No. of patients** taken to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**November 13, 1911**

- **Stoker Hobbs moves in:** now in occupation of No. 5 Cottage, at 7s per week rent.
- **Staff changes**: all the staff changes proposed in October 16th's report take place, and new Asst. Pierman **J. Dockery** employed.

**November 27, 1911**

- **Uniform for stoker**: asks about a uniform for the new stoker. States that stokers are non-resident, and 'in the opinion of the Medical Officer not adequately protected from infection without uniform'.
- **Flooring in Medical Officer's House**: mentions there is terrazzo flooring in the passage, covered with cork lino which needs replacing.
- **Collision**: 'On the 24th inst. the barge Sarah … collided with the Maltese Cross damaging mooring bollard and sponson deck …'
- **Dredging**: 'The Port of London Authority's dredger recently reported at work about 300 yards south of this wharf, is now working its way in a southerly direction away from South Wharf and the prospects of any relief from the accumulation of mud by dredging in the vicinity of South Wharf, as held out by the Port of London Authority seem very remote.'
- **Tainted meat**: 'On the 18th inst. the meat supplied by the Contractor A. Wolsey being tainted, it was rejected, on a further supply being received in replacement, that was also found to be badly tainted, and upon the contractor failing to make further supply purchase was made against him, the extra cost incurred 1/1 being charged against him.'
- **Nurse transferred: E. Grissell** transferred to N. Western Hospital.

**December 11, 1911**

- **Retirement of Piermaster Gardner**: 'On Jan 23rd 1912 Piermaster Gardner upon reaching the age limit of 65, will leave the service on superannuation, his record of service at South Wharf on that date amounting to 27 years 6 months 27 days. Gardner however, states his service for the Board is 30 ½ years, he having served as Head Ship-Keeper on the hospital ships from July 20th 1881 until his transfer to South Wharf as Piermaster June 27th 1884 …'

- **Spark catchers on chimneys**: 'It has hitherto been the practice to provide wire guards (spark catchers) to the chimneys of the buildings here, looking towards the adjoining wharf (a timber and creosote works); at the present time 1 guard remains out of 14…' Asks if these should be replaced.
- **Nurse accident**: 'On Dec 5th Ward Sister **E. Hughes** was removed to the South Eastern Hospital for treatment for accident, having slipped off a chair whilst dusting the dispensary on Nov 30th and slipped on terrazzo Sunday Dec 3rd.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Ward Maid **B. Shaw** resigned. Nurse **E. Grissell** transferred back to South Wharf from the N. Western Hospital.

# 1911 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas<br>**Ricketts**, Thomas Frank; **Scales**, Thomas; **Edwards**, George; **Roche**,James |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Witton**, William |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson,** John |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Punter,** William George |

# 1911 Census

Transcription of census, taken on 2 April 1911, for South Wharf properties:

Name; Age; Mar. Status; Occupation + Industry/Service ; Birthplace

All the following (except for the patient listed) 'Employed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board for Smallpox Service and River Ambulance Work'

South Wharf

James **Roche**; 40; Single; Senior Clerk; R.A.S. Institution; Liscarroll, Cork
Frank **Gardner**; 64; Widower; Piermaster; ?, Middlesex
Thomas **Allen**; 42; Single; Gate Porter; Hayes, Middlesex
John **McMahon**; 37; Married; Pierman; Kildysart, Clare (Ireland)
Thomas **Scales**; 38; Single; Foreman Porter; Islington, London
Ernest **Lake**; 32; Single; Assistant Pierman; Penge, Surrey
George **Edwards**; 27; Single; Assistant Pierman; Kew, Middlesex

Ella **Ellis**; 37; Single; Housekeeper; Manchester
Elizabeth **Crissell**; 34; Single; Hospital Nurse; City [?] Middlesex, London
Jessie **Millson**; 38; Single; Hospital Nurse; Cold Ash, Berks
Jemina **Warby**; 37; Single; Hospital Nurse; Middlesborough, Yorks
Beatrice **Shaw**; 24; Single; Ward Maid; Islington, Middlesex/London
Margaret **Webber**; 22; Single; Ward Maid; Chelmsford, Essex
Louisa **Whetstone**; 23; Single; Ward Maid; Charlton, Kent
Dorothy **Palmer**; 22; Single; Ward Maid; Epsom, Sussex [?]
Edith **Palmer**; 20; Single; Ward Maid; Charlton, Kent
Katherine **Burke**; 21; Single; Kitchen Maid; Wicklow (Ireland)

Jane **Neldon / Needon** [?] [patient]; 27; Married – 7 years, 1 child; French Polisher – Furniture Dealers; ?, Middlesex

Number of rooms:
Male Staff Quarters = 28
Female Staff Quarters = 50
Small Pox Wards = 18

| | Name; relationship to Head of Family; Age; Mar. Status; Occupation etc; Birthplace |
|---|---|
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: (6 rooms) | **Clement Ernest Sullivan**; Head; 44; Married; Engineer by profession, now Chief Officer, River Ambulance Service – Transport of Infectious Patients, Metropolitan Asylums Board; St Heliers, Jersey.<br>Helen Sullivan; Wife; 37; Married 12 years, 3 children, born alive; Southampton<br>Helen Marguarite Sullivan; Daughter; 10; School; Southampton, Hants.<br>Lilian Madge Sullivan; Daughter; 7; Cardiff, S. Wales.<br>Clementina Maud Sullivan; Daughter; 4; Ashford, Kent.<br>Louisa Martyr Gardiner; Sister; 31; Married 2 years, 1 child, born alive; Southampton<br>Clement Ernest Gardiner; Nephew; 1; Johannesburg (S. Africa) |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **Henry Bird;** Head; 60; Married; Pensioner and N. Gate Porter, M.A.B.; Enfield, Middx<br>Caroline Bird; Wife; 54; Married 17 years, 1 child, born alive; City of London.<br>Percival Bird; Son; 21; Single: Mining Company Clerk; Bow, London<br>Rosa May Bird; Daughter; 16; Single; School; Rotherhithe, Surrey. |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **Charles Digby**, Head; 39; Married; Waterman & Lighterman, River Ambulance M.A.B. Asylums Board; Woolwich, Kent.<br>Sarah Digby; Wife; 34; Married 14 years, 9 children born – 6 living, 3 dead; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>Sydney Digby; Son; 12; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>Elsie Digby; Daughter; 10; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>Doris Digby; Daughter; 7; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>Florence Digby; Daughter; 6; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>William Digby; Son; 5; Rotherhithe, Surrey<br>Fredrick Digby; Son; 1; Rotherhithe, Surrey |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **Frederick James Showell**; Head; 40; Married; Thames Waterman, Metro. Asy. Board; Greenwich, Kent.<br>Charlotte Showell; Wife; 32; Married 5 years, 2 children born and still living; Port. Vale Common [?], Herts.<br>Harold George Showell; Son; 15; Single; Office Boy, Daily Newspaper Office; Greenwich, Kent.<br>William Frederick Showell; Son; 13; School; Greenwich, Kent<br>Florence Ida Showell; Daughter; 10; School; Greenwich, Kent<br>Herbert Leonard Showell; Son; 4; Greenwich, Kent<br>Winifred Alice Showell; Daughter; 2; Greenwich, Kent |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **William Witton**; Head; 55; Married; Stoker; M.A.B. ; Wittlesham, Suffolk<br>Caroline Witton; Wife; 44; Married 28 years, 10 children born, 8 still alive, 2 dead; Rotherhithe.<br>Elizabeth Witton; Daughter; 18; Single; Tailoress, Army Clothes Maker; Rotherhithe<br>Ethel Daisy Witton; Daughter; 15; Single; Brass Polisher, General Engineers; Deptford<br>Caroline Charlotte Witton; Daughter; 13; Deptford<br>Rose Maryam Witton; Daughter; 11; Deptford<br>Charles Edgar Witton; Son; 8; Deptford<br>Frederick John Witton; Son; 6; Deptford<br>Dorothy Ena Witton; Daughter; 3; Deptford |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **John Masson**; Head; 40; Married; Marine Engineer, Metropolitan Asylums Board; Fetteresso, Kincardinshire [form signed: 'John Stewart Anderson Smith Masson']<br>Annie Masson; Wife; 34; Married 11 years, 3 children born, all still alive; Fetteresso, Kincardinshire<br>John Masson; Son; 8; School; Greenwich<br>Annie Masson; Daughter; 5; School; Greenwich<br>Jessie Masson; Daughter; 4; Greenwich |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: (5 rooms) | **William Kelley**; Head; 54; Married; Captain of River Ambulance Service Steam Boats, Metropolitan Asylums Board; County of Middlesex, Parish of St Mary<br>Susannah Kelley; Wife; 40; Married 12 years, 1 child born and still living; County of Dorset, St Georges Parish, Portland<br>Percy Kelley; Son; 11; School; County of Surrey, London |

# 1912

***Minimal smallpox cases; all M.A.B. road ambulances motorised.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1912

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1912; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1606)

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- **Changeover from horse-drawn to motorised ambulances in the M.A.B.**: 'The year 1912 will be notable in the history of the ambulance service as the year during which the substitution of motor for horse traction throughout the service was completed. The 14th September was the last day on which horses were employed. The change has been gradually made, as we were anxious to avoid any interference with the work of the service; and, moreover, desired to sell our stock of horse-drawn vehicles to the best advantage. As the change proceeded we had to face the difficulty of obtaining competent motor drivers, who could also be relied upon to undertake the careful removal of patients to and from the ambulances by stretcher, carrying-chair, or in arms. We, therefore, considered it expedient to cause such of our older coachmen who exhibited aptitude for motor work to go through a course of training in motor driving at the Western Station. All these men were well acquainted with the districts in which they would have to drive and were already trained in the handling of patients. They were subsequently tested by our Engineer-in-Charge and, with few exceptions, gave satisfactory proof of capacity as motor drivers. We thus avoided the unpleasant duty of dismissing old servants of the Board. At an early stage we were impressed with the importance of ascertaining that all our drivers had perfect eyesight, and we made it a rule that their eyes should be tested by a medical officer of the Board before appointment and subsequently at intervals of a few years. At a recent re-examination it was found that in the case of two men defects of vision had developed in consequence of which we were unable to retain their services, and they were discharged with pensions.'

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- **Smallpox admissions**: Five patients admitted with smallpox - 1 died; 5 further patients received at South Wharf suffering from other diseases (1 syphilis, 4 varicella)

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- **Conveyed 301 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 5
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 4
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 5
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 287
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1912 Vol. XLVI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1912)

Page 55

- **Retirement of F. Gardner, late piermaster**: had completed 30 years' service, was retired on superannuation.

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1910-14

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/002)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 8, 1912**

- **Collisions with Maltese Cross at North Wharf:** 'I beg to report that damage occurred to the Maltese Cross now laying at North Wharf Blackwell as follows …
  Dec. 12th Damage to rudder and steering chains by Tug "Cunis"
  Dec 27th Damage to curtain board by barge "Hannibal"
  Jan 1st Damage to stern plate and tiller by barge "Greek"
  Jan 3rd Damage to paddle box by barge "Artic"'.
- **Christmas extras**: list of expenditure on extras for Xmas – turkey, dry goods, and 'evergreens'. The turkey was supplied by the Tooting Bec Asylum.
- **Proposal for replacing Piermaster with Stores Porter**: on the retirement of **F. Gardner**, Piermaster and Storekeeper, he suggests replacing him in such a way that will save money – 'At present the value of the Piermaster and Storekeeper's appointment is £2.0.0 with lodging and uniform (weekly). With the Captain of the Steamer being in attendance at the Pier, it is not necessary for a Piermaster to be in attendance as well. I propose therefore a Stores Porter be engaged at the scale rate of 21s to 28s with board and uniform … For this post I propose the promotion of **J. Scales**, now Foreman Porter he having been over 9 years in the service … and that **E. Lake** now Asst. Pierman … be appointed Foreman Porter…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Asst. Nurse **C. Turner** resigned. Charge Nurse **E.A. Grissel** promoted to Sister.
  Pay increase due for Wardmaid **M. Webber**, on completion of 12 months' service.

**January 22, 1912**

- **More collisions with Maltese Cross at North Wharf:** 'I beg to report that damage occurred to the "Maltese Cross" now laying at North Wharf under survey, as follows …
  Jan 10th The barge "Asia", owners the Union Lighterage Co, damage to the port paddle wheel.
  And on the same date the barge "Spiff" [?] owners Messrs Shepherd did damage to the stern, counter and moulding.'
- **Death of patient at wharf**: 'On Jan 15th 7.30pm a patient (James Alderton) was admitted from Woolwich and being on the danger notice a South E. Motor was sent to Woolwich for the patient's wife, who arrived here at 10.0pm. In the meantime the patient died at 9.30pm. On Wednesday 17th inst. in accordance with instructions the deceased was removed by steamer to Long Reach for interment at Joyce Green. I ask for an instruction as to deceased's clothing being returned to Mrs Alderton.'
- **Retirement of F. Gardner:** Piermaster Gardner retired on superannuation on Jan 23rd.
- **Sick list: J Scales** returned to duty after being off sick for 4 days.

**February 5, 1912**

- **Yet more collisions with Maltese Cross at North Wharf, and to steamer at South Wharf:**
  'I beg to report that damage was done to the Maltese Cross now laying at North Wharf under survey, on the following dates:
  Jan 21st Damage to forward bulwark by unknown craft.
  Jan 27 Damage to after bulwark by barge Genoa …
  And on Jan 24th the teak rails and stanchions of the White Cross at South Wharf were damaged by the barge Flora …'
- **Dispute about collision**: a solicitor's representative visited North Wharf regarding the damage caused by tug Cunis on Dec 12th – 'the owners of the tug disputing being at North Wharf at that time, the Ins. Co. are taking legal action.'
- **Sick list: G. Edwards**, Pierman, with bruised toe, off duty 2 days.
- **Promotions and appointments**: **J. Scales** promoted from Foreman Porter to Stores Porter, and **E. Lake**, from Asst. Pierman to Foreman Porter. [As proposed on Jan 8 1912]
  **C. Lanyon** appointed as Asst. Pierman.
- **No. of patients** sent to Long Reach = 2 Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1

**February 19, 1912**

- **Tarring of ground in front of staff cottages completed**: work done by wharf staff, using screened ashes from the steamers, hogging [?] and some cement, with hot tar, and a top dressing of cinder - 'the whole now forms a compact surface about 2" thick…'.
- **Collision**: on Feb 8th the barge Loddon collided with the Maltese Cross, damaging the mooring bollard and decking.
- **Contractors unwilling to be vaccinated**: two different contractors visited South Wharf regarding the upcoming painting contract – weren't on the vaccination list, and they declined the offer of vaccination, so 'permission to view the work was not granted'.
- **Chairman's Visit**: on 9th Feb the wharf was visited by Chairman Miss Inderwick.
- **Sick list: W. Witton**, Charge Stoker, absent 7 days.
- **Wardmaids**: **Blanche M. Peek** transferred from Grove Hospital. Increases of pay due to wardmaids **E. Cooper, F. Newton** and **B. Peek** on completion of 12 months' service.
- **No. of patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**March 4, 1912**

- **Steps to female staff quarters**: steps wasted away in places, needed to be chipped down to a level surface. 3 steps at the main entrance and 2 at the west entrance needed treatment.
- **Storage for perishable provisions**: 'Owing to the lack of storage accommodation for perishable provisions at this wharf it is proposed to utilize a portion of the Piermaster's sitting room for that purpose…'
- **Resignations**: 'On Feb 21st Asst. Pierman **C. Lanyon** left the service without giving notice, he having obtained employment at Woolwich Arsenal and was ordered to start next morning 22nd Feb, 3 days' pay was due him which in lack of a week's notice has not been paid him…
  On Feb 21st **J. Scales** Stores Porter gave a week's notice, resigning his post, with a view to bettering himself, and he left the service on Feb 28th…'
- **Painting work preparations, and shelter prepared for patients**: The Receiving Rooms and C shelter were thoroughly disinfected in preparation for the painting contractors ... 'meanwhile B shelter is fitted up for the reception of patients.'
- **Damage to the Maltese Cross while at North Wharf**: 'I submit my observations upon the report received by the Association of Master Lightermen and Barge Owners relative to the damage incurred by the "Maltese Cross" whilst laying at North Wharf under survey and repair.'
- **Coalman gets toes crushed**: 'On Feb 21st a Mellgate Coal Contractors workman whilst engaged in coaling the steamers had the toes of his right foot damaged between the coal barge and sponson deck of the Red Cross…'
- **Wardmaid slips**: '… on the 2nd inst. **Blanche Peek**, Wardmaid, whilst cleaning the dispensary windows, slipped from a pair or steps, owing to a cord breaking, and bruised her right ankle, but was able to continue her duties…'
- **Chairman's Visit**: on 27th Feb the wharf was visited again by Chairman Miss Inderwick.
- **Weighing machines**: 'Estimates for regulating the weighing machines were invited from 5 firms, one of whom have only replied…'

**March 18, 1912**

- **Subsidence under telephone pole**: 'I have to report a settlement taking place at the base of the telephone pole inside the gate at this wharf, it is in close proximity to the Gate Box and for some distance round, the flagstones are disturbed and uneven…'
- **Painters at South Wharf**: painting work commenced on March 5, with 4 men living in.
- **Housekeeper taken ill**: 'On the 9th **Miss Ellis**, Housekeeper, was removed to the S.E. Hospital for medical treatment.'
- **New staff:** On March 14 **Chas Akehurst** was appointed as Asst. Pierman (to replace C. Lanyon) and on March 18 **Percy Powell** appointed Stores Porter, to be resident at the wharf.

**April 1, 1912**

- **Messman for painters**: asks to be able to appoint a temporary messman to attend to the painting contractors currently living in.
- **New nurse**: Ward Nurse **Shea** transferred from S.E. Hospital
- **Sick housekeeper**: 'Miss **Ellis**, Housekeeper, discharged from S.E. Hospital and on the 30th proceeded for 2 weeks sick leave.'

- **Management of West Wharf**: 'Being in receipt of the instruction that the entire administration of West Wharf will be resumed by the Hospitals Committee from the close of last quarter, I ask for instructions as to the temporary transfer of the existing staff…'
- **No. of patients** send to Long Reach = 0  Detained in shelters = 2

**April 15, 1912**
- **No messman found**: unable to find a messman to attend to the painting contractors staying at the wharf – 'I have been unable to receive a man willing to be vaccinated for so short a period of employment…' and the work was nearly completed anyway.
- **Staff transferred** from Mead Ambulance Station (at West Wharf): **W. Wakeford**, Pierman, and **E. Swinyard**, Night Watchman.
- **Sick list: C. Denny**, Stoker, off with tonsillitis, and **F. Showell**, Deck Hand.
- **No. of patients** sent to Long Reach = 1  Non-smallpox cases returned to their homes = 1

**April 29, 1912**
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes: Florence Edwards**, Asst. Nurse, transferred to North W. Hospital. Pay increase for **E. Beeching**, Ward Maid.

**May 13, 1912**
- **Collision:** 'On April 29th the barge Flora adrift with no one on board, owners Messrs Lane & Hurley, collided with the Albert Victor doing damage to the port sponson deck and mooring bollards…'
- **Annual leave**: 'It is proposed to commence annual leave on the 16th inst., this will allow of all staff being returned to duty by the end of July.'

**June 10, 1912**
- **Emergency stores during Dock Strike:** 'On the 24th May the Chairman Miss Inderwick visited S. Wharf and in view of the present labour trouble in this locality and the possibility of supplies being cut off, sanctioned a supply of tinned goods and preserved provisions, these are to be used only in an emergency and supplies failing to reach us…' [this is in reference to the Dock Strike]
- **Resignation: F. Newton**, Wardmaid on May 30.

**June 24, 1912**
- **Bunting for royal sail-past**: 'In connection with the Royal visit to the Albert Docks on July 17th when the journey will be made by water, South and North Wharves will be passed by the King. To make an effective display of bunting that day, I ask if arrangements could be made with the Exmouth for the loan of a code set of flags together with any ensigns available for that purpose.'
- **Storage for perishable provisions**: 'The alterations for providing storage for perishable provisions have been completed…'
- **Salary increase**: for Sister **K. A. Mills**.

**July 8, 1912**
- **Life belts for children**: had made enquiries if a life belt suitable for children was available, but there appeared to be none on the market, only ones that could be made to order; tests some samples on children of different ages.

**July 22, 1912**
- **Life belts for children**: does further testing of modified life belts for children.
- **Dock strike – emergency stores**: 'Certain emergency stores were ordered here at the beginning of the Dock Strike, as the outlook is now more satisfactory, I ask for sanction for the stores that can consumed here to be issued to the value of the scale, and the following articles to be transferred to other institutions as required ….1 doz Bovril  1 doz Lemco  1 doz tins sardines…'
- **Pay increases**: on completion of 12 months' service, for **W. Kelly**, Master, **C. Digby**, Mate, and **F. Fainton**, Deck Hand.
- **No. of patients** sent to Long Reach = 0  Transferred to Eastern Hospital = 1

**September 30, 1912**
- **Children's life belts**: 50 life belts for children delivered, were tested, and found satisfactory.
- **Leave for kitchenmaid: E. Wright**, kitchenmaid, was granted an extension of annual leave.

- **No. of patients** sent to Long Reach =1  Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1

**October 14, 1912**

- **Collision**: 'On the 9th inst. the steamer Nautilus of Stockholm anchored off South Wharf and in swinging round collided with the Maltese Cross, doing damage to the curtain board, wooden doubling and rubbing band and damaging the sponson bunckle [?] of the Geneva Cross and rubbing streak on the Piles.'

**October 28, 1912**

- **Stores Porter's dirty cubicle and unauthorised 'Toilet utensil'**: 'I beg to report as follows. On Friday 18th inst. I visited the Men's Quarters here, for an inspection of their condition as to cleanliness etc and found all parts clean and satisfactory, with the exception of the cubicle occupied by **P. Powell**, Stores Porter, heavy layers of dust being found on top of the chest of drawers and bedstead frame, further noticing a Principal Officers Toilet utensil in the room I enquired how it came there and Powell informed me it was one he had taken from the store and "that as one was allowed he was going to have one". I told him he was not allowed to remove anything from the stores without authority and if he wanted anything to put in a requisition for it, thence directed him to return the article to the store at once and on return to clean his room and put it in a satisfactory condition, adding I was afraid I should have to report the matter to the Committee.'
- **Further trouble with the Stores Porter**: 'On Wed last 23rd inst. I had further occasion to reprove **Powell**, the circumstances originating as follows ...' [describes in detail the process of painting the interior of the White Cross and the special paints needed for different coats]
  'About 9am of this day I observed the Deck Hands painting the inside of the White Cross with this paint and on enquiring of **Capt. Kelley** if he was using the right paint for first coat work, he said Yes as he had asked the Stores Porter to be particular and give him the paint out of the drum marked "First Coat". By its appearance I was doubtful and told Mate **Digby** to return it to store and I would enquire myself, on questioning Powell he abruptly told me it was all the same paint and none of the drums were marked. I thereon turned the drum of paint round and pointed out the words "First Coat" to which he replied he hadn't seen it. I returned to the White Cross, not reaching the office till 1 o'clock when I was informed Powell had left the wharf without a pass at 12.20pm, and later in the day was told by Mr Mann that he had complained of my using abusive language to him and I take this opportunity to emphatically and indubitably deny using such terms as quoted by this man to the Clerk of the Board. Further report herewith in connection with complaints from **Miss Ellis** (Housekeeper) as to Stores Porter Powell.'
- **Clocks needing repairing**: 16 clocks out of order and need repair from North and South Wharves.
- **Salary increase**: for **E. Wright**, Kitchenmaid, from £21 to £22 per annum.

**November 11, 1912**

- **Dismissal of Stores Porter Powell**: 'On Sat 2nd inst. the Chairman (Miss Inderwick), Col. Sheffield and Mr Benson visited South Wharf and investigated the case of Stores Porter Powell as previously reported; with the result that Powell was summarily dismissed the Service, 1 week's pay being granted in lieu of notice.' Recommends filling his position with **Mr Dockery** 'at present Asst. Pierman, he has a good record and gives every evidence of making a good Stores Porter.'
- **His own child sick with Diphtheria**: 'On the 5th inst. one of my children aged 6 years was removed to the South Eastern Hospital suffering from Diphtheria.'

**November 25, 1912**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 11th inst. the barge "Naseby" owners Messrs Cook & Co, Minories, collided with the Albert Victor doing damage to [the] paddle wheel and on the 13th inst. the barge "Alice" owned by Mr Nichols Limehouse, also struck the vessel doing damage to plating…'
- **Overalls**: 'I ask for sanction to the issue of 8 suits of white duck overalls, to male staff for use when carrying patients.'
- **Accumulation of mud**: 'I have to again report the mud increasing in the vicinity of this wharf. In Oct 1909 and March 1911 similar representations were made by me with the ultimate result that hopes were held out that relief could be looked forward to and the depth of water increased when the Port Authority undertook the dredging of the channel in this locality, which was to form part of a scheme for providing an increased depth of water throughout the river. On Oct 27th 1911 a dredger commenced working off the main entrance to the Surrey Docks, and after dredging there for a month, worked down the river in a southerly direction away from this wharf, since which time local

dredging has ceased. The immediate effect of this work at the pontoon was a loss of about 1 foot of mud and this held good till about June when the mud was observed to be increasing again and at the present time we have returned to the conditions existing before the dredging took place. As it has been demonstrated that the recent dredging operations reduced the mud and vice versa when dredging ceased, the mud increased, it appears evident some responsibility is attached to the Port Authority and I am in agreement with the local wharfingers who contend that periodical dredging should be maintained by the Port of London Authority.'

- **Promotion: M. Dockery**, Asst. Pierman, promoted to Stores Porter.

**December 9, 1912**

- **Collision**: 'On the 2nd inst. the barge Scion, owned by the Tilbury Lighterage Co, adrift and with no one on board, collided with the White Cross, doing damage to stern and rails…'

# 1912 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Gardner**, Frank; **McMahon**, John James; **Allen**, Thomas **Ricketts**, Thomas Frank; **Scales**, Thomas; **Edwards**, George **Roche**, James; **Lake**, Ernest

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Bird,** Henry
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby,** Charles
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Showell,** Frederick James
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Witton**, William
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Masson,** John
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Kelly,** William Alfred

# 1913

***River Ambulance Service started conveying fever patients; North Wharf used for Scarlet Fever Service; only one case of smallpox.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1913

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1913; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1607)

Page 88

- **Increased prevalence of diphtheria and scarlet fever**: Joyce Green Hospital re-opened to accommodate fever patients, who were conveyed from North Wharf to Long Reach, and some from West Wharf as well. The river ambulances were also used for returning recovered patients back to London, 'travelling by water being less fatiguing than by road'.

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- **Conveyed 3,217 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 1,368 [mostly fever patients conveyed from North Wharf]
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 1,381
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 19
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 449
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

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- **Smallpox cases**: Only 1 patient with smallpox admitted to Joyce Green Hospital. A further 9 patients admitted to South Wharf but suffering with other disorders. Joyce Green Hospital was used mainly for scarlet fever patients (1,582 admitted).

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1913 Vol. XLVII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1913)

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- **Chief Officer Mr Sullivan given permission to live away from South Wharf**, and telephonic communication provided between his house and South Wharf and Joyce Green Hospital.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1910-14

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/002)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 6, 1913**

- **Visit by Dr Bousfield**: on Dec 16th Dr Bousfield visited South and North Wharves on the White Cross; at South Wharf inspected the proposed cleaning and painting work.
- **Collision**: 'On 30th Dec the barge Helda, … collided with the Albert Victor damaging the bulwarks…'
- **Christmas Fare**: shows costs of Xmas fare for 16 staff, including an 18lb turkey. Also, in the list of petty cash payments is an entry for 'evergreens' on Dec 24, presumably Xmas trees.
- **New pierman**: New Asst. Pierman **A. Ridout** appointed.
- **Domestic and nursing staff changes**: Wardmaids **M. Webber** and **M. Wheeler** resigned; Asst. Nurse **J. Millson** transferred to Eastern Hospital Nov 27 to Dec 11.

**January 20, 1913**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 11th inst. a raft of timber owned by the Thames Lighterage co, and the Barge Stella … damaged the paddle wheel and bow plate of the Albert Victor, and on the 15th the Barge Aut [?] owned by Messrs Vokins did further damage to the bulwarks …'

**February 3, 1913**

- **Work accident: W. Livett**, Deck Hand '…damaged his hand on getting anchor of White Cross ready. Seen by Dr Turner, S.E. Hosp…' Off duty 5 days, for which he was paid.

**February 17, 1913**

- **His child suffering from diphtheria**: 'On the 8th inst. one of my children aged 12 years was removed to the S. E. Hospital being certified as suffering from Diphtheria by the Medical Officer of Health for Bermondsey.'
- **Salary increase**: for Sister **E. Hughes** - £42 to £44 per annum.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1

**March 3, 1913**

- **Sick list: J. Masson**, Engineer, and **H. Horton**, Watchman.
- **Wardmaids pay increase:** for Wardmaids **E. Cooper** and **B. Peeke** – from £21 to £22 per annum.

**March 17, 1913**

- **Egg supply**: makes proposal for South Wharf to be supplied with eggs from Joyce Green; mentions that the average consumption is 100 per week.
- **Sick list: H. Horton**, Watchman – off with rheumatism, and **W. Kelly**, Master, off sick.
- **On leave:** Sister **E. Hughes** on leave for 2 weeks.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1
  Non-smallpox cases returned home = 2

**March 31, 1913**

- **Pierman Edwards' application:** currently working at South Wharf, applies for vacancy of Night Watchman at North Wharf. '… he is a good reliable man, sober and quite suitable for the position…'
- **Request to live away from wharf: Clement Sullivan** applies to the Committee 'to obtain your permission to change my residence to a position 20 minutes distant from this wharf.' (The reasons for this request he says are given in a statement, unfortunately not enclosed in the report.)

**April 14, 1913**

- **Collision**: 'On the 3rd inst. the Sailing Barge Tyne, owners The British Portland Cement Co, collided with the Albert Victor, doing damage to the Port Paddle Box wheel…'
- **Claim from former Night Watchman**: **E. Swinyard** applied for return of his superannuation contributions, and states he has annual leave due, having served 5 years with 4 terms of annual leave only.
- **Staff register: W. Hobbs**, Stoker, off sick after straining his back at work; **E. Swinyard**, Night Watchman, discharged; Pierman **G. Edwards** promoted to Night Watchman.

**April 28, 1913**

- **Use of West Wharf**: the lamp shed was surveyed and discussed; he points out that before it be renewed, it needs to be decided what it might be used for 'in the event of the wharf being brought into active use. The requirements of the wharf depend greatly upon the purpose it is adopted for.' States what would be required if used for the transfer of convalescent patients.
- **Permission for him to live away from wharf:** having requested to live elsewhere, **Clement Sullivan** provides particulars of his plans: 'The position selected is 16 Sandrock Rd, New Cross, Lewisham, 50 yards from a Telegraph and Telephone Office and 8 doors from the main road where a double service of Trains and three services of motor buses are available for connection with the Wharf, coupled with a 5 minutes Electric Train Service to Rotherhithe.' Agrees to their stipulation that he be willing to live in, or near the wharf, if and when required, and he offers to cover the cost of telephonic communication being installed, and to pay half the expenses.

**June 9, 1913**

- **Collision**: '… on May 5th the Barge "Corrie Sea" … collided with the Red Cross laying at South Wharf, doing damage to sponson deck, fender beams and curtain board…'
- **Police whistles for watchmen**: the Night watchman at West Wharf asked to be supplied with a Police whistle for use in doing his rounds; one whistle was then requisitioned for each of the watchman at the 3 wharves.
- **Staff annual leave**: 'The annual leave of the male staff was commenced on May 16th and under present conditions should terminate at the end of July.'
- **His move from wharf**: having been given permission to live away from the wharf, he vacated 1 Staff Cottages on May 15. Engineer **Masson** applies to be allow to reside in 1 Staff Cottages.
- **Pierman resigns**: Asst. Pierman **C. Akehurst** resigned.
- **Nursing and domestic staff transfers and changes**: Asst. Nurse **A. Bowyer** and Wardmaid **H. Harvey** transferred from Southern Hospital; Wardmaid **E. Beeching** due a pay increase.
- **No. of patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**June 23, 1913**

- **Masson moves in, and rental of Staff Cottages**: Engineer **Masson** moves into 1 Staff Cottages, at a rental of 9s per week, as opposed to 7s at no. 6 where he was previously.

**July 7, 1913**

- **Change of tenants of Staff Cottages**: Stoker **Hellyer** moves into 6 Staff Cottages (as vacated by Masson who'd moved into no. 1)
- **Staff news: W. Kelley**, Master, entitled to salary increase. Asst. Nurse **Bowyer** transferred from Southern Hospital and Asst. Nurse **Milson** from Joyce Green.

**July 21, 1913**

- **Fire grenades**: 'On examining the fire appliances in the buildings here, I find there are 9 Hand Grenades short and one block, the Night Nurses House, not equipped. An estimate has been obtained from the makers Sinclair & Co…' [Fire grenades were early fire extinguishers: chemical-filled glass bottles, to be thrown at the base of a fire].
- **Sick List; W. Witton**, Stoker, at Guys Hospital for rupture, and **J. Roche**, Clerk, was on annual leave, but having sprained his ankle, was unable to return at the appointed time.
- **Nurse transfers**: Asst. Nurse **Milson** to Joyce Green, and Asst. Nurse **Bowyer** from Joyce Green.

**September 29, 1913**

- **Damage from falling timbers**: 'On Aug 11th damage was done to the party wall at South Wharf owing to the fall of some wooden sleepers from the adjoining wharf Messrs Gabriel & Sons…'
- **Sick List**: Deck Hand **F. Fainton** - 'feverish cold'. Stoker **W. Witton** and Clerk **Mr Roche** still off.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Asst. Nurse A **Bowyer** transferred to [?] Southern Hospital. Ward Maid **S. Pickup** resigned. Wardmaid J**. Tomkins** due a salary increase.

**October 13, 1913**

- **Staff promotions for Fever Service**: 'I submit list of staff promotions & appointments for working the Fever Service from North Wharf for your approval:

  **C. Digby** Mate to Master
  **F. Showell** Senior Deck Hand to Mate
  **F. Fainton** Deck Hand to Mate
  **W. Livett** Deck Hand to Senior Deck Hand
  **F. Hellyer** Stoker Driver to Engine Driver
  **C. Denny** Stoker to Stoker Driver'

  Also states that 3 additional Deckhands, 1 Stoker and 1 Porter needed. 'On the grounds of efficiency, **F. Fainton** Deck Hand with over 3 years' service at the wharf and Mate's experience on other vessels is raised to Mate @ 40s per week, against **W. Livett** Deck Hand with 19 years' service to Senior Deck Hand @ 37s per week, Livett's record includes 1 period as Mate for 10 months in 1901 and one period as mate for 1 month in the last Fever Service on which occasion the Master of the Steamer he was engaged on, reported that he refuse to take any responsibility, if Livett was retained there as mate.'

- **Preparations at North Wharf for Fever Service**: temporary labour engaged at North Wharf to prepare the staff quarters and wards for occupation.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Wardmaid **E. Aylett** resigned; Housekeeper **E. Ellis** and Sister **E. Hughes** transferred to Joyce Green Hospital; Sister **K. Mills** transferred from Joyce Green.
- **Sick List: J. Hellyer**, engine driver of launch, sick with influenza.

**October 27, 1913**

- **North Wharf Fever Service starts**: 'On the 17th inst. North Wharf was opened for the transfer of Fever patients to Long Reach, 35 being admitted and conveyed by the Maltese Cross that day, total transferred to date by steamer 115.'
- **Staff register**: New Deck Hands appointed (for North Wharf probably) - **W. Corps, E. Spencer, F. Milmoth,** and Charge Stoker **W. Hickman** and Porter **J. Burch**, all temporary.
  Engine Driver **J. Hellyer** promoted to Stoker Driver.

**November 10, 1913**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 29th Oct the barge Kaffir Queen, damaged the sponson deck and mooring bitts of the Maltese Cross and on Oct 31st the Barge "Rose" damaged the angle irons and rubbing streak of the lower dolphin at South Wharf…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Transferred from Joyce Green - Housekeeper **E. Ellis**, Asst. Nurses **A. Bowyer**, **L. Gower**, Wardmaids **M. Cooper, A. Elliott, C. Winter, E. West**.
  Transferred back to Joyce Green - Sister **K. Mills**, Wardmaid **J. Tompkins**,
  Asst. Nurses **L. Gower, E. Bowen** and **A. Bowyer**, and Wardmaids **E. Cooper** and **E. West**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 278

**November 24, 1913**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 15th inst. the barge Sapphire … damaged the Maltese Cross paddlebox and on the 21st inst. the barge Haarlem owned by Messrs Cory damaged the mooring bollards …'
- **Provision of dinner**: 'Owing to the lack of any facilities in this locality, I ask for Committee's sanction to my being provided with dinner at the wharf upon payment of the scale rates…'
- **Sick list:** Stoker **W. Hobbs**
- **No. of patients** conveyed:
  - to S.E. Hospital = 1
  - Scarlet Fever patients transferred to Long Reach = 307 since last report (Total to date = 700)
  - Recovered Scarlet Fever patients returned to North Wharf = 56

**December 8, 1913**

- **More life belts for children needed**: 'With the running of the steamers for Fever patients, larger numbers are dealt with per week than with Small Pox, more so than the existing Life Belt equipment provides for, I would therefore recommend a further provision of 100 life belts for children …'
- **Experimental journey to West Wharf**: 'On Dec 1st the "Albert Victor" proceeded from South to West Wharf and back (the Chairman Dr Bousfield joining at the Temple) the trip being undertaken as a trial run and of an experimental nature.' [Purpose of 'experiment' not specified]
- **No. of Scarlet Fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 283
  Recovered Scarlet Fever patients returned to North Wharf = 394

# 1913 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Allen**, Thomas; **Ricketts**, Thomas Frank; **Edwards**, George<br>**Roche**, James; **Lake**, Ernest |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell,** Frederick James |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson,** John |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |

# 1914

***R.A.S. used for scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough and smallpox;***
***South Wharf converted to fever receiving station;***
***North Wharf changed from Scarlet Fever to smallpox receiving station;***
***West Wharf brought into use for fever service;***
***some staff leave for military service in WWI.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1914

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1914; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1608)

Page 3

- **Fever cases and River Ambulance Service**: 'In view of the regular use of Joyce Green Hospital for fever purposes, of the river service for the conveyance of fever patients, and of the fact that the main accommodation reserved for smallpox is now the Long Reach Hospital (with the adjacent pier buildings), it became evident that the term "smallpox hospitals" as applied to the whole group was a misnomer, and accordingly the title of "River Hospitals and Ambulance Service" was adopted as a collective title for the Joyce Green, Long Reach and Orchard Hospitals (with the Pier Buildings), and the River Ambulance Service.'

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- **Fever patient accommodation at South Wharf**: 'South Wharf: The use of this wharf for the reception of fever patients at Joyce Green Hospital rendered necessary the provision of adequate isolation accommodation thereat, and on 11 July last the Managers approved of the conversion, at a total cost of £265, of D shelter at the wharf into 12 isolation chambers, by forming a central passage through the six rooms in the building.'

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- **Conveyed 10,957 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 4,619
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 2,963
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 2,750
  Staff, workmen etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 625
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

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- '**Smallpox**: 1 case was admitted during the year and treated in the Pier Buildings [at Long Reach]. The staff employed at the Pier Buildings were interned during the time that the buildings were infected by smallpox...'

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1914 Vol. XLVIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1914)

Page 61

- **Need for improvement of swing bridge and Rotherhithe Street**: problems of swing bridge on road leading from Deptford New Road to South Wharf causing delays due to its narrowness and steep gradient. A public meeting was held involving wharfingers, manufacturers, ratepayers etc to discuss widening of Rotherhithe St and reconstructing the dock bridges. Recommendation to endorse these suggested improvements; further developments mentioned on P. 94.

Page 122

- **Change in use of wharves for fever / smallpox**: explanation of the use of Joyce Green Hospital for fever patients, and the forthcoming need to send acute fever cases there. 'Hitherto North Wharf has been used as the receiving station for acutely ill [fever] cases, South Wharf being regarded as the smallpox receiving and diagnosing station. North Wharf is at present ill-equipped for fever purposes, there being no ward accommodation for doubtful or complicated cases. If, however, it were provided with a disinfector and adequate changing accommodation for female staff, it would be well suited for use as the smallpox wharf, and as South Wharf is so well provided with means of isolation, we propose that the functions of the two wharves should be exchanged, and that South Wharf should be used as the place of embarkation for acute fever patients en route to Joyce Green Hospital.' Plans and estimates obtained for provision of a disinfector and female staff accommodation at North Wharf. 'The carrying out of these two schemes will enable to Managers to make practically unlimited use of their accommodation at Joyce Green Hospital by freeing South Wharf for use for fever, and reserving North Wharf for smallpox purposes'. Plans recommended to be approved and carried out with urgency. [from Hospitals Committee report dated 26 March 1914]

Page 187

- **Railway plate on wall**: East London Railway granted permission to affix a direction plate to the South Wharf boundary wall, at an annual cost of £1.

Page 226

- **Chief Officer Mr C E Sullivan – request for salary increase**: 'Mr Sullivan was appointed in October, 1904, on the resignation of Mr. Thomson, the superintendent of the River Service, on terms and under conditions very different from those previously in force. The control and management of the River Ambulance Service had just been transferred to the Hospitals Committee, and the opportunity was taken of revising the terms of the appointment. It was decided not to appoint a principal officer again, but to endeavour to obtain the services of "a responsible man capable of undertaking duties such as are discharged by the steward of a fever hospital as well as the superintendence of steamers" and that he should be an accounting officer, should give security, and should have the qualifications of a marine engineer…..The title of the office was also changed from "superintendent" to "chief officer". This appointment has proved an unqualified success. In the words of the medical superintendent, who strongly supports Mr Sullivan's application, "the Board cast a line into the deep expecting to bring ashore an ordinary ship engineer. It could never have been anticipated that by that method we should secure the services of an officer, not merely of ability in his profession, but, what is a good deal more important, of so much adaptability outside it."' Mr Sullivan gave as the reasons for his application of an increase:
  - The increase in the cost of living since his appointment
  - He didn't have the privilege of purchasing rations from the Board as the stewards did.
  - His additional responsibilities – e.g. maintenance of Long Reach pier and pontoon, and the catering duties of the river service.
  - The permanent increase in his workload and responsibilities due to the use of the service for fever patients.

  Proposed salary increase recommended, ultimately raising it to the level of his predecessor.

Page 245

- **Conversion of D shelter for fever isolation:** further to the plans to make South Wharf the fever receiving station, D shelter was to be converted to provide isolation accommodation for fever patients who may have to be held at the wharf before being sent to Joyce Green. Plan submitted for converting shelter into 12 chambers by forming a central passage through the existing 6 rooms. P. 327: Proposal not approved due to the central passage interfering with the through ventilation. P. 392 – Revised plan submitted with new ventilation scheme.

Page 252

- **Need for river ambulances queried**: motion put forward questioning if the steamers and receiving wharves should be retained now that Joyce Green Hospital was used for fever patients, and to consider if all patients could be conveyed by road ambulance. Motion lost.

- **Gas fittings and telephone extensions**: gas fittings to be replaced, and two telephone extensions requested for the medical officers' quarters and 'staff house'.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1910-14

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/002)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 5, 1914**

- **Use of West Wharf for Fever Service:** 'On the 11th ult. West Wharf was opened for the admission of patients, the "White Cross" being engaged on their transport from West Wharf to North Wharf. The admissions to date being 100.'
- **Staff news: W. Livett**, Deck Hand, on sick list. **J. Murray** appointed as Deck Hand.
  Staff Nurse **J. Smythe** transferred from Joyce Green Hospital.
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 1 admitted, then discharged, not having smallpox.
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** conveyed from North Wharf since last report = 284
  " " " " " " West Wharf " " " = 100
  Recovered fever patients discharged at North Wharf from Joyce Green & Southern Hospital = 1025

**January 19, 1914**

- **Preparations for closure of Fever Service**: 'Instructions being in hand to close the West Wharf service and also terminate the Service to and from North Wharf and Long Reach, 1 week's notice terminating the engagement of the temporary staff engaged for this work was issued…'
- **Staff updates**: Wardmaid **M. Cooper** resigned; **W. Livett** back to work after being off sick.
- **No. of smallpox patients**: 1 admitted and detained in shelter.
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 97
  No. of recovered fever patients discharged at North Wharf = 534

**February 2, 1914**

- **Steamers, Fever and Whooping Cough**: 'On Jan 28th the Maltese Cross was taken off the Fever Service and moored at South Wharf for boiler cleaning and overhaul, the Albert Victor now running the Fever Service and the White Cross for whooping cough cases.'
- **Continuation of Fever Service**: asks to engage the temporary staff for a further 4 weeks.
  Addenda at end of report: 'Steam coal being required, owing to the decision to continue the Fever Service, an emergency order was issued …'
- **Steamer grounded**: 'On the "Maltese Cross" coming to the ground during a very low ebb tide 30th ult., the vessel took a shear and damaged the sponson deck…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Duncan**; Wardmaids **M. Grundy, H. McMillan**, **R. Banks**. Resignations - Wardmaids **M. Cooper, E. Winter, A. Elliott.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 1 'discharged'
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 104
  No. of recovered fever patients discharged at North Wharf = 398
  **No. of whooping cough patients** transferred = 7

**February 16, 1914**

- **Collision**: damage done to the rails of the Albert Victor at North Wharf by barge 'Scot'.
- **Wardmaids: A. Ellard** and **S. Sumner** transferred from Joyce Green Hospital
- **No. of smallpox patients** = 0 Non-smallpox cases discharged = 1
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 128
  No. of recovered fever patients discharged at North Wharf = 401
  **No. of whooping cough patients** transferred = 70

**March 2, 1914**

- **Worn-out kitchen in patient shelter**: 'Complaints have been received from time to time of the unsatisfactory condition of the kitchen range in Shelter A, this range is used in connection with the

preparation of the food for patients under observation, the Nursing Staff attached, and for the hot water supply…' On examination he finds it beyond repair and recommends its replacement.
- **Collision**: 'On Feb 27th the barge Humber damaged the bulwarks of the Albert Victor…'
- **Staff updates**: Temporary Deck Hand **W. Tidy** appointed; Asst. Nurse **E. Davies** transferred from Joyce Green; Staff Nurse **Duncan** transferred to Joyce Green. Stoker **C. Denny** sick with influenza.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 1
  **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 11
  **No. of whooping cough patients** transferred = 18
  **No. of diphtheria patients** transferred = 24
  No. of recovered patients discharged at North Wharf = 170

**March 16, 1914**
- **Preparations for closure of Fever Service**: one week's notice given to temporary staff engaged in the Fever Service.
- **Nursing and domestic staff:** Daily Woman Mrs **M. Young** appointed. Wardmaids **C. West** and **B. Wheatley** transferred from Joyce Green; **C. West** transferred back the following week.
- **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 78
  **No. of whooping cough patients** transferred = 15
  **No. of diphtheria patients** transferred = 18

*Reports for 1914 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**March 31, 1914**
- **Carpenter**: recommends a permanent carpenter be employed, instead of temporary carpenters as and when needed, due to ongoing workload. Hours of duty would be 7am to 6pm, and 7am to 4pm on Saturday, with 2 hours for meals, 12 days annual leave and Bank Holidays.
- **Staff updates**: Daily Woman **M. Young** discharged, as well as Deck Hands **G. Spencer** and **F. Milmoth**, Stoker **W. Hickman** and Porter **J. Burch**. Wardmaid **R. Banks** resigned. Staff Nurse **J. Smythe** was transferred to Joyce Green. Stoker **W. Witton** off sick.
- **No. of scarlet fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 28
  **No. of whooping cough patients** transferred = 31

**April 27, 1914**
- **Drunk Pierman**: 'On the 14th inst. **J. Murray** Asst. Pierman took the letters to the post (10 minutes) at 8.30am and did not return till 11am then under the influence of drink. Murray joined the service Dec 9th 1913 (4 months) and has not been a success; being anxious to maintain discipline it was desirable that he should be made an example of, and on the advice of Dr Ricketts 1 week's notice was given him…'
- **Death of Stoker William Witton**: 'I regret to report the death of W. Witton, Charge Stoker. He was on the Sick List suffering from Pleurisy and died April 1st, being 16 years in the service… the wages due to date 19s 5d have been paid to the widow.'
- **Staff updates**: Temporary Deck Hands **F. Milmoth** and **A. Cook**, and Charge Stoker **W. Hickman** appointed [re-appointed?]. Wardmaid **H. McMilllen** resigned. Deck Hand **W. Tidy** off sick. Wardmaids **G. Ellard** and **S. Sumner** transferred to Joyce Green Hospital.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 148

**May 12, 1914**
- **Disinfection at South Wharf:** buildings at South Wharf disinfected [presumably in preparation for taking fever patients]
- **Unfit fish delivery**: 'On the 7th the supply of fish being bad and unfit for consumption it was rejected and a supply obtained locally…'

- **Viewing window for shelter**: 'Permission is asked to fitting 2 windows to A Shelter to enable one ward to be viewed from the other…'
- **Pay increases**: for **M. Dockery**, Stores Porter, **E. Lake**, Foreman, and **H. Targett**, Piermaster.
- **New staff**: Ship's Carpenter **M. Brickfield**, Charge Stoker **F. Nightingale**, and **M. Tomlinson**, Daily Woman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Kitchenmaid **F. Dyer** resigned.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaids **J. Hill, K. Dibsdall, M. Martin, K. Jarvis, J. Delaney**; Staff Nurses **J. Smthye, M. Bromley, E. Bradley**; Asst. Nurses **M. Scott** and **J. Harrie**.
- **Temporary Promotions**: as of 11 May, the following were promoted - **C. Digby** - Mate to Master; **F. Showell** - Snr Deck Hand to Mate; **F. Fainton** - Deck Hand to Mate; **W. Livett** - Deck Hand to Snr Deck Hand; **J. Hellyer** - Engine Driver of Launch to Engine Driver; **C. Denny** - Charge Stoker to Engine Driver of Launch.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred from North Wharf = 24
  No. of fever patients transferred from South Wharf = 74 Detained in Shelter: 11

**May 25, 1914**

- **Request for more staff due to demands of Fever Service running at South Wharf, and Smallpox now at North Wharf:** 'With the changed conditions now existing at South Wharf, I submit for your consideration the question of increasing the clerical and accounting staff here. South Wharf is now receiving patients at the same ratio as the largest acute hospitals and with the use of the River Hospitals for Fever as well as Small-pox, the increased work arising on admitting, transferring and discharging patients from the various diseases is more than can be adequately dealt with. The present office staff consists of 1 Clerk without other officer to assist or relieve – my duties in supervising wharves. Steamers and staff calling me outside and away from the clerical work and with North Wharf established for the reception of small-pox, increased supervision is necessary there on reception of patients and the subsequent disinfection of buildings. On these grounds and to efficiently cope with the clerical and statistical work, [I] would propose for your consideration, that the Clerk Mr **J. Roche** with 13 years' service be promoted to the rank of Asst. Steward and the engagement of an additional Clerk be considered, and as Fever patients are admitted up to 11pm and Small Pox any hour night and day, the appointment should be a residential one.'
  Also asks for permission to engage one further Pierman, and what overtime to be paid for staff involved in removing patients after 7pm.
- **New staff: F. Nightingale** as Charge Stoker, **G. Warrington** as Asst. Pierman, three Deckhands – **Tidy, Milmoth and Cook**. Stoker **Hickman** transferred from temporary to permanent staff.
- **Sick List**: Wardmaid **E. Beeching**.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 199
  Detained in shelters = 10 'Returned home' = 10

**June 8, 1914**

- **Flag pole**: estimates obtained for a flag pole for South Wharf.
- **Henry Bird off sick**: 'Gate Porter Bird is off duty, on the sick list since June 3rd, Medical Certificate herewith for Gastritis...' As he expects him to be off duty some time, asks to be able to employ a temporary Gate Porter.
- **Work accident**: 'On June 5th **J. Masson** Engineer whilst engaged at his duties received injury to the eye by a piece of steel flying off the hammer head, he has been off duty since the accident…'
- **New staff: A. Wanless [?]**, Ward Maid, and **A. Thomas**, Asst. Pierman.
- **Staff transferred**: Staff Nurses transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - **M. Payne, F. Chamberlin, L. Reed, M. No..on [?]. W. Esling**, Clerk, transferred from Mead Ambulance Station.
  Staff Nurses **N. Greenaway** and **W. Scot** transferred back to Joyce Green.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 151
  'Returned home' = 12 Detained in shelters = 4
  **No. of smallpox patients** received at North Wharf and then returned home, not small-pox = 1

**June 22, 1914**

- **Collision:** 'On June 10th the Barge "Irene" owned by W. Gobbett N. Greenwich collided with the White Cross doing damage to teak and iron rails…'
- **Furniture for Nursing Sister**: 'Requisition is made for 1 writing table, 1 easy chair and 1 small round table for the Nursing Sister at the wharf to whom a sitting room has been allotted.'

- **Sick List**: Gate Porter **Henry Bird** still off sick. **J. Masson** returned to duty 1 week after his eye accident.
- **Visit by Chairman:** on June 16 Miss Inderwick [Chairman] & Capt. Thimm R.N.R. visited the wharf.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** New Wardmaid **D. Hurdle**; Sister **E. Egerton** transferred from Joyce Green; Wardmaids **M. Mortien / Martin [?]** and **H. Caberele [?]** transferred to Joyce Green.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 158
  'Returned home' = 7 Detained in shelters = 7

**July 6, 1914**

- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Appointed - Wardmaids **H. Davis, E. Bayutin** [who left the service a few days later], Sempstress **E. Ferguson**. Transferred to Joyce Green – Wardmaids **H. Cotterell, J. Hill** and **R. Dibsdall**. Transferred from Joyce Green: Asst. Nurse **Graham**, and Wardmaid **E. Bell**.
- **Gate Porter Henry Bird**: still off sick and has been paid full pay for 4 weeks.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 266
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 47

**July 20, 1914**

- **Staff updates**: Increase of pay after 12 months service is due to **W. Kelley**, Master.
  New Asst. Pierman **John Fletcher** appointed. **Henry Bird** still off sick, now on half pay.
- **Replacement of Gate Porter**: '…there is at present at this wharf a most suitable candidate who at present holds the office of Foreman Porter, he has recently revealed a most intimate knowledge of gardening in addition to which he appears to possess the qualifications required for Gate duties. On an appointment being made, I would recommend the office being termed Gate-Keeper…' [Is referring to **Ernest Lake** – see Oct 12, 1914]
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 213
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 69

**September 28, 1914**

- **Delays due to mud accumulation**: 'On Tues Sept 22nd the Maltese Cross with 20 patients, 2 nurses and 9 visitors to patients on the danger list, on board was already for departure usual time 9.30am, but owing to the absence of water due to the accumulation of mud here did not get afloat till 10.45am, a delay of 1 ¼ hours, the effect of this delay causing considerable inconvenience at Joyce Green, on the down journey, and a certain amount of irritation and complaint from the friends and relatives of the recovered patients due to arrive by the steamer on return journey, the patients not arriving till 3.15pm and the friends notified for 2.0pm.
  On the night journey similar conditions prevailed, the Maltese Cross returned to S. Wharf 9.45pm and was compelled to stand-by outside till 11.15pm when the rise of tide permitted her to scrape in and moor to the pontoon – 1 ½ hours overtime for Crew @ Time and Half rate of pay.
  In this instance the vessel employed has the minimum draught of any of the steamers 3'-3'' - with the Geneva or Red Cross engaged, both drawing 2 ft more water, a far more serious delay will be experienced.
  Apart from it being impossible to run a regular service under these conditions; a thing most essential; the straining of the vessels when endeavouring to get off the mud and the damage accruing to boilers, pumps, condenser and machinery, due to the influx of mud instead of water, raises a factor requiring serious consideration or disastrous results may follow.
  The remedy for this appears to be localised dredging sufficient to maintain water under the vessels at low water springs, and maintained at that by periodical dredging. When this problem was discussed in 1910-11 a belief was expressed that the dredging of the River Thames by the Port Authority would have the desired effect at South Wharf, and dredgers have been continuously employed for the past 3 years on this work and there is not as [?] such more water here now than there was 5 years ago.'
- **Stretchers and litters for war work**: '12 litters and 22 stretchers stored at West Wharf were handed over to the Military authorities for ambulance work in connection with the war.'
- **Internal telephones**: installed at South Wharf.
- **Gate Porter Bird still sick**: now on half-pay, asks what rate of pay should be given for the remainder of his sickness.

- **Staff left for Military Service**: 'Resignations for Naval and Military Service' – **A. Topple**, Asst. Pierman; **W. Hobbs**, Charge Stoker; **F. Nightingale**, Charge Stoker; **M. Dockery**, Stores Porter; **G. Warrington**, Asst. Pierman; **A. Ridout**, Asst. Pierman**, A. Thomas**, Asst. Pierman; **Mr W. Esling**, Clerk; **G. Edwards**, Night Watchman.
- **New staff appointed**: **J. F. Fletcher** and **A. Topple**, Asst. Piermen; **F. Murphy**, Fitter [his resignation also mentioned in this report!]; **J. Cooper** and **W. Hughes**, Charge Stokers; **E. Hollingworth** and **H. Butterworth**, Asst. Piermen; **J. Hughes**, Night Watchman; **J. Brown**, Asst. Pierman; **A. Kingston**, Stores Porter; **S. Stephenson**, Clerk II.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Appointed - **E. Buckland**, Ward Maid; **F. Dyer**, Asst. Cook. Resignations - Asst. Nurses **F. Harrie** and **E. G. Davies**; Kitchenmaid **F. Dyer.** Transferred to Joyce Green – **E. Bell**, Ward Maid and **L. Gulman**, Staff Nurse. Transferred from Joyce Green – nurses **E. L. Solomon, A. Hudd, E.H. Davies, L. Gulman, M. Tavender, H. Walls, E. Bolton, E. Hawke, H. Harbord.**
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 825
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach = 217
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 775

**October 12, 1914**

- **Storage of blankets in receiving rooms**: 'With the admission of Fever patients to South Wharf, their preparation for passage by steamer, is carried out in the Receiving Rooms, with the result that the storage of blankets there impedes the progress of diagnosis. As a remedy it is proposed to utilise the old Receiving Room at the head of the Pier, and there erect racks for storage of blankets and linen required…'
- **Illness and resignation of Gate Porter Henry Bird:** 'Gate Porter Bird has been off duty from June 2nd to Sept 12th during which time he was an inmate of the London Hospital suffering from anaemia, since his return to duty he appears to be very weak and quite unfit for work and on the 7th inst. handed in a letter of resignation …'
- **Replacement of Gate Porter**: '…**E. Lake** at present Foreman Porter here is a suitable candidate having joined the service June 1910 and has carried out Gate duties from time to time, is sober and steady and has good knowledge of gardening. The appointment proposed is that of Gate Keeper … with the proposal that he receive money in lieu of board and lodging and occupy the Gate Porter's House No. 2 Staff Cottages.'
- **Sick List**: Carpenter **M. Britchfield**, off work with hernia
- **Staff update**: Asst. Nurse **E. H. Davies** resigned; Asst. Pierman **J. Fletcher** discharged. Asst. Nurse **A. Ubsdelle** transferred from River Hospitals.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 217
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach = 104
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 125

**November 9, 1914**

- **Gate Porter**: Gate Porter **Henry Bird** certified as no longer fit for duty and put on superannuation. Foreman Porter **Ernest Lake** appointed to the vacancy of Gate Keeper, to live at no. 2 Staff Cottages.
- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On Oct. 17th the steamer Batavier V passed South Wharf at excessive speed, the wash causing damage to the teak and iron rails of the White Cross…'
- **Telephone extension**: installation of telephone extension between Medical Officer's quarters and female staff quarters was completed.
- **Chairman's visit**: on Oct 17 the Chairman Dr Bousfield visited all North and South Wharves, and on Nov 5, West Wharf.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Wardmaid **M. Gundry** appointed; Asst. Nurse **E. Hawkes** resigned; Asst. Nurse **G. Brind** transferred from Joyce Green.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Oct 27 = 627
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Oct 27 = 198
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Oct 27 = 104
  No. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Oct 27 = 35

**December 7, 1914**

- **Dredging, and delays caused by mud accumulation**: has prepared specification for dredging at South Wharf, and list of dredging firms. 'Due to the shortness of water at South Wharf, the steamers' departure with patients has been delayed during the past week as follows: 3rd 2hrs, 10 mins, 4th 1 hr 30 min, 5th 2 hrs 0 min, 6th 1 hr 0 min.'
- **Collision:** 'On the 16th Nov. the White Cross on returning from West Wharf, collided with the Albert Victor then laying at South Wharf, slightly damaging sponson beam…'
- **Shed for deceased patients**: 'In the case of a patient's decease at South Wharf a wooden shed is required for same during detention and transfer. Sanction is asked to one being made by the carpenter here.'
- **Staff register**: **Chas Williams** appointed as temporary Charge Stoker. Temporary Charge Stoker **W. Hughes** discharged. Sick List: **F. Showell**, Mate.
  **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Salary increase – due to **Sister Egerton**.
  Resignations - Wardmaids **A. Wanless [?], M. Gundry, S. Sumner, E. Buckland**; Asst. Nurse **A. Ubsdelle**. Transferred to or from Joyce Green - **H. Barnard**, Asst. Nurse **L. Allworth**, Housemaid **E. Edgeley**, Asst. Nurse **E. Godwin**.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Nov 9 = 612
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Nov 9 = 261
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Nov 9 = 253
  No. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Nov 9 = 53

# 1914 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Allen**, Thomas; **Ricketts**, Thomas Frank |
| | **Dockery**, Michael Joseph; **Roche**, James; **Lake**, Ernest |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson,** John |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell,** Frederick James |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer,** James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |

# 1915

***South and North Wharves used alternately for fever and smallpox; many staff leave to join the forces; heavy dredging carried out.***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1915

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1915-20 – bound together as one volume; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1609)

Page 6

- **Effects of WWI on staffing**: at the beginning of the war, the M.A.B. employed about 2,100 men of all ages, but at the end of 1915, only 778 men of military age were left.

Page 14

- **11 smallpox patients** treated at the smallpox hospital during the year; 2 died.

Page 18

- **Conveyed 2,759 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 1,552 (11 smallpox, 1,541 fever – mostly scarlet)
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 563
  Visitors, staff, workmen etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 644

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1915 Vol. XLIX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1915)

Pages 14, 44, 155

- **Problems of mud causing steamer delays, and dredging arranged:** lengthy discussion of this ongoing issue (see also M.A.B. Board Minutes 1911). The PLA's general dredging nearby over the past 3 years had not had any impact on the mud accumulation at South Wharf. Due to South Wharf now being in regular use for conveying fever patients, this now had to be dealt with. 'We may point out that the boat runs to a time table arranged, not only for the benefit of patients just admitted, but also for discharged patients and for the convenience of those summoned to meet them, as well as for the convenience of visitors to patients seriously ill. A delay in the departure of the boat disorganises all the subsequent arrangements. In several instances recently, patients at the Wharf and visitors to patients on the danger list at Joyce Green have been delayed for some time, causing considerable inconvenience, and at certain states of the tide it is impossible to move any of the boats from the pontoon, even the one with the lightest draught, 3 ft 3 in. Apart from the impossibility of running a regular service under these conditions the straining of the vessels when endeavouring to get off the mud, and the damage caused to boilers, pumps, condenser and machinery by the influx of mud instead of water certainly requires consideration, and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a serious accident might happen.' Proposal that dredging be done by a private firm (cheaper than PLA) and tender recommended. P. 44 – approved by Local Government Board. P. 155: dredging work completed, with 4,656 cubic yards of mud removed at a cost of £873.

Page 20

- **Retirement of gate porter Henry Bird**: age 64, superannuation recommended after 24 years' service.

Pages 44, 76

- **Plans for conversion of D Shelter**: Local Government Board approve plans for conversion of D shelter, subject to some changes. P. 76 – plans postponed due to wartime economies.

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 4, 1915**

- **Falling ceiling**: during the storm on Dec. 28, a portion of the ceiling 6 ft x 4 ft on the top floor of the female staff quarters fell down.
- **Resignations**: 'On the 18th Dec Deckhand **Tidy** absented himself from duty and on the 21st his resignation was received… On Dec 31st **G. Williams** Temporary Stoker gave notice of resignation, he has failed to attend for duty since Sat 2nd inst. …'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **E. Bowen** and **F. Fuller**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Nurse **J. Smythe**
- **Xmas specials**: petty cash payments and Xmas expenditure includes costs for dried fruit, 'evergreens' and turkey.
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to North Wharf, and then sent home, not smallpox = 1
  **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Dec 7 = 366
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Dec 7 = 322
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Dec 7 = 438
  No. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Dec 7 = 36

**February 1, 1915**

- **Broken telephone pole**: In a recent snowstorm, the telephone pole outside the entrance gate broke off at the base, suspending the telephone service. Repairs nearly complete.
- **Deckhand departs**: 'On Jan 25th **A. Cook**, Deckhand absented himself from duty and on the 27th he reported having received another berth and left the service…'
- **Visit by Chairman and others**: 'On Jan 26th the Chairman (Dr Bousfield) and Mr Baxter visited South and North Wharves and on the same day Mr Benson visited N. Wharf.'
- **New staff**: **R. Hill** appointed as temporary Charge Stoker; **G. Grinstead** as temporary Deck Hand.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Resigned - Sister **E. Egerton**. Sick List – Wardmaid **M. Gundry**.
  Asst. Nurses discharged – **E. Bollin [?], H. Watt, S. Solomon, H. Harbord, M. Payne**.
  Asst. Nurses transferred to Joyce Green – **A Hudd** and **E. Bowen**.
  Asst. Nurses transferred from Joyce Green – **A. Crocher**. Pay increase – for Wardmaid **A. Todd**
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to North Wharf, and then sent home, not smallpox = 2
  **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Jan 4 = 84
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Jan 4 = 354
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Jan 4 = 350
  No. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Jan 4 = 47

**March 1, 1915**

- **Scarlet Fever Service discontinued, and return to smallpox admissions**: 'On Feb 4th the Scarlet Fever Service was discontinued and on the 5th the Receiving Rooms, Wards and Shelters were disinfected and the wharf open for admission of smallpox patients. Work completed by the staff and no outside expense incurred.'
- **Coal contractors refusing re-vaccination: '**Owing to the refusal of the cartage contractor to be re-vaccinated 4 trucks of coal consigned to South Wharf have been transferred to the Park Hospital, meanwhile arrangements are pending for a supply from another source.'
- **Small-pox pay rates**: 'As per salaries and wages scale, Small-pox rate of pay has been paid to the staff from Feb 13th, date of admission of 1st S.P. patient.'
- **Change of piermen**: **E. Cawdrey** appointed temp. Asst. Pierman. Asst. Pierman **J. Brown** resigned.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Resignations – Wardmaids **J. Delaney** and **H. Davis**; Asst. Nurse **H. R. Barnard**
  Transferred to Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **A. S. Crocher**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Sister **E. Boyden**.
- **Sick list: F. Fainton**, Mate; **J. Masson**, Engineer; **J. Hickman**, Charge Stoker.

- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 8
  **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Feb 1 = 35
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Feb 1 = 200
  No. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Feb 1 = 82
  No. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Feb 1 = 20
- **TOTAL no. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach since Oct 1913 = 7509
  Total of recovered patients returned from Long Reach since Oct 1913 = 4833
  Total no. of visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach since Oct 1913 = 1886
  Total no. of staff conveyed to and from Long Reach since Oct 1913 = 716

**March 29, 1915**

- **Dredging work and findings**: dredging work commenced - '…the substance dredged bears out the original soundings – soft mud 6 to 12 in[ches] in places, then a form of binding clay with a good proportion of sand…'
- **Collision**: 'On the 18th inst. the Barge Wye collided with the Geneva Cross, doing damage to fore sponson…'
- **Post Office staff refuse revaccination:** 'The Post Office authorities state they are unable to get men vaccinated for the repair of the Gate Lodge chimney stack, damaged by fall of telephone pole in the last snowstorm, and suggest we getting the work done on an approved estimate, at their expense…'
- **Resignation**: Stores Porter **A. Kingston** resigned.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Wardmaid **A. Pankhurst** and Asst. Nurse **G. Brind**.
- **Sick List**: Carpenter **Britchfield**. Night Gate Porter **Allen** 'Absent from 22nd to 24th inst, "Pains in inside". No medical certificate being submitted, pay has not been given for the period off duty.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 2 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1
  Recovered patients returned from Long Reach = 5

**April 26, 1915**

- **North Wharf re-opened for Fever Service**: 'On the 22nd inst. North Wharf was opened for the admission of patients, the "Albert Victor" being berthed there for their conveyance and the Geneva and Red Cross transferred from North Wharf and Long Reach to South Wharf to allow free use of the landing piers…'
- **Loss of staff to military service and suggestion of war badge**: '**W. Hickman**, Stoker, has given notice to leave Sat next to join the army, and **R. Hill** Stoker is away this week, I understand for a similar purpose; as great difficulty will be experienced in filling these posts, and at the loss of another man a breakdown in the service, I ask if the remainder of the staff here can be supplied with an official War Badge or Special Service Badge as are issued to all firms on the river here engaged on escort work, this would tend to hold them together, and place the Managers in a position to deal [with] any sudden influx of patients…'
- **Staff register**: Appointed – **Jas Thornton**, temporary Deckhand, and **Thos Winder**, temporary Porter. Sick List – **W. Hickman**. Increases of pay due to **C. Digby**, Master; **F. Showell,** Mate; and **F. Fainton**, Mate.
- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Recovered smallpox patients returned = 3
  **No. of fever patients** transferred from North Wharf to Long Reach = 15

**May 25, 1915**

- **Carpenter Britchfield's hernia and truss troubles**: 'As reported Sept 24, 1913 Britchfield claims to be suffering from hernia contracted while in the employment of the Board, as a result he has been interviewed on several occasions by the Med. Supt. Dr Cameron, with a view to an operation being performed, or failing such to wear a suitable truss, on each occasion a definite promise was given to comply with this request, so far however the only action taken is to provide himself with an ill-fitting truss…' Was asked to provide medical certificate confirming that the truss was satisfactory, but the certificate he offered wasn't adequate.
- **Collisions**: 'On April 28th the curtain board of the Albert Victor was damaged by the Steamer Port-pirie and on May 5th the tug Hampton damaged the port mooring bollard of the same steamer. May 12th the bulwarks and teak rail of the "Geneva Cross" was damaged by the Barge "Bert" …'

- **Wharf noticeboards**: needed to be re-written for all 3 wharves. States that there are 2 at South Wharf and the wording is as follows:

  Metropolitan Asylums Board
  Notice
  No vessel nor craft to be moored to this Pier or Wharf
  No person is allowed to land at this wharf without the authority of the Board
  By order J. Duncombe Mann Clerk to the Board
- **Departure of Deckhand**: 'On Sat 15th inst. temporary Deckhand **Grinstead** left work and has not since returned for duty having obtained employment elsewhere…'
- **New appointments**: **W. Mead** and **A. Eastaway**, Charge Stokers.
- **Nursing, clerical and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Joyce Green – temporary Clerk **L. Stephenson**; Asst. Nurses **E. Godwin** and **L. Allworth**; Wardmaid **A. Pankhurst;** Sister **E. Boyden**. Salary increase – Asst. Matron Miss **Ellis**. Resignations – Asst. Nurses **F. Chamberlain** and **L. Reed**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 1
  **No. of fever patients** transferred from North Wharf to Long Reach = 111

**June ? 1915** (not dated, but the latest date mentioned in this report is June 22nd)

- **Disinfection at South Wharf**: disinfection completed of all buildings, effects and bedding.
- **Carpenter Britchfield's troublesome truss**: further to the report of May 25, 'Carpenter Britchfield was notified by the Clerk to the Board that unless he produced a certificate from his medical attendant, that he had provided himself with a suitable truss, his services would terminate June 12th.' Britchfield asked if he could interview the Clerk on the matter and was given leave to do so, but the outcome of the meeting was that his appointment was terminated.
- **North Wharf re-opened for smallpox**: 'On 31st ult. North Wharf was taken over on the completion of the Contract there and has since been used for the admission of S.P. [smallpox] patients. The female staff bath and change rooms require certain articles to complete the equipment, the major portion of which can be transferred from South Wharf…'
- **Collision**: '…on the 17th inst. the barge Italy damaged the teak work of the White Cross bulwarks…'
- **Staff news**: Asst. Pierman **E. Franklin (?)** resigned. Increase of salary for Piermaster **H. Targett,**
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Resignations – Wardmaids **F. Dunn** and **A. Todd**. Transferred from Joyce Green – Sister **E. Boyden** and Nurse **E. Godwin**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 2
  Recovered smallpox patients returned from Long Reach = 1

**July 20, 1915**

- **Collision**: 'On July 10th the Steamer "Ravonia" owned by the Commercial Gas Co. collided with the lower dolphin South Wharf extensively damaging piles and braces…'
- **Dredging work at South Wharf completed**: gives details of the depths and specifications; '…the steamers' departure may now be guaranteed at any state of tide…'
- **Resignations**: Wardmaid **M. Gundry**, Nurse **M. Tavender**, Housemaid **E. Edgeley**, Night Watchman **W. Wakeford**.
- **Pay increase**: due for **W. Kelley**, Master, and **J. Dyer**, Asst. Cook.
- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**September 28, 1915**

- **Collisions**: 'On Aug 12th and Sept 20th damage was done to the White Cross by barges "George" and "Bobs"…'
- **South Wharf in use for fever cases**: 'Since July 27th the steamers are engaged in conveying fever patients to Long Reach from South Wharf; to date 598 convalescent and 7 acute have been carried.'
- **Fever rates of pay**: 'On July 31st the staff on Small Pox pay since Feb 13th reverted to Fever rate and were paid at fever rate from that date.'
- **Resignations**: **J. Dyer**, Asst. Cook; **B. Peeke**, Ward Maid; **M. Ferguson**, Sempstress. Left without notice – **J. Thornton**, temporary Deckhand.
- **Sick List**: **F. Showell**, Mate – sprained side. **J. Hellyer**, Engine Driver – pleurisy. **J. Dyer**, Asst. Cook – unspecified.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**

Transferred to Joyce Green – Sister **E. Boyden** and Asst. Nurse **A. Bryant**.
Transferred from Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **A. Hudd**, Kitchenmaid **Dickenson** and Nurse **Bryant**, Sempstress **E. Topson**, Wardmaid **E. Collins**, Kitchenmaid **E. Baker**.

- **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1
  **No. of fever patients** sent to Long Reach = 605

**October 12, 1915**

- **Sick list: F. Fainton**, Mate, and **F. Millmoth**, Deck Hand.
- **Pay increase**: due for Asst. Nurse **L. Allworth**.
- **No. of fever patients** sent to Long Reach: transfers = 145, direct admissions = 101 Total = 246

**November 9, 1915**

- **Query about overtime pay**: crews' hours of duty are 6.30am to 6.00pm, but with the steamers leaving at 3 to 3.30pm, the return journey isn't completed until 7pm each evening. '…this is termed by the men as working "one hour for nothing"'. They ask for overtime to be paid for this.
- **Staff register**: **Joseph Allen** appointed as temporary Asst. Pierman. Deck Hand **F. Millmoth** returned to duty after being off sick.
- **Nursing, clerical and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Clerk **W. Lloyd**, Asst. Nurses **A. Bryant** and **E. Buckley**, Messroom Maid **A. Wright,** Asst. Nurse **S. Casey**, Wardmaid **D. Smith**.
  Increase of pay - due to Asst. Nurse **E. Godwin**, Wardmaids **E. Collins** and **D. Hurdle**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach – direct admissions = 238

**December 7, 1915**

- **Fowls for Christmas meal**: 'It being proposed to provide fowls instead of turkey for Christmas fare this year, I ask for Committee's instruction as to obtaining same…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resigned - Wardmaid **D. Smith**
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **E. Farmer** and Wardmaid **M. Davies**.
  Increase of pay - due for Wardmaids **F. Fuller** and **B. Wheatley.**
- **Sick List: W. Livett**, Deck Hand – with synovitis. **J. Allen** – Night gate Porter.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach – direct admissions = 118

# 1915 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Allen**, Thomas; **Sullivan**, Clement Ernest; **Ricketts**, Thomas Frank<br>**Rideout**, Arthur Samuel; **Dockery**, Michael Joseph<br>**Roche**, James; **Lake**, Ernest |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson,** John |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Bird,** Henry |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby,** Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell,** Frederick James |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer,** James |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly,** William Alfred |

# 1916

***Mainly diphtheria and scarlet fever patients conveyed; more staff leave for war***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1916

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1915-20 – bound together as one volume;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1610)

Page 9

- **Fever and smallpox cases**: Increase in diphtheria cases received by M.A.B. (7,695) – highest of any year on record, exceeding the number of scarlet fever cases, which was in decline. Only one smallpox case all year.

Pages 11 - 12

- **Effects of war on staffing**: Loss of male motor ambulance drivers in the M.A.B. due to enlisting for war; many were successfully replaced by women drivers. Unable to replace many mechanics however, so unable to maintain ambulances efficiently.
- **River ambulances conveyed 1,404 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to and from Long Reach = 1 smallpox, 985 fever
  Visitors, staff, workmen etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 418

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1916 Vol. L

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1916)

No relevant / significant mentions, other than the annual tenders for cleaning and painting works.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 4, 1916**

- **Deckhand's resignation and change of mind**: 'On Dec 29th Senr Deckhand **Livett** tendered notice of resignation, and subsequently withdrew same on the 31st Dec.'
- **Pierman in hospital with hernia**: 'Temporary Asst. Pierman **Butterworth** was granted leave of absence Dec 9th to attend at the Rotherhithe Town Hall and has not returned to duty since, he being admitted to the London Hospital the same day and detained till Dec 24th under treatment for hernia. He is still away certified unfit for duty.'
- **Sick List: A. Eastaway** and **W. Mead**, both temporary Stokers.
- **Nursing, clerical and domestic staff changes:** Resignation - Wardmaid **E. Collins**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **A. Bryant, E. Farmer** and **M. O'Sullivan**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Wardmaid **E. Williams.**
- **No. of fever patients** sent to Long Reach: direct admissions = 45 transfers = 29 Total = 74

**February 1, 1916**

- **Staff register**: **A. Bell** appointed as Asst. Pierman. **E. Hollingsworth** resigned as Asst. Pierman.
- **Sick List: H. Butterworth**, temporary Asst. Pierman; **A. Eastaway** and **W. Mead,** temporary Stokers, and **F. Showell**, Mate – bruised shoulder caused by excessive strain whilst on duty.
- **No. of fever patients** sent to Long Reach: direct admissions = 54 transfers = 93 Total = 147

**February 29, 1916**

- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Increase of salary for **E. Topson**, sempstress.
  Discharged – Asst. Nurses **L. Allworth** and **E. Buckley**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **M. Clancy** and **P. Blanie / Blaine [?]**.
- **Sick list: F. Showell**, Mate – off sick with septic knee.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 222
  (direct admissions = 74, transfers = 127, recovered = 2)

**March 26, 1916**

- **Sick List:** Mate **F. Fainton** – rheumatism; Engine Driver **C. Denny** – influenza; **F. Showell** returned to duty.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach: direct admissions = 66 transfers = 81 Total = 147

**April 25, 1916**

- **Military patients**: 'On Sat last 22nd inst. the services of 3 members of the Steamers crew whose duties ceased at 4pm, were requisitioned for transporting military patients to Long Reach, not returning until 8.0pm…' Asks what hours they can be paid overtime for.
- **Mumps patients from training ship Exmouth**: 'On April 1st, 4th and 8th, the White Cross conveyed 8 patients from Training Ship Exmouth to Long Reach.' [Figures below show these were mumps]
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Resignations – Wardmaids **F. Fuller, D. Hindle** and Messroom Maid **A. Wright**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green – Wardmaids **A. Roberts** and **H. Eves**, and Asst. Nurses **M. Nash** and **M. Evans** (both transferred back a few days later).
- **Disappearing Wardmaid**: 'On the 5th inst. **B. Wheatley** Wardmaid went on leave from 7pm to 10pm and has not since returned to duty…'
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach - direct admissions = 33 transfers = 22
  **No. of mumps patients** from T. S. Exmouth = 8 **No. of measles patients** – direct admissions = 7
  **No. of smallpox patients** sent to Long Reach = 0 Non-smallpox cases returned home = 1

**May 23, 1916**

- **Visit by Sir Arthur Downes**: visited South Wharf on May 9, enquiring about the number of staff required to run the steamers. [Reason not specified].
- **Balloon lands on West Wharf**: the Pierman at West Wharf reported a balloon falling on the Pier Brow, West Wharf; no damage resulted. [No further explanation given]
- **Disappearing Wardmaid leaves:** 'On the 9th inst. Wardmaid **Wheatley** applied for her luggage and tendered 1 month's wages in lieu of notice…'
- **Pay increases**: 'Messroom Maid **E. Beeching** becomes eligible for the long service premium of £2.00 … for 12 months' service.' Other staff due for pay increases: **C. Digby**, Master; **F. Showell,** Mate; **F. Fainton**, Mate; **H. Targett**, Piermaster.
- **Sick List**: Deckhand **Livett** – 'feverish cold'.
- **No. of measles patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 37
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1 Detained in shelters = 1

**June 20, 1916**

- **Nursing staff changes**: Asst. Matron **E. Ellis** due for an increase in salary. Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital – **E. Boyden**, Sister, and **E. Lucas**, Staff Nurse.
- **Military Service**: Asst. Pierman **Butterworth** resigned to join the forces. Also, '**A. Thomas**, formerly Assistant Pierman, was called up August 5th/14 from the Reserve to join his regiment, being now available for duty, he being certified as unfit for further military duty.'
- **Sick List: F. Milmoth**, Deckhand, off with bronchitis.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 3
  **No. of fever patients** transferred to Joyce Green Hospital = 6

**July 18, 1916**

- **Military service: J. Cooper** resigned to join forces.
- **Staff changes: A. Bell**, Asst. Pierman, resigned. New staff: **W. New**, temporary stoker; **A. Thomas**, Asst. Pierman.
- **Nursing / domestic staff changes**: Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaid **A. White**

Transferred to Joyce Green: Sister **E. Boyden**, Asst. Nurse **Casey**.

- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 65 (12 direct admissions and 51 transfers)

**October 10, 1916**

- **War bonus pay rates for staff**: 'Enquiries have been received from some of the male staff of this Service relative to Committee's consideration of their war bonus being increased, in support of such request claim is made that it is difficult to live on the present wages and that other bodies pay a larger war bonus. Here in this service the deck crews are in the first instance licensed watermen, qualified for lighterage or steam boat work, other members are men conversant with and drawn from riverside occupations. I find the current rate paid lighterman weekly is £2.0.0 plus 4d [?] against pre-war rate of £1.16.0.; this increase may be taken as an approximate reflex of the advance granted by riverside firms in general…' [gives examples of other river employers' pay]. Points out the recent increase in stokers' pay, making them better off than deckhands, when previously they both received the same pay. 'I would recommend therefore that if the question of an increased bonus be considered it should be applicable in some degree to all ranks non-resident.'
- **Sick List**: Wardmaid **E. Williams**, Asst. Nurse **S. Casey**, Deckhand **F. Milmoth** – 'now an inmate of the Seamans' Hospital Greenwich'. Temp. Stoker **A. Eastaway**. Clerk **Mr Roche** had a broken arm.
- **Resignations**: **E. Beeching**, Messroom Maid; **H. Eves**, Wardmaid; **W. New**, temp. Charge Stoker. Left without notice: **A. Thomas**, Asst. Pierman; **E. Topson**, Sempstress.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green - **L. Webb** and **M. Reader** – Messroom Maids; **M. Allridge**, Kitchenmaid; **H. Saunders** and **M. Stevens**, Ward Maids; **H. Hayes**, Staff Nurse; **F. Hermitage**, Sempstress; **B. Smith** and **G. Herring**, Asst. Nurses; **E. Kirk**, Messroom Maid.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - **A Roberts**, Wardmaid; **M. Allridge**, Kitchenmaid; **E. Lucas**, Staff Nurse; **S. Casey, J. Blaine** and **M. Clancy** – Asst. Nurses; **L. Webb** – Messroom Maid.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 173 (18 direct admissions and 155 transfers)

**November 7, 1916**

- **Sick List**: **F. Milmoth** still at Seamans' Hospital in Greenwich. **F. Fainton**, Mate, off sick.
- **Nursing and domestic staff transfers and changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green - **H. Sanders** and **M. Stevens,** Wardmaids; **E. Godwin**, Asst. Nurse.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - **M. Baker** and **G. Hudson**, Wardmaids; **L. Birch**, Asst. Nurse.
  Increase of salary for **M. Davies**, Wardmaid, on completion of 1 year's service.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 77
  (32 diphtheria convalescent and 45 Scarlet Fever)

**December 5, 1916**

- **Damage from speeding steamer**: 'On Sunday 3rd inst. a steamer passed South Wharf at such speed, the indraught of water caused the White Cross to damage bulwarks and the iron stanchions on the starboard side…'
- **Staff news:** Asst. Pierman **J. Allen** gave a week's notice. 'Application for a temporary reference was received as he found it difficult to get employment without one … Mr Brebner suggested he should be told it was a leaving certificate he required, this was done…'
  **F. Fainton** and **Mr J. Roche** returned to work after being on sick leave.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Staff nurse **A. Hayes** and Sempstress **F. Hermitage**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Sempstress **G. Bourne**.
  Pay increase due to **E. Dickenson**, Asst. Cook, and **E. Williams**, Wardmaid.
- **Sick List:** Deckhand **F. Milmoth** still in hospital – had been paid full pay for first week, half pay for 4 weeks, and weekly allowance of 10s [?] paid thereafter; asks at what rate he should continue to be paid. **F. Showell**, Mate, off sick with influenza.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 35 (Diphtheria = 18, Scarlet Fever = 17)

# 1916 Electoral Register: no register / not found

# 1917

***South Wharf used for fever; no smallpox cases;***
***Red Cross requisitioned for Woolwich Arsenal***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1917

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1915-20 – bound together as one volume;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1611)

Page 6

- **Effects of war on staffing**: shortage of M.A.B. staff due to war – 600 vacancies at end of year.

Page 9

- **Fever cases** decreased from the previous year. Diphtheria was the main fever treated, which continued to exceed scarlet fever. 'As in previous years, a considerable number of soldiers and sailors suffering from various infectious diseases was received'. There was also an increase in measles cases.
- **No smallpox cases** admitted during the year; 3 cases were certified as smallpox, but the diagnosis was not confirmed.

Page 13

- **River ambulances conveyed 696 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to and from Long Reach = 426 (all fever)
  Visitors, staff, workmen etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 270
- **Red Cross requisitioned**: The ambulance steamer Red Cross was temporarily handed over to the Government to transport munitions workers at Woolwich, with the proviso that it be returned should a serious epidemic occur.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1917-18 Vol. LI & LII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1917-18)

Pages 117, 283

- **Requisitioning of the Red Cross**: the Red Cross was requested for the transport of munitions workers at Woolwich; the Ministry of Shipping was informed that it 'can be placed at their disposal at any time, with the stipulation that should a serious epidemic occur it should be returned in its present state of preparedness with as little delay as possible.' [from report dated 4 Oct 1917]
  P. 283 – 'This vessel was handed over to the Ministry of Shipping in October 1917, and considerable adaptation was required in order to fit her for the use to which she was put'.

Page 117

- **Death of Piermaster H. Targett**: report of his death at the London Hospital after an operation, following 18 years' service. 'He was one of the best employees in the river service, and leaves a widow, who is in poor circumstances, and two children.' Recommended that a contribution be made to his funeral. [from Hospitals Committee report dated 4 Oct 1917]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 2, 1917**

- **Cultivation of land at West Wharf:** 'In view of the desire for all spare land to be cultivated, I would state for the Managers' information, there is a plot of land at West Wharf about 1/5 acre in extent that could be made use of, a portion is all ready tilled, the remainder would require the grass removing before "turning over", this work could be carried out by the Pierman resident there…'
- **Staff changes**: 'On the 15th Dec 1 week's notice was given to Asst. Pierman **J. Smith** terminating his services, he being medically unfit for duty.' New staff: **H. Seagrave**, Asst. Pierman, and **J. A. Forbes**, Asst. Pierman, who then left about a week later 'having absented himself without leave on more than one occasion.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resigned - Asst. Nurse **W. Herring**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **B. Smith**, and Messroom Maid **E. Kirk**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **E. Deasy**.
- **Sick List: F. Milmoth** still an inmate of the Seamans Hospital.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach (diphtheria) = 26

**January 30, 1917**

- **Collision**: 'On the 26th inst. the barge Baines collided with the "White Cross" damaging teak rail and indenting bulwarks…'
- **Effects of Silvertown explosion**: 'As a result of the explosion on Friday night 19th inst., 4 panes of glass were broken at South Wharf, and at North Wharf 10 small panes of glass, 8 gas globes and 1 clock was broken also 1 door jambed and broken, new glass has been fitted where possible and requisition is now made for further glass required.' [This explosion must be the one at the Silvertown munitions factory which occurred on Jan 19, 1917]
- **Deckhand Milmoth's sickness**: 'On Jan 9th Deckhand F. Milmoth was medically examined by Dr. Cameron and as a result Milmoth proceeds to the Downs Sanatorium for treatment during the course of the week, his services being no longer available, sanction is asked to the filling of this vacancy.'
- **Staff changes**: Night Gate Porter **Allen** resigned. Proposes to fill the vacancy with Night Watchman **Russell**. **J. Barber** appointed as Asst. Pierman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Messroom Maid **A. Webster** and Asst. Nurse **L. Burch**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Messroom Maids **V. Joslin** and A**. Dudley**; Asst. Nurse **M. Avis**.

**February 27, 1917**

- **Collision**: 'On the 20th inst. the Barge "Naiad" owned by Messrs Humphrey & Gray, collided with the lower dolphin at S. Wharf doing damage to upper portion of wood work …'
- **Chairman's visit**: visited West Wharf on Feb 5, and North and South Wharves on Feb 9.
- **Staff appointments**: **J. Higgins** as Deck Hand, and **G. Wickes** as Night Gate Porter – 'this man has been discharged from the Army due to loss of left arm, and to date he is carrying out his duties in a very satisfactory manner.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resignations - Wardmaids **M. Baker** and **G. Hudson**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaids **A. Goodsall** and **G. Warner**.
- **Sick List**: Deckhand **J. Higgins** and Asst. Pierman **H. Seagrove**.

**March 27, 1917**

- **Cultivation of vegetables at wharves**: 'The ground at West Wharf has been trenched, tilled and manured, 4 cwt of seed potatoes obtained from Joyce Green have been supplied there and planting is now being carried out by the Pierman, with a view to growing beans etc at West and South Wharves…'
- **Discharge of Deckhand F. Milmoth**: 'now in the Downs Sanatorium, was taken off our books…'
- **Deckhand disappears**: '**J. Higgins** Deck Hand was paid wages on following Sat, and has not since returned to duty.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**

Transferred to Joyce Green - Wardmaid **A. White** and Sempstress **G. Bourne.**
Transferred from Joyce Green - Sempstress **G. Eyres**

- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Joyce Green Hospital from North Wharf = 1

**April 24, 1917**

- **Staff news: F. Fainton**, Mate, on sick list. Increase of pay due for **C. Digby**, Master.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Nurse **Deasy**; Messroom Maids **Joslin** and **Dudley;**
  Sister **E. Boyden**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaid **A. White**; Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**; Sister **Boyden**; Messroom Maid **A. Young**; Staff Nurse **E. Nicholas**.

**May 22, 1917**

- **Collisions at North Wharf**: 'On the 2nd. Inst. the barge "Opley" [?] collided with the lower dolphin North Wharf damaging diagonal brace and on the 4th inst. the barge "Pansy" [?] damaged the Pier Brow in way of cross stays. Both of these barges are owned by Messrs Cook & Co. On the 9th inst. another diagonal brace was found fractured the result of collision by unknown craft.'
- **Clocks needing repair**: 'The clocks at the wharves being out of order and several stopped for want of repair, I ask for sanction to prices being obtained for the cleaning and repair of 12 clocks.'
- **Resignation of Asst. Pierman Barber**: 'May 14th to date – Temporary Assistant Pierman Barber absent from duty, a medical certificate was received for ulcers in eye, he now writes resigning his post, and has made personal application for return of his War Loan contributions on the grounds that though he was still under the Doctor, his intention was to leave the Service, upon which I informed him his resignation as tendered could not be accepted as he was employed on work of national importance and advised him to return to duty when well.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resignation - **J Milson**, Staff Nurse.
  Pay increases/bonuses: Increase of pay due to Staff Nurse **E. Nicholas** and Asst. Matron **Miss Ellis**. Wardmaid **A. White** eligible for long service premium on completion of 12 months' service, and Wardmaid **M. Davies** on completion of a further 6 months' service is eligible for a premium.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - **M. Avis**, Asst. Nurse; Wardmaids **A. Goodsell** and **G. Warner**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green: Asst. Nurse **G. Oseland**, Wardmaids **D. Mitchell** and **L. Kemp**.

**June 20, 1917**

- **Requisitioning of Red Cross for Woolwich Arsenal:** 'On June 9th, 2 representatives from the Ministry of Munitions visited South Wharf and inspected the steamers, the opinion they formed being that the only vessel suitable for their requirements was the "Red Cross"; this vessel being subsequently surveyed by 2 Admiralty Surveyors on June 12th who pronounced her suitable for the purpose required (ie) that of conveying workpeople from Woolwich Arsenal to the other side of the river and back.'
- **Departure of Asst. Pierman Barber:** 'Asst. Pierman J. Barber has not since returned to duty (having left the Service without notice) in accordance with instructions from the Accountant, the amount of his contributions 12s 6d to War Loan Stock was refunded to him on the 11th inst.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **Brewster**; **F. Hermitage**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Sempstress **G. Eyres**.
  Long service bonuses for Wardmaid **A. White** - eligible for cash bonus £2.00 on completion of 12 months' service, and Wardmaid **E. Williams** eligible for £1.00 on completion of 6 months' service.

**July 17, 1917**

- **Staff changes and updates:** new appointments - **W. Baker** as Asst. Pierman, and **A. Azeamar** as Deckhand. Resignations - **A. Young**, Messroom Orderly, and **W. Baker**, Asst. Pierman. Staff eligible for bonuses: **G. Wickes**, Night Gate Porter, for 6 months' service, and Stokers **W. Mead** and **A. Eastaway**, and Watchmen **J. Hughes** and **F. Coulsdon**, for 3 months' service. Resident staff eligible for bonus: **H. Seagrave**, Asst. Pierman, for 6 months, and **F. Webb**, Pierman, for 3 months.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Brewster** and Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Messroom Orderly **E. Gee**, and Asst Nurse **N. Williams**.

**October 9, 1917**

- **Groundings of ambulance steamers**: 'On July 19th the "Geneva Cross" grounded on some hard substance indenting and fracturing bottom steel plate … On Sep 1st at low water the Albert Victor took a shear on the mud and broke a mooring bollard…'
- **Requisitioning of Red Cross for Woolwich Arsenal:** 'In furtherance of my report re hire of Red Cross by the Woolwich Arsenal Authorities the vessel was visited by the Board of Trade Surveyor on the 2nd inst. and arrangements are now being made for the Survey of Machinery and Docking of Vessel by the Arsenal Authorities. Meanwhile the Red Cross is still at South Wharf.'
- **Death of Piermaster Targett**: 'I regret to report death of Piermaster Targett N. Wharf Sept 27th. He was on the sick list from Sept 15th certified suffering from influenza and gastric catarrh, and on 21st Sept removed to London Hospital where he died from typhoid fever and haemorrhage. Piermaster Targett would have completed 16 years service with the Board on 4th Dec. next. He was a most efficient officer, his conduct and ability being at all times exemplary. He was an old Exmouth boy from 1895 to 1901, a Gold Badge Boy, and was awarded Silver Watch for Best Boy in School and Silver Medal for Special Conduct and Ability.' At the end of the month's report is an addendum: 'In connection with the occupation of No. 2 Managers St by Mrs Targett, I ask for instructions as to what period of grace may be allowed Mrs Targett in occupying these premises without rent.' [This is a staff house at North Wharf].
- **Departing Domestic:** 'Ward Orderly **M. Davies** went on leave July 28th and did not return. On Aug 9th M. Davies wrote, she did not intend to return. Nett wages due … have not been paid.'
- **Shelter during air raids**: '…I beg to say the families of the employees in the Staff Cottages have been sheltered during Air Raids in the female staff quarters since Sept 29th.'
- **Staff changes: C. Fennel** appointed as Porter. Resignations: **A. Azeamar**, temp. Deckhand.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resignation - **E. Doble**, Staff Nurse.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Nurses **Oseland** and **Williams**, and Ward Orderlies **D. Mitchell. D. Kemp, M. March, D. Martin**; Sempstress **F. Hermitage**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Nurses **Tormey**, **Green, Crondace**; Ward Orderlies **Martin, Hearnden, March, Ennis, Hughes, Waters**; Sempstress **Eyres**.
  Bonuses and pay increases: eligible for long service premium for 12 months' service and also war bonus - Ward Orderly **D. Hearndon**. Eligible for war bonus for 3 months' service – **H. Seagrove**. Asst. Cook **E. Dickenson** eligible for pay increase.
- **Sick List: C. Denny**, Engine Driver, with diarrhea.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 102

**November 6, 1917**

- **Requisitioning of Red Cross for Woolwich Arsenal:** The Red Cross was surveyed, and taken over by the Ministry of Shipping, and on the 30th of October 'the vessel left South Wharf for survey and conversion to Arsenal requirements.'
- **Collision with pier:** 'On the 23rd Oct the barge "Doris" fouled the pier brow at South Wharf doing damage to deck planking…'
- **Use of South Wharf for fever, and increased workload for Clerk**: 'With the opening of South Wharf for Acute Fever patients and their retention in the wards, increased clerical work in connection with their reception, dieting and transport devolves upon the clerk (**Mr Roche**). This work necessitates him being often employed till 8 and 9 o'clock of a night. I ask therefore to Committee's consideration for overtime pay being sanctioned for the periods worked after 6pm. On former occasions it has been the practice to engage an Asst. Clerk to deal with this work, but in view of the times no request has been made so far.'
- **Staff changes and bonuses: J. Hardiman** appointed as Asst. Pierman. Eligible for 6 months service premium – Messroom Orderly **E. Gee**; Asst. Nurses **J. Freeman, D. Clark;**
  Cook **E. Dickenson**; Sempstress **G. Eyres**; Ward Orderly **Williams**; Stokers **F. Mead** and **E. Eastaway;** Night Watchmen **J. Hughes** and **F. Coulsdon**; Pierman **F. Webb**.
- **Nursing and domestic staff transfers:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Nurses **E. Doble**, **Freeman, Clarke, Lockyer, Titterton**. Ward Orderlies **Wells, E. Ware, M. Paterson**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Ward Orderly **Hearnden**, and Nurse **Tormey**.
- **No. of fever patients** transferred to Long Reach = 167 (direct admissions 108, transfers 59)

**December 4, 1917**

- **Preparation of Red Cross for Woolwich Arsenal**: Red Cross underwent surveys in preparation for use in transporting Woolwich Arsenal staff. Discussions as to which repairs should be paid for by MAB, and which they shouldn't have to cover. Passenger certificate issued for carrying 515 persons.
- **Pierman Webb and his application to work at North Wharf:** 'Re Piermaster's post North Wharf. Pierman F. Webb has applied for this position. He has a good record, a most suitable man for the post and can recommend him. His record is as follows. Royal Navy 12 years. Merchant service 5 years. South Wharf 4 ½ years. His services would have been considered before, but was handicapped by being "Single", this objection is now waived as he proposes to get married forthwith.'
- **Mr Targett's widow**: 'As the period for which Mrs Targett was allowed to remain in the house at North Wharf has expired I ask for further instructions and submit letter received from Mrs Targett on the 28th ult., who is still resident there.'
- **Staff changes: J. Calnan** appointed as Night Watchman, temporary.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resigned - Messroom Orderly **E. Gee**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **M. Macaulay**, Staff Nurse **J. Green.**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Asst. Nurses **M. Jenkins** and **C. Lavering**.
  Eligible for 6 months service premium / war bonuses: Ward Orderlies **E. Williams** and **A. White.**
- **Sick List: F. Showell**, Mate.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  **No. of fever patients** admitted = 98 (direct admissions 54, transfers 42, discharged 2)

# 1917 Electoral Register: no register / not found

# 1918

***Smallpox returns briefly - South Wharf takes smallpox patients again, then back to fever cases; staff shortages filled by soldiers***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1918

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1915-20 - bound together as one volume;
London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1612)

Pages 5 - 8

- **Loss of M.A.B. staff to war**: the total number of male employees of the M.A.B. who joined the forces was 1,493, out of a total of about 2,600. 156 members of female staff also left to take up war work. 153 of the men who enlisted had been killed or died of wounds (named on P. 5, none from South Wharf mentioned) and 234 were seriously wounded.
- **Rationing, and staff shortages**: Problems of rationing discussed, and shortage of staff – luckily there were no major epidemics at the time so the shortage of staff was an inconvenience rather than a serious difficulty.

Page 9

- **The steamer Red Cross** is mentioned as being lent in September 1917 to the military authorities (see also M.A.B. Annual Report 1917)

Pages 11 - 12

- **Admissions for infectious diseases** were fewer than in 1917. The majority of admissions were for diphtheria, exceeding scarlet fever cases. 'As in previous years, a considerable number of soldiers and sailors suffering from various infectious diseases was received'.
- **Increased smallpox cases, and pattern of epidemics:** 45 smallpox cases treated during the year – a greater number than any of the preceding 6 years. A table drawn up by Dr Cameron, Medical Superintendent of the Smallpox Hospitals, shows a pattern of epidemics roughly every 9 years, pointing to the possibility of an outbreak in 1920.

Page 58

- **River ambulances conveyed 403 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 210
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 37
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 19
  Staff etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 137
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross (on wartime loan)

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1917-18 Vol. LI & LII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1917-18)

Page 202

- **Increase in smallpox, soldiers to staff South Wharf**, **car for Dr Cameron**: reference to recent outbreak of smallpox and being prepared for larger numbers of patients. '…in order to obtain the necessary male staff, the War Office have been approached, through the Local Government Board, and, in pursuance of arrangements made in 1916, have provided a considerable number of soldiers for duty both at South Wharf (as piermen, deckhands and stokers) and at the River Hospitals (as porters, orderlies, carpenters, stokers, etc.) The Ambulance Committee have been asked to provide

a motor vehicle for Dr. Cameron's use when travelling to see notified cases of smallpox before their admission to South Wharf…' [from Hospitals Committee report dated 8 April 1918]

Page 203

- **Chaplain - Rev. W. H Hacksley:** 'An offer has been received from the Rev. W. H. Hacksley, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Rotherhithe, to act as chaplain to the smallpox patients at South Wharf. As we felt it was desirable that these patients should be visited by a chaplain, we accepted Mr. Hacksley's offer, which was made without any request for remuneration, but as we are of opinion that he should receive some payment, we have arranged for him to be paid the sum of 10s. 6d. a visit, such visits only to be made at the request of the medical officer at the wharf.'
- **Chief Officer Mr Sullivan – reconsideration of salary and title**: on Mr Sullivan's request for a salary increase and change of job title, the Hospitals Committee consider how they can satisfy his requests and make full use of his engineering and administrative skills, considering that in quieter years there are fewer demands on him. They propose and agree to add the duties of supervising the engineering equipment of Long Reach Hospital and shore buildings, to change his title from 'Chief Officer' to 'Engineer-Surveyor of the small pox service (River Ambulance Service, Long Reach Hospital and the shore buildings)', and to increase his salary of £395 to £450 a year. [from report dated 8 April 1918]

Pages 239, 280

- **Repairs to river frontage**: tender from Messrs Chafen & Newman of 96 Trundley Rd, Deptford, for 'repair of the river frontage at South Wharf', and completion of work. [from report dated 30 Oct 1918]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 1, 1918**

- **Return of war-injured watchman**: 'Night Watchman **Edwards** (North Wharf) now discharged from the Army with loss of right arm, having applied for permission to resume his employment, it is proposed subject to your approval that arrangements be made for him taking up his duties on Sat Jan 5th.'
- **Staff changes**: with Pierman **Webb** promoted to Piermaster at North Wharf, proposes filling his role by transferring **J. Calnan**, Temp. Night Watchman, to Pierman - 'This man was taken on after the loss of Piermaster Targett and so far has proved reliable and efficient.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resigned - Asst. Nurse **V. [?] Lockyear**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Asst. Nurses **M. Jones** and **A. Jones**; Messroom Orderly **L. Green**, Ward Orderly **A. Pawley**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green: Asst. Nurses **E. M. Jenkins, G. Crondace, D. Clarke, S. Titterton**; Ward Orderlies **G. Hughes, R. Wells, E. Ware**; Staff Nurse **E. Doble**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 61 (direct admissions = 37, transfers = 24) Death = 1 Returned home = 1

**January 29, 1918**

- **Cultivation at West Wharf:** lists the costs of seed, and value of produce grown from it.
- **Mr Targett's widow moves out:** 'On the 9th Jan Mrs Targett vacated No. 2 Managers St, North Wharf, and Piermaster **Webb** went into occupation on the 13th inst. Mrs Targett desires me to state she is very grateful for all that has been done for her.'
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 12

**February 26, 1918**

- **Need for repair of wharf frontage**: 'The attention of the Committee is called to the defective condition of the wooden piles and camp sheeting on the river frontage at this wharf. Due to dry rot the upper portion of a number of piles, can hardly be considered reliable for the work of preserving the land frontage intact … The camp sheeting (ie) (the planking in between the piles) also requires

attention, many of these planks being defective. The necessity of this work has been apparent before today, but has not been brought forward before in view of the abnormal times, the time has however now arrived when I consider it would be advisable for the work of repair to be considered…'

- **Collision**: 'On 31st ult. the Steamer London Queen collided with the Maltese Cross, doing damage to paddle box …'
- **Military vacates West Wharf**: 'On Feb 20th the military unit stationed at West Wharf and Mead Ambulance Station were removed to another district and the premises vacated.'
- **Sick list:** Asst. Pierman **J. Hardiman**, and also **Clement Sullivan** himself: 'Due to a chill and an attack of neuralgia I was absent from duty from Feb 14 to Tues Feb 19th.'
- **Resignation**: Asst. Pierman **H. Seagrave**.

**March 26, 1918**

- **Collision at wharf**: 'On Feb 26th the Barge George collided with the inner dolphin at this wharf, doing damage to [?] water pile…'
- **Smallpox admissions moved to South Wharf**: 'On Sat Mar 2nd 9.0pm 5 Small Pox cases were admitted to North Wharf and transferred to Long Reach on the 3rd inst. Patients were received there till the 5th inst., when it was decided to open South Wharf, where smallpox patients are now received.'
- **Soldiers arrive to staff South Wharf:** 'On March 7th 16 Sappers and 1 Sergeant of the Inland Water Transport arrived 5.10pm for duty at South Wharf. These men were rationed by the Board at Army Scale rate until Mar 12th when the Poplar Depot took over the rationing of the troops with army supplies… [gives details of value of rations, costing of supplies etc] … the cooking of the food for these men hitherto performed by the kitchen staff is now undertaken by one of the troops who has been acting as cook since the 22nd with satisfactory results.'
- **Air raid shell hits South Wharf**: 'About 10.30pm Mar 7th during Enemy Air Craft attack a 3" shell with Fire cap gone struck the Receiving Room annexe at South Wharf, doing damage as follows:
  Glass roof broken
  Wooden barge board broken
  Roof struts and tie bars damaged
  Blue brick paving damaged
  The shell was removed from South Wharf by an Officer of the Army Ordnance Corps Mar. 10th / 18.'
- **Staff refusing re-vaccination:** '**W. Mead** Charge Stoker was paid 1 week's wages in lieu of notice for refusing to comply with Small Pox regulations as to be revaccinated, and on the same day **A. Eastaway** was paid 1 day's pay in lieu of notice, for the same reason. Eastaway tendered his resignation 6 days previously.'
- **Staff appointments: B. Young** and **W. Skellin** as Charge Stokers, **H. Lawrence** as temp. Porter, and **F. Hall** as temp. Asst. Pierman. (W. Skellin and H. Lawrence resigned shortly after.)
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Staff Nurses **F. M. Cozens, B. Hughes**; Asst. Nurses **W. J. Ellard, M. Griffith, W. Buckley, D. Pickles, J. Freema**n; Sister **A. Lloyd**, Ward Orderlies **J. Morris, W. Webb, E. Wright, C. Gough**.
  Transferred to Long Reach - Staff Nurse **F. Cozens**, Ward Orderly **M. Patterson**.
- **Soldiers staffing South Wharf**: 'On the 16th inst. an additional Sergeant reported for duty here, and on the 18th inst. Sapper Stone (?) left for the Depot, being declared medically unfit.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 30
  Returned home, not smallpox = 3 Detained in shelter = 1

**April 23, 1918**

- **Contractors and smallpox vaccination costs**: claim received from contractors employed to scale the boilers of the steamers for time lost by their staff in complying with the smallpox vaccination regulations.
- **Acid conveyed on steamers:** 'On the 15th inst. 10 Carboys of …….[?] Acid were delivered at North Wharf for conveyance to Joyce Green (via Long Reach). Apart from the objection to goods passing through Long Reach just now, these Carboys are a most undesirable freight for these steamers and I ask for instructions as to their transfer.'

- **Smallpox rates of pay for South Wharf staff:** 'In connection with the opening of South Wharf for Small Pox patients the monthly staff were paid on March 31st at the rate of £2.00 per annum advance on fever rates.'
- **Cook with Scarlet Fever**: 'Asst. Cook **E. Dickenson** ill with Scarlet Fever from Jan 4th – Feb 21st was granted 2 weeks sick leave on recovery, she now makes application for the allowance of 20d weekly for that time, the allowance laid down for employees under these conditions.'
- **Phone out of order and Post Office staff refusing vaccination**: telephone at South Wharf out of order 'but owing to the refusal of the P.O. telephone staff to be vaccinated the defect has not been rectified. Meanwhile the receipt of a call, cannot be guaranteed here.'
- **Staff news: B. Young**, temp. Charge Stoker, resigned. Pay increase pay due to **C. Digby**, Master.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Brewster, [?] K. Lambourne**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Ward Orderly **A. Powley**; Asst. Nurses **C. Lavering, A. Jones, M. Jones, M. Griffiths**; Mess Orderly **L. Green**. Transferred to Long Reach: Sister **A. Lloyd**
- **Sick List: W. Livett**, Senior Deckhand.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 3 Detained in shelter = 1

**May 23, 1918**

- **Repairs to wharf frontage - specifications**: because of the high costs, he specifies the minimum amount of work to be done to make the wharf frontage safe and watertight; 'in addition it is specified for openings between planking where tide flows in and out of wharf to be covered with 1 ½ planking against renewing planking all over the area…' Due to the high price of pitch pine, he specifies 'home grown oak' for piling and larch or fir for capping.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:** Resignation - Ward Orderly **J. Morris**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Brewster**; Ward Orderly **D. Gigg**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2 Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1
  'Returned home' = 2

**June 18, 1918**

- **Closure of South Wharf for Smallpox and discharge of army staff**: 'With the closure of South Wharf for Small Pox, the Military Authorities at Poplar were notified on the 14th inst. that 11 men of the unit stationed here could be disposed with, they will therefore under army instructions return to their headquarters on Sat. 22nd inst. This leaves 5 sappers and 1 carpenter at the wharf.'
- **South Wharf disinfected**: buildings and equipment disinfected between June 5 – 15.
- **Artificial arm for war-injured watchman**: 'Night Watchman **Edwards** who lost right arm whilst serving with the forces was notified to attend Roehampton Hospital on 7th inst. for the purpose of having an artificial arm fitted, he is still detained there and will probably be some weeks away…'
- **Resignation: J. Calnan**, temporary Pierman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes:**
  Transferred to Long Reach Hospital - Ward Orderlies **E. Wright** and **C. Gough.**
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Staff Nurse **B. Hughes**, Asst. Nurses **J. Freeman**, **M. Ellard**.
  Transferred from Long Reach Hospital - Ward Orderlies **E. Wright, C. Chapman.**
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **A. Bryant, M. Skerritt, M. France**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0
  Transferred to S.E. Hospital, not smallpox = 1

**July 30, 1918**

- **Artificial arm for war-injured watchman:** Night Watchman Edwards returned to work after having 'mechanical arm fitted' at Roehampton.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **W. Buckley, M. France, M. Skerritt**;
  Ward Orderlies **A. Webb, K. Lambourne**
- **Resignation**: Asst. Pierman **F. Hall**

**September 24, 1918**

- **Wharf frontage repair**: being carried out by Messrs Chafen & Newman, and nearly complete.

- **Gate Keeper recruited for army**: 'Gate Keeper **E. Lake** has recently been before the Army Medical Board and having been graded A.1. I am informed by Mr Mabner that he will be required for the Army…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Resignation - Ward Orderly **E. Wright**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **E. Freeman, M. Graham**; Ward Orderly **R. Rouse**; Sister **A Lloyd**; Staff Nurse **E. Brewer**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Sister **A. Lloyd**, Asst. Nurse **A. Bryant**.
- **Sick List**: Night Watchman **W. Russell.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  **No. of fever patients** transported to Long Reach = 25

**October 22, 1918**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 24th Sept the Barge Weaver collided with the lower Dolphin at South Wharf, doing damage to angle iron and rubber. On the 5th inst. the White Cross while returning to berth, damaged own bulwarks and rail due to swell from passing steamer. On the 12th the Maltese Cross on passage to Long Reach in order to avoid collision with sailing craft in Blackwall Reach came in contact with an iron barge damaging bulwarks and stanchions of Maltese Cross…'
- **Watchman in hospital**: 'Night Watchman **Russell** on sick list since Sept 14th is an inpatient at Guy's Hospital since Oct. 14th…'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Ward Orderly **D. Gigg**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital: Ward Orderly **V. Gould**; Kitchen Orderly **E. Roots**.
  Increase of pay due to Asst. Cook **E. Dickenson**.
- **No. of fever patients** transported to Long Reach = 66

**November 5, 1918**

- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Kitchen Maid **E. Roots** transferred to Joyce Green Hospital.
- **No. of fever patients** transported to Long Reach = 21

**December 3, 1918**

- **Collision**: 'On the 18th Nov. the Barge Cambourne collided with the Maltese Cross at South Wharf doing damage to bulwarks…'
- **Death of Mrs McMahon, Pierman's Wife**: 'Nov. 12th. I regret to report the death of Mrs MacMahon from Pneumonia following Influenza, wife of Pierman MacMahon at West Wharf, and an old employee of the Board's at various institutions for 23 years.'
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **M. E. Graham, E. C. Freeman**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital: Asst. Nurses **M. Skerritt, M. France.**
- **Staff news:** Night Watchman **A. Russell** still at Guys Hospital.
  Pay increase for Piermaster **F. Webb**.
- **No. of** [fever] **patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 48

# 1918 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Hobbs**, William Henry
**Calnan**, James
**Hall**, Frederick James
**Hardeman**, John
**Price**, William James
**Roche**, James

# 1919

***South and North Wharves used alternately for smallpox and fever cases; staff return from war, and the Red Cross is returned from Woolwich Arsenal***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1919-20

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1915-20 - bound together as one volume; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1613)

Page 15

- **Increase in admissions of patients with infectious diseases** since previous year. Diphtheria continued to be the main fever treated.

Page 19

- **26 cases of smallpox** admitted to smallpox hospital during the year, with 4 deaths.

Page 34

- **Return of staff from war:** 1,649 of M.A.B.'s employees had served in forces during war, and most were assimilated back into work over the year, with some difficulty for those who had been injured, but 'posts found for the majority. For example, men who had lost limbs were appointed as gate porters or given other work equally compatible with their disabilities.'

Page 120

- **River ambulances conveyed 794 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 202
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 391
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 40
  Staff etc conveyed to and from Long Reach = 161
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1919 Vol. LIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1919)

Pages 12-13

- **Telephone line problems**: phone line from South Wharf to Head Office 'constantly out of order'. Recently out of order for 11 days and couldn't get it repaired. 'This defect has caused great inconvenience in connection with the reception of smallpox patients. In view of the importance of this wharf, which is a receiving station for cases of smallpox, being constantly accessible by telephone, we are of opinion that it should be connected with the local exchange.' [from report dated 23 Jan 1919]

Page 38

- **Death of nightwatchman A. Russell**: died on 7 Feb in Greenwich Infirmary after working for M.A.B. for 26 years 'and bore an excellent character. As we understand his widow is in poor circumstances we think a contribution should be made towards the cost of the funeral…'

Page 82

- **Salary of second assistant matron Miss Ella Ellis**: recommendation of additional allowance of £10 a year. 'Miss Ellis has had 23 years service, but not being fully trained cannot be promoted to be first assistant matron, although she is otherwise entirely fit for promotion, and is, and in fact has

been for many years, performing the duties of the office.' [Later entry in 1926 confirms that she worked at South Wharf, and gives her full name as Miss Ella L. H. Ellis]

Page 137

- **Preparations for Red Cross to be returned to R.A.S.**: substantial repairs needed to steamer Red Cross before it could return to service for R.A.S. It had been lent to the Royal Arsenal Woolwich in wartime for transporting staff, and was in their service until June 1919.

Page 149

- **Red Cross returned**: returned to South Wharf on 30 Oct on completion of the repairs.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1914-1919

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/003)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 2, 1919**

- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Asst. Nurses **K. Storr** and **F. Ellard**; Staff Nurse **A. Goodway**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Bremer**.
- **Sick List**: Night Watchman **A. Russell** an outpatient at Guys Hospital since Sept 14;
  Senior Deck Hand **W. Livett** off sick.
- **Telephone out of order**: phone at South Wharf had been out of order on and off since Dec 11.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 3

**January 28, 1919**

- **Military unit leaves South Wharf:** 'On the 18th inst. notice was received from the Military Authorities recalling the military unit doing service at South Wharf, to Richborough Camps for demobilization, they are due to leave tomorrow Thursday, meanwhile steps are being taken to engage staff to fill these vacancies'.
- **Sickness of Night Watchman A. Russell**: had been off duty from Sept 14 to Jan 7. 'On Jan 8th being certified for light duty he commenced work and continued to Jan 20th when he again reported ill and is since off duty…'
- **Sick List:** Engineer **Masson** – influenza; Deckhand **Livett** with bronchial catarrh.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**; Ward Orderlies **C. Chapman, R. Rouse**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **K. Hickey**; Ward Orderly **W. Stringhill**
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 6 Transferred to S. Eastern Hosp = 1
  Returned home, not smallpox = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 2

**February 25, 1919**

- **Piano tuning**: 'The contractor for tuning the piano at South Wharf being unable to further carry out the work, estimates from 3 firms have been called …'
- **Pierman back from military service**: **C. Warrington**, Asst. Pierman who'd been away on war service since August 1914, was now demobilized and returning to work, and requests if he can have a 'live out' post – the vacancy of Night Watchman is proposed for him.
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **C. Bennett** appointed Jan 28th – reported ill suffering with colic contracted in the army and going into hospital as a result. **C. Denny**, Stoker/Driver of Launch, also off sick.
- **Death of Night Watchman A. Russell**: 'On Jan 31st Night Watchman A. Russell on sick list since Sept 14th / [19]18 was removed to Greenwich Infirmary, where he died on February 7th aged 63 years. Russell had 25 years 9 months service for the Board. His record during that period has been of the highest for character and ability. In view of his long service and exemplary record, I ask for the Managers' consideration to the payment of the allowance granted towards funeral expenses on behalf of the widow who is without means.'
- **Unvaccinated deliveryman**: 'On Feb. 7th a load of Coke was brought to the wharf by unvaccinated carman and returned through failure to unload'.

- **Staff returned from war service**: Stoker **W. Hobbs**, Stores Porter **M. Dockery**, both returned to work after returning from the war.
- **Staff changes:** appointments - Deckhands **G. Bennett** and **W. Hawker**; Pierman **J. B. Smith**; Asst. Pierman **W. Lipyeat**; Carpenter **R. Walker**. Temporary appointments: Stoker **J. Murphy** and Asst. Pierman **C. Roberts.** Resignation - Pierman **J. B. Smith**.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Ward Orderly **A. Ames**, Asst. Nurses **E. Cook** and **E. Carden**; Staff Nurse **L. Canacott**
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **K. Hickey, W. Ellard, K. Starr**;
  Ward Orderly **F. Gould**; Staff Nurse **A. Cushway**.
- **No. of smallpox patients**: 'recovered patients discharged' = 7

**March 25, 1919**

- **Search for piano tuners**: '…estimates were invited from 3 more piano tuners for tuning the piano at this wharf, but no replies have been received.'
- **Sick List**: Engine Driver **C. Denny** and Night Watchman **Edwards** with influenza; Senior Deckhand **W. Livett** with bronchial catarrh; Night Gate Keeper **Wicks** with sprained ankle.
- **Resignation: G. Roberts**, temp. Asst. Pierman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Ward Orderlies **A. Jarvis** and **Martin**; Asst. Nurses **Thomas** and **Prince**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 6 Transferred to S. W. Hosp. = 1
  Returned home, not smallpox = 2

**April 24, 1919**

- **Permission for fowl-keeping at North Wharf**: Night Watchman **Edwards** living at North Wharf 'has asked if he can be allowed to keep fowls in the yard…'
- **Sick List**: Night Watchman **Edwards**; Mate **Fainton** and Engine Driver **Hellyer** with Influenza.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Ward Orderly **D. Martin** transferred to Joyce Green.
- **Staff news: F. Nightingale**, Marine Stoker, returned from war. Increase of pay for **C. Digby** on completion of a further 12 months' service.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 3 Detained in shelters = 1

**June 3, 1919**

- **Collision**: 'On the 14th May the Barge A.C. 1029 collided with the Lower Dolphin at South Wharf, doing damage to rubbing plate and pile of structure…'
- **Return of Red Cross from Woolwich Arsenal**: makes enquiries about the return of the Red Cross after it having been used for war duty at Woolwich Arsenal; is informed that they intend to dispense with its services on June 28; arrangements made for its survey, repair and reconditioning before being handed back.
- **Return of stretchers and litters from war service**: Army returned 11 wheeled litters and 17 stretchers borrowed from West Wharf in 1914. 'They have seen a lot of service, are badly damaged and unfit for further use without repair…' Proposed that they are repaired and the costs recovered from the Army Authorities.
- **Staff appointments: R. Hill** as Night Watchman; **L. Biggs** as Asst. Pierman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Resignations - Asst. Nurse **E. Carden**, Asst. Cook **E. Price**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **E. Cook** and **L. Thomas**;
  Ward Orderlies A. **Ames** and **N. Clarke**; Sister **E. Boyden**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital: Sister **E. Boyden**, Asst. Nurses **E. Scott, M. Tatlock, B. Gibbs**; Ward Orderlies **G. Brooker, A. Martin**; Kitchenmaid **D. Skinner**.
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **W. Livett**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 4 Transferred to S. E. Hosp. = 1
  Returned home, not smallpox = 2

**July 1, 1919**

- **Collision**: 'On May 31st the barge Malta collided with the "Albert Victor" damaging paddlebox; on June 5th the barge Dorothy collided with "White Cross" damaging fender beam, and on June 7th the

rowing boat at North Wharf broke her moorings and got fast under the pier brow, damaging stern and planking…'

- **Return of Red Cross**: visited Woolwich Arsenal to survey the Red Cross, and made arrangements for its reconditioning and return.
- **Resignation:** temporary Marine Stoker **J. Murphy**.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **F. Kennedy, E. White**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurse **D. Prince.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1 Transferred to S. E. Hosp. = 1
  Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**July 29, 1919**

- **Preparations for return of Red Cross**: being reconditioned; 'It may interest the Committee to know that during the 18 months the Red Cross was in service at Woolwich she carried 2,103,729 passengers, some periods at the rate of 40,000 per week of 6 days, and up to 680 per trip.'
- **Staff updates:** Deckhand **H. A. Gladish** appointed. Stoker **Nightingale** receives Returned War Bonus.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Ward Orderlies **E. Pearson**, **A. Kirk**; Kitchen Orderly **E. Roots**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital: Ward Orderly **A. Jarvis.**
- **Purchases**: petty cash payments for the month include for veg & fruit, lymph, 6 bottles ale, 1lb biscuits, tin fruit and tobacco – 'Peace Fare'

*Reports for 1919 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**October 7, 1919**

- **Small boat submerged by ambulance steamer:** 'On the 20th Sept the "White Cross" whilst on passage to Long Reach fouled the painter of the small boat attached to Barge "Cam" causing the boat to fill with water and submerge, the matter is in the hands of the Insurance Co for full settlement, but to date no claim has been received for damage to boat.'
- **Staff changes:** appointed - **Thos Hughes**, Marine Stoker; and three Night Watchmen: **John Hands, William Green, Joshua Gibbs.** Deck Hand **H. Gladish** resigned.
- **Nursing, clerical and domestic staff changes**: Resignation - Asst. Nurse **F. Kennerly**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Staff Nurse **E. Bampton**, Asst. Nurses **E. Bull, M. Pendall, E. Chapman, L. Davies**; Ward Orderlies **E. Wright, S. Bull, J. Jenkins, A. Cheal**; Kitchen Orderly **A. Sharp**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Clerk **W. Butterworth**, Asst. Nurses **E. Scott, M. Tatlock, B. Gibbs, E. White, E. Chapman**; Kitchen Orderly **E. Roots**;
  Ward Orderlies **G. Brooker, A. Martin**. Transferred to S.E. Hospital - Staff Nurse **L. Canacott**
- **Returned from war service**: Night Watchman **G. Warrington**.
- **Sick List: F. Fainton**, Mate, and **J. Hughes**, Marine Stoker.
- **Purchases**: petty cash payments listed include for veg & fruit, lemons, 200 cabbage plants, and ½ dozen lymph.

**November 4, 1919**

- **Red Cross returned from war service**: 'On Oct 30th the Red Cross returned to South Wharf, the work of reconditioning being now completed by the contractors, the vessel is now available for the Board's Service.'
- **Request for pay increase by Night Watchman: W. Horton** requested to be paid extra as he woks 3 days at South Wharf and 3 days relief work at North Wharf, and 'bases his application on the plea that as it takes him longer to go to North Wharf than to South Wharf, he should be

remunerated for the time so engaged. As these men are engaged for the River Service and not any specific wharf, and have carried out relief duties both annual and otherwise for many years, I submit this matter for your decision, no payment having been made before, other than travelling expenses both ways.'

- **Mr Sullivan's sprained ankle:** 'Due to a sprained ankle I was off duty from Oct 23rd to 27th.'
- **Death of stoker**: 'On Oct 10th **J. Hughes** Marine Stoker on Sick List from Oct 6th died from influenza and pneumonia. His service with the Board commenced on Aug 21st 1919.'
- **Sick list: F. Showell**, Mate, and **J. Masson**, Engineer.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**December 2, 1919**

- **Bicycle accident:** 'On Nov 7 as Night Watchman **Hands** was cycling home, after duty at North Wharf, his bicycle skidded in Prestons Road, Poplar, he being thrown off and sustained a fractured thigh. He was taken to Poplar Hospital and is still detained there…' Temporary Night Watchman **Hughes** covers for him at North Wharf, but as Hughes was over 65 and due to be retired, Mr Sullivan requests that he be retained until Hands is able to return.
- **Sick List:** Carpenter **R. Walker** off duty with poisoned hand.
- **New appointments: A. Brock**, temporary Night Watchman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Ward Orderly **E. Pearson**, Asst. Nurse **M. Rendall**;
  Staff Nurse **E. Bampton**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Ward Orderly **M. Bryant**, Asst. Nurse **M. Salt**,
  Asst. Nurse **H. Clarke**.
- **Cabbage plant delivery**: petty cash payments include payment for 300 cabbage plants.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 65

**December 30, 1919**

- **Collisions**: 'On Dec 10th the 3 Barges "Two", "Sparrow" and "Norway" collided with the "Maltese Cross" and "Albert Victor" then laying at their moorings South Wharf, doing damage to paddle box, teak rail and mooring bollards…'
- **Pay increase**: for Piermaster **F. Webb**.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Ward Orderlies **S. Bull, E. Kirk, E. Wright, J. Jenkins, F. Smith**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Ward Orderlies **E. Williams, F. Smith, W. Bye, E. Jackson**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to and from Long Reach = 460
  "Admissions" = 112 Discharges" = 348

# 1919 Electoral Register

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby**, Charles + Sarah
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Showell**, Frederick + Mary
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Kelly**, Willliam Alfred + Susannah

# 1920

***South Wharf used alternately for smallpox and fever cases***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1920-21

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1920-21; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1614)

Page 55

- **Conveyed 4,898 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 2,606
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 1,860
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 31
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 401
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1920 Vol. LIV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1920)

Pages 62, 109, 131

- **Repair of wharf dolphins**: the dolphins at North, South and West wharves were all in need of extensive repair, having been erected 30-40 years previously and having no major upkeep since then. P. 109 – tender received from Chafen & Newman Ltd of 96 Trundley Rd, Deptford – estimate £1,895. P. 131 – Chafen & Newman state due to wage increases, their estimate needed to be amended. Tender re-advertised, and John Gill Contractors Ltd of Cannon St appointed – estimate £1,977. Work to be done: '…renewing stays and braces, and scarfing piles and braces to the dolphins at the North, South and West Wharves…'

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- **West Wharf returned from military occupation**: West Wharf had been in military occupation since 1916, and was handed back on 5 November. [No mention of this in 1916 Board Minutes]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 27, 1920**

- **Collision:** 'On the 3rd inst. the Barge Mary-Graham collided with the White Cross, doing damage to iron and teak rails …'
- **Proposed jetty at Trinity Wharf:** mention of a proposal at Trinity Wharf (adjoining site on the north side) to erect a jetty 125 ft out into the river; he submits to the Committee his report on this.
- **Proposal to discharge one-armed Night Watchman Wickes:** 'Wickes who will be 48 Feb 3rd next was appointed Feb 12 1917 and suffers from the loss of left arm whilst doing military service. The duties of the night man here with so small a staff vary considerably from those at a large institution; in addition to attending the gate the practice hitherto has been for the Nightman to clean out the offices, assist in receiving a patient on stretcher and conveying to a shelter when staff are off duty and do the rounds of the wharf, with a detector dial clock every hour. Wickes was engaged at a period when it was not desirable to employ an able bodied man and the above duties were waived

owing to his disablement; till such time that suitable candidates could be obtained to carry out the necessary duties. As it is important that an able bodied man should hold this office, I ask for your approval to same.'

- **Sick List:** Night Watchman **Hands** still off after bike accident; Night Watchman **Brock** also off sick.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **M. Skerritt** and **S. Cork.**
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. **Nurses L. Davies** and **F. Salt**.
- **Staff updates: J. Hardiman**, temp. Asst. Pierman, discharged. Increase of pay for **H. Hawker**, Deckhand. Asst. Pierman **L. Biggs** made permanent.
- **Return from military duty**: 'Asst. Pierman **H. Butterworth** who was appointed temporary Aug 5th 1914 to June 1916 and left for military duty has returned with loss of one eye, your approval is asked to his appointment. Age 32.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2
  **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 17 No. of fever patients discharged = 89

**February 24, 1920**

- **Repairs to dolphins**: presents specifications for repair of dolphins ('mooring accommodation for steamers') at all 3 wharves, the timbers being wasted away with dry rot and unsafe.
- **New piano**: 'Last June the Piano at this wharf was condemned and a new one provided; the old one is still here not fit for further use…' Suggests selling it to a dealer for parts.
- **Sick List: W. Livett**, Senior Deckhand, off with colic; **W. Hobbs**, Marine Stoker, off with bronchitis; and **C. Digby**, Master, with lumbago.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Ward Orderlies **E. Jackson** and **A. Cheal**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Ward Orderly **M. Brown**.
- **New staff appointments**: **E. Marriott** as Deckhand; **R. Marriott** as temporary Deckhand; **H. Butterworth** as Asst. Pierman.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach Hospital = 4
  Returned home, not smallpox = 1 Detained in shelter = 1
  **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 56 No. of fever patients discharged = 153

**March 23, 1920**

- **Sick List**: Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** with rheumatic catarrh; Mate **Fainton** with tonsillitis; Carpenter **Walker** with influenza.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Staff Nurse **F. Hancox**, Asst. Nurses **A. Household, L. Household, E. Marsh**; Wardmaids **A. King, E. Gee**; Asst. Cook **A. Hope**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Kitchenmaid **A. Sharp.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 9 Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**April 20, 1920**

- **Boat stolen from West Wharf**: 'On Good Friday 2nd inst. about 7pm the Night Watchman being on his round the rowing boat moored at the West Wharf Pontoon was taken away by some person. On the Watchman's return from his round he saw a youth in the boat making for the centre of the river, being unable to get in touch with the boat he at once reported the matter to the Battersea Police and Thames Police. By the efforts of the Thames Police the boat was found the following day moored to a Barge near Battersea Bridge and brought back to West Wharf undamaged.'
- **Pay for Night Watchmen**: Night Watchman **Horton** enquires if he is to get the same pay increase as Night Watchmen are getting at Joyce Green and Southern Hospitals. Clement Sullivan points out that any increase to one rating will mean an increase for all other ratings, and that the duties of the Night Watchman at the wharves are not as onerous as those at the large hospitals, and that their pay compares very favorably with Deckhands, who are licensed watermen.
- **Request for increase of annual leave**: Masters **W. Kelly**, **C. Digby** and Engineer **J. Masson** ask whether they can have an increase in their annual leave of 14 days, as other staff have had an increase from 10 to 14 days.
- **Sick List:** Deckhand **W. Livett**. Watchman **Hands** returned to work on light duty, but on his second day was unable to continue.

- **Staff changes:** Deckhand **E. Marriott** resigned; Deckhand **Sanders** appointed. Temporary stoker **E. Barron** transferred to permanent staff.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**:
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Ward Orderlies **E. Bryant, E. Williams, M. Strongline, A. Cork**; Asst. Nurses **L. Clarke, M. Skerritt.**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Ward Orderlies **E. Barnes, R. Beckwith, J. Hurr, A. Millard**; Staff Nurse **M. Bridgett**; Asst. Nurses **S. Scott** and **H. Morse**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 17 "Discharged" = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 5 Detained in shelters = 1

**May 18, 1920**

- **Collision**: 'On 19th April the Barge Teal owns Messrs Vokins collided with the Albert Victor doing damage to port bulwarks…'
- **Sick List**: Deckhand **J. Sanders** with influenza.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Resignations - Wardmaids **A. Millard** and **M. Brown**.
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital: Wardmaids **W. Bye** and **E. Jackson**; Staff Nurse **F. Hancox**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Wardmaid **A. Goodsell**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 3 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 15 Died = 1

**June 22, 1920**

- **Clock repairs**: 12 clocks in need of cleaning and repairing.
- **Nightwatchman Hands leaves**: sent letter notifying that he was discharged from hospital treatment, and also tendering his resignation. Had been on sick list since Nov 7 after falling off his bicycle and fracturing his thigh.
- **New appointments: F. Port**, temporary Night Watchman.
- **Nursing and domestic staff changes**: Resignation - Wardmaid **A. King.**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaids **E. Evans** and **R. Evans**; Asst. Nurses **F. Brierley, A. Taylor.**
  Transferred to Joyce Green - Asst. Nurses **L. Household** and **A. Household**; Wardmaid **E. Gee**.
- **Sick List**: Mate **Fainton**, with colic.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 7 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 6

**July 13, 1920**

- **More staff needed due to shorter working hours**: asks to be able to engage another Deck Hand, as more staff required 'to deal with the upkeep and repair work that has accumulated owing to the shortened working hours.'
- **Increase of pay**: to Night Watchmen **Wallington, Green** and **Gibbs.**
- **Domestic and nursing staff changes**: Resignations - Asst. Cook **A. Hope**, Wardmaid **E. Evans**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital: Wardmaids **A. Streatfield, A Halick, E. Griggs;** Asst. Nurses **C. Jones, M. Brean**; Kitchenmaid **N. Bailen [?]**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **S. Scott, E. Marsh**; Wardmaids **E. Barnes, R. Beckwith.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 3

**October 5, 1920**

- **Collisions and damage to steamers**: 'Aug 14th - White Cross, damage to teak and iron rails by rowing boat endeavouring to get towed. Sept 12th – Maltese Cross and Albert Victor mooring bollards by wash from Royal Sovereign. Aug 29th – Damage to pontoon by Red Cross due to wash from passing steamer.'
- **Jetty proposal at Trinity Wharf**: reports that this proposal (for a jetty at the adjacent wharf on the north side) has been abandoned.
- **Staff appointments**: **P. Kelly**, Deck Hand; **A. Whyburn**, Asst. Cook; **G. Knulsden** and **J. Eyres**, Asst. Piermen.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes:**
  Resignations - Asst. Nurses **F. Brierley, S. Richardson**; Asst. Cook **A. Bollen**

Transferred to Joyce Green and other hospitals: Wardmaids **J. Hurr, A. Goodsell**, **R. Evans, E. Griggs**; Asst. Nurses **M. Breen, G. Pile**; Staff Nurse **M. Bridgett**.
Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital: Asst. Nurses **G. Pile, S. Richardson, M. Hatch, H. Pearson, E. Laud, A. Paterson, J. Baker, D. Collins**; Staff Nurses **E. O'Byrne, M. Breen**; Wardmaids **L. Foreman**, **S. Pearson, R. Rouse, M. Burnett, N. Clarker** [?], **C. Chapman, S. Bull**; Sisters **A. Tow** [?], **E. Mackey**.

- **South Wharf opened for fever patients**: started admitting fever patients on Sept 13.
- **No. of fever patients** admitted at South Wharf up to Oct 5th = 439
  Conveyed to Long Reach = 399 No. of recovered fever patients discharged = 196
  Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 4 Transferred to Park Hospital = 1 Returned home = 1
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  No. of recovered smallpox patients discharged = 2

**November 2, 1920**

- **Mud accumulation**: 'I have to report that owing to the accumulation of mud in the vicinity of the pontoon at South Wharf, delays are now experienced when it is required to get a steamer away on or about low water spring tides…' Mentions that dredging was last carried out in 1915, since which time the mud had slowly accumulated again, accelerated by the stoppage of all dredging during the war. Recommends dredging be carried out.
- **Military unit leaves West Wharf**: 'On the 21st Oct the Military Unit occupying West Wharf were removed and the premises vacated, after being in occupation since 1916.'
- **Second crew**: to run a second crew for the steamer service, he asks to make the following promotions and some temporary appointments.
  **W. Kelly**, Master – to Senior Master **F. Showell**, Mate – to Master
  **W. Livett**, Senior Deckhand – to Mate **C. Denny**, Engine Driver of Launch – to Engine Driver
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff changes:**
  Transferred from Joyce Green - Wardmaids **E. Wright, L. Doran**; Kitchenmaid **E. Martin**; Asst. Nurses **E. Wells, E. Farr**. Promoted - Messroom Maid **A. White** to Asst. Cook
- **Temporary staff appointed:** Asst. Pierman **A. Webb** and temp. Marine Stoker **G. Sarsons [?]**
- **Sick List: J. Masson**, Engineer
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach since Oct 5 = 723
  Recovered patients returned = 283

**November 30, 1920**

- **Collision between ambulance steamers**: 'On Nov 10th the Albert Victor whilst coming into position at the pontoon collided with the Maltese Cross, doing damage to teak rail of Albert Victor and after quarter plate and teak rail of Maltese Cross, this damage occurred owing to the Engineer going Slow Astern instead of Slow Ahead…'
- **Damage to steamer in gale**: 'On the 15th inst. the Red Cross during the gale then blowing took a sheer on the mud resulting in 2 mooring bollards being broken…'
- **Mate Showell asks to be demoted**: 'On Nov 5th **Showell** was promoted from mate to Master, and carried out the duties till Nov 7th when he interviewed me and stated he wanted to resign from Master as he had found out that by accepting a post with increased wages, he was likely to lose a pension he was receiving for the loss of a son killed during the war, and preferred the pension to increased wages and wished to revert to Mate. As a result Nov 9th Mate **Fainton** was promoted to Master, to enable the second steamer to run.'
- **Repairs to dolphins**: the repairs to dolphins at all 3 wharves were completed on Nov 16.
- **Staff changes**: appointments - **W. Whinteringham**, Night Watchman, temporary, during illness of Night Watchman **Gibbs**, and temporary Deckhand **J. Griffiths**. Proposes promotion of **W. Hobbs**, Stoker, to temp. Engine Driver.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff changes**: Resigned - Asst. Nurse **N. Breen**.
  Transferred from Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **E. Farr, L. Wells, K. Harper, H. Farr**; Staff Nurse **A. Young**; Wardmaids **E. Griggs, L. Kemp, E. Traynor, J. Lenihan.**
  Transferred to Joyce Green Hospital - Staff Nurse **E. O'Byrne**; Asst. Nurses **A. Taylor, J. Baker, C. Jones, E. Laud**; Wardmaid **E. Wright.**
- **Sick List: J. Gibbs**, Night Watchman – his pay paid to his wife 'who is in receipt of £3.18.6 weekly from the Army authorities during the illness of her husband…' ; also **F. Showell**, Mate – influenza.
- **No. of fever patients** to Long Reach since Nov 2 = 744 Recovered patients returned = 431

**December 28, 1920**

- **Death of Night Watchman Gibbs**: died Nov 30, after being off sick since Nov 2. (Cause of death not stated).
- **Sick List: E. Barron**, Stoker.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green - Asst. Nurse **Farr**; Wardmaids **G. Wickers, F. Rixon**; Staff Nurse **M. Hatch**.
  From Joyce Green - Asst. Nurses **D. Cherry, J. Baker**; Wardmaid **E. Wright**;
  Staff Nurse **F. Fincham [?]**.
- **Increase of pay**: due to Piermaster **Webb**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach since Nov 30 = 540
  Recovered patients returned = 597

# 1920 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf | **Dockery**, Michael; **Biggs**, Leonard; **Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + William Frederick + Mary |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly**, William Alfred + Susannah + Percy |

# 1921

***Scarlet fever outbreak, but minimal smallpox -***
***South Wharf used alternately for smallpox and scarlet fever;***
***mud accumulation causing problems for the steamers and their schedule***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1921-22

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1921-22; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1615)

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- **Smallpox cases**: report from smallpox hospital - only two cases seen over the year; hospital closed from 7 Feb - 26 April and unoccupied 19 May -30 Dec

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- **Conveyed 8620 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 4201
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 3876
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 30
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 513
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1921 Vol. LV

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1921)

Page 183

- **Accumulation of mud at wharf, and use of South Wharf for scarlet fever**: 'The silting up of the river bed at the approaches to South Wharf, which has been a source of difficulty in the past, is again taking pace to a degree which interferes there with the working of the river ambulance service. As the Board are aware, the river ambulance service is the means of transport of smallpox cases between London and Long Reach and is also used, during periods of high prevalence of fever, for the conveyance of cases of scarlet fever *en route* for Joyce Green Hospital and back. The service is in full use for the latter purpose at the present time, 993 new patients having been transported to date from South Wharf to Long Reach from 15 August, when the service was started during this seasonal rise, to 5 October, and 885 recovered patients having been brought back to London in the same period.' Detailed report of the problem – the need for the steamers to be able to keep to their timetable, a report of the previous mud problem and resultant dredging done in 1915. '… the position is now worse than it was in 1915. At each low-water spring tide the wharf is inaccessible from the river by the larger steamers (which draw from 3 feet to 5 feet of water) for about two hours, and it is impossible to bring these vessels within 100 feet of the pier at low water…' Other concerns are the possible damage to the vessels from grounding on the uneven mudbank, and the need to keep South Wharf fully accessible in the case of a smallpox outbreak. Silting greatly accelerated since 1915 – likely to be due to suspension of PLA's routine dredging during wartime? The P.L.A. was again unwilling to cover the costs of dredging, but agreed to do the work at the M.A.B.'s cost, at an estimate of £2,150. Levelling of the mooring berths also needed, but deferred until after the main dredging. [from report dated 27 Oct 1921]

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- **Damage to West Wharf after military use**: damage to land and buildings after military occupation of the wharf costed at £66.

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 25, 1921**

- **Collision with dolphin: '**On the 4th inst. the German steamer Lisbeth Cords. on leaving the adjoining wharf Messrs Gabriels, collided with the lower dolphin at South Wharf doing considerable damage to piles and braces of the structure and disturbing the concrete foundation…'
- **Reduction in fever admissions:** due to a reduction in admissions, a second steamer wasn't needed to be run, and proposes that **F. Fainton** and **W. Livett** revert to their former positions.
- **Sick List: E. Barron**, Stoker, off Dec 8 – Jan 9; **W. Livett**, Mate, sick with bronchial catarrh.
  **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** From Joyce Green Hospital – **Sister E. Boyden**
  To Joyce Green and other hospitals – Wardmaids **L. Foreman, M. Burnett, L. Doran, S. Pearson**; Asst. Nurse **A. Patterson**; Sisters E. Mackay and **A. Tow [?]**
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 93 Recovered patients returned = 27
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1

**February 22, 1921**

- **Sick list**: Senior Deckhand **W. Livett**; temp. Asst. Pierman **W. Knulsden** – inpatient at Golden Square Throat Hospital; Stoker **Barron** – inpatient at Guys Hospital.
- **Staff updates:** Pay increases due to Stoker **E. Barron**, Deckhands **R. Marriott** and **H. Hawker**. Deckhand **R. Marriott** transferred to permanent staff.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **A. Young**; Sister **E. Boyden**;
  Asst. Nurses **F. Parry, H. Pearson**; Wardmaid **J. Linehan**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **E. Springale**, **G. Crondace, K. Price, E. Whitcombe, A. Palmer, F. Siley;** Sisters **E. Mackay** and **D. Jefferson**; Wardmaids **L. Nash, W. McCusker, G. Walls, E. Alberts, A. King**; Staff Nurse **A. Waters**; Asst. Cook **F. Lewis.**
- **Use of wharf for scarlet fever**: 'On the 10th inst. the wharf was re-opened for the reception and conveyance to Long Reach of Scarlet Fever patients.'
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 201 Recovered patients returned = 174

**March 22, 1921**

- **Sick List: F. Fainton**, Mate; **E. Barron**, Stoker; **E. Webb**, temp. Asst. Pierman.
- **Increase of pay**: for Night Watchman **A. Ague** and Deckhand **A. Sander**
- **Purchases**: list of petty cash payments includes purchases of veg & fruit, 1 doz lymph, 3 bottles of ale, 3 bottles of ginger beer, 350 cabbage plants.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaids **J. Streatfield** and **A. King**
  From Joyce Green – Wardmaid **E. Derrick**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 382 Recovered patients returned = 348

**April 19, 1921**

- **Staff called up for military service**: the following who were reservists were called up for National Service – Stokers **F. Nightingale** and **J. Sissons**, and Deckhand **H. Hawker**.
- **Staff changes: H. Carter** appointed as temp. Marine Stoker. Night Watchman **J. Hughes** discharged. Asst. Pierman **L. Bigg** transferred to Night Watchman.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **E. Traynor, L. Kemp, W. Morning**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Ingram, M. Selvege, E. Squires**;
  Asst. Nurses **A. Davies, A. Mahoney**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 351 Recovered patients returned = 355

**May 17, 1921**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Waters**; Asst. Nurses **Crondace, Davies, A. Palmer, K. Price, Lilley**; Wardmaids **McCusker, A. Ingram, L. Nash;** Sister **A. Jefferson**, Sister **Mackie.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Waters**; Asst. Nurses **Davies, M. Phillips**; Wardmaid **L. Chiles**; Sister **Boyden**.
- **Pay increase**: for Nightwatchman **R. Hill**
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach since last report = 144 (total Feb to May = 1078)
  Recovered patients returned = 156 (total Feb to May = 1033)

**June 14, 1921**

- **Staff returned from National Service**: Marine Stoker **Nightingale**, Deckhand **Hawker**, Marine Stoker **Sissons**.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green– Sister **Boyden**, Asst. Nurse **Springall**
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **M. Bull, Quigley, J. Morton**; Wardmaid **Ferguson.**
- **Sick List:** Gate Keeper **Lake** with influenza, and Deckhand **Sanders**.
- **Pay increase**: for Deckhand **Kelly**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Transferred to S. Eastern Hospital = 1

**July 12, 1921**

- **Dredging**: enquiries had been made with the P.L.A. about getting a price for levelling the steamers' mooring berth at the wharf. The PLA said they couldn't give a price; he suggests they invite them to come at a low water spring tide to give an estimate, or otherwise ask outside contractors.
- **Renovations at North Wharf, and mention of smallpox patients**: proposes to replace old floor coverings with lino instead of carpet 'for the purpose of simplifying the disinfection of these premises after the admission of smallpox patients.'
- **King passes on royal yacht:** 'On July 8th, H.M. King George passed South and North wharves on passage to the Albert Docks, the wharves and steamers being suitably decorated with a good display of bunting. While off South Wharf the Royal Yacht was saluted by the River Ambulance Steamers and the salute acknowledged by the dipping of the white ensign.'
- **Domestic / Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Resigned – Wardmaids **B. Peters, C. Walls**.
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Cook **F. Lewis**, Asst. Nurse **E. Whitcombe**, Wardmaids **A. Albert, E. Squires, M. Salvage, J. Martin**. From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **E. Beldam, J. McGowan**.
- **Staff updates:** Deckhand **W. Livett** sick; pay increase for Nightwatchmen **Wallington**, **W. Green**.

**October 4, 1921**

- **Necessity of dredging at South Wharf:** Chief Engineer from P.L.A. visited to view the site at low water, then sent proposals and requested details on the necessity of this work. 'The necessity may be summarised as follows – that owing to an uneven accumulation of mud between the dolphins … the steamers no longer lay on an even keel at their moorings as formerly. As this produces an undue strain on the vessels, their cables and dolphins, the mooring berth cannot be considered a safe one …' The PLA estimates £1,650 for the dredging, but to be done by outside contractors.
- **Temporary fever service staff:** staff employed temporarily for the fever service had now been employed for 6 months; asks whether their services should be retained.
- **Chairman's visit**: Chairman of the Hospitals Committee, Mr Eickhoff, came on Aug 11 and Sept 23.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Evans, Phillips, A. Challen, E. Quigley**; Staff Nurse **A. Waters**; Wardmaids **Roberts, Childs, Griggs, Bull, Bentley, Derrick, Ferguson, E. Baker**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Hatch**; Wardmaids **Baker, King, Wignall, Smith, Palmer, Griggs, Wheeler, McDonald, Henson, Waller, Bentley**; Asst. Nurses **Challen, Alderson, Dorling, Mushette [?], Clement, Ransome, Hood, Shaw, Booth**; Sisters **Jefferson** and **Fellows**; Kitchenmaid **Stringhill**.
- **South Wharf opens for fever patients**: 'On the 13th Aug South Wharf opened for the admission of patients, since which date the following numbers have been conveyed by steamer …'
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 993 Recovered patients returned = 885
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 2

**November 1, 1921**

- **Custody of West Wharf**: is asked to report on the custody of 'Mead Station' (West Wharf) – argues for the necessity for a watchman to be present to guard it at all times, especially with the increased risk of collisions due to new works in the area. As well as the P.L.A.'s regulation for all piers and pontoons to be guarded at all times, a watchman was required in order to record details of any vessels colliding with it, and to stop other vessels mooring to the pier or landing there, and maintain the lights at night, 'and have rowing boat handy for rendering assistance.'
- **Damage to steamer**: 'On Oct. 24th the Maltese Cross whilst laying alongside the Red Cross owing to shortness of water damaged the after starboard teak rail and rubbing band of the Red Cross...'
- **Steamer grounded and delayed by mud accumulation**: 'Oct 25th the Red Cross was aground from 1.40pm to 2.55pm, and this day Nov 1st the vessel grounded 7.30am and floated 10.20am, in both instances the steamer was detained with patients on board.'
- **River pollution sampling**: 'On Oct 19th a London County Council official obtained a sample of the mud off South Wharf for analysis on behalf of the sewage enquiry as to the pollution of the river.'
- **Second steamer for fever service**: asks for sanction to promote the following in order to run a second steamer for fever patients: **F. Fainton**, mate – to Master; **W. Livett**, Deckhand – to Mate.
- **Visit by Chairman etc**: on Oct 17th South Wharf visited by Chairman Commander Thimm, Mr … (?) and Mr McCarthy.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Alderson, E. Clements, K. Ransome, A. Basil, E. Shaw, M. Simmonds.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **E. Dyke, M. Whitney, D. Gladhill, E. Moore, G. Head, E. Underwood**; Staff Nurse **Corkery**.
- **Sick list**: carpenter **R. Walker** - abscess
- **Salary increase**: for **W. Kelly**, Senior Master, and **O. Brock**, Watchman.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 882 Recovered patients returned = 530

**November 29, 1921**

- **Scarlet fever epidemic**: 'Due to the influx of scarlet fever I have been unable to complete my annual leave …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Hord [?], Gladhill, Byrne**; Staff Nurse **Hatch**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Byrne, Harris**.
- **Sick list**: Night Watchman **Green** off with tonsillitis.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 630 Recovered patients returned = 609

**December 27, 1921**

- **Pay increase**: for Piermaster **Webb**.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Resigned – Asst. Nurse **Underwood**
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **Darling, Muskett, Moore**; Wardmaids **McGowan, Beldam**.
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **Locke, Kelly, Nelson, Williams**; Wardmaids **Martin, Bone.**
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 663 Recovered patients returned = 828

# 1921 Electoral Register (2 registers available for 1921 – spring and autumn)

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Biggs,** Leonard (listed in spring register only); **Butterworth**, Henry **Dockery**, Michael; **Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Mary |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William H + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly**, William Alfred + Susannah + Percy |

# 1921 Census

Transcription of census, taken on 19 June 1921, for South Wharf properties:

Name; Age (years + months); Mar. Status; Birthplace; Occupation

The employer for all the following is given as 'Metropolitan Asylums River Ambulance Service', and this main section was completed by Clement Sullivan.

South Wharf

Henry **Butterworth**; 38y + 8m; single; London; Assistant Pierman
William **Lipyeat**; 25y + 8m; single; London; Assistant Pierman
Alfred **Webb**; 22y + 5m; single; London; Assistant Pierman
George **Knudsen**; 25y + 0m; single; New Southgate, Middx; Assistant Pierman
James **Eyers**; 19y + 8m; single; Dartford, Kent; Assistant Pierman
Michael **Dockery**; 35y + 1m; single; Aughrim, Roscommon; Stores Porter
James **Roche**; 52y + 1m; single; Liscarroll, Co. Cork; Clerk
Ella **Ellis**; 45y + 1m; single ; Manchester; Hospital Matron
Alice **Waters**; 24y + 3m; single; Banbury, Oxon; Sick Nurse
Myfanwy **Evans**; 24y + 8m; single; Caernarvon, North Wales; Sick Nurse
Ellen **Quigley**; 21y + 2m; single; Silvertown, Essex; Sick Nurse
Naomi **Bull**; 27y + 0m; single; Cambridge; Sick Nurse
Mary **Phillips**: 20y + 9m; single; Aberdare, S. Wales; Sick Nurse
Annie **White**; 42y + 3m; single; London; Wardmaid
Edith **Williams**; 25y + 8m; single; Talywain, Monmouth; Wardmaid
Ethel **Griggs**; 25y + 11m; single; Sudbury, Suffolk; Wardmaid
Ellen **Marten**; 30y + 0m; married; Crayford, Kent; Kitchenmaid
Ethel **Alberts**; 21y + 0m; single; Gravesend, Kent; Wardmaid
Ethel **Derrick**; 34y + 3m; single; Rochester, Kent; Wardmaid
Mary **Selvage**; 19y + 9m; single; Dartford, Kent; Wardmaid
Edith **Squires**, 18y + 6m; single; Wouldham, Kent; Wardmaid
Daisy **Roberts**; 22y + 6m; single; Biggleswade, Beds; Wardmaid
Julie **Marten**; 19y + 4m; single; Rainham, Essex; Wardmaid
Elizabeth **Ferguson**; 24y + 0m; single; Lancashire; Wardmaid
Lily **Chiles**; 27y + 4m; single; London; Wardmaid

*(No patients are listed in this census)*

Totals: Males = 7
Females = 18
Persons = 25
Rooms = 60

Name; relationship to Head of Household; Age (years + months); Mar. Status; Birthplace; Occupation & Employer

1 South Wharf Cottages:

**John Masson**; Head; 50y + 9m; Married; Kincardinshire, Scotland, Marine Engineer, Metropolitan Asylums Board
Annie Masson; Wife; 45y + 1m; Married; Guernsey, Channel Islands; 'at home'
John Masson; Son; 18y + 4m; Single; Greenwich; apprentice Marine Engineer, General Steam Navigation Company, Deptford
Annie Masson; Daughter; 15y + 11m; Greenwich; millinery, Southwark Rd
Jessie Masson; Daughter; 14y + 1m; Greenwich [at school]
Males = 2 Females = 3 Persons = 5 Rooms = 5

2 South Wharf Cottages:

**Ernest Lake**; Head; 42y + 3m; Married; Penge, Surrey; Gatekeeper, Metropolitan Asylums Board
Ethel Rose Lake; Wife; 30y + 2m; Married; Chatham, Kent; home duties
Males = 1 Females = 1 Persons = 2 Rooms = 5

3 South Wharf Cottages: **C R [Charles Robert] Digby**, Head; 48y + 3m; Married; Woolwich, Kent; Lighterman, M.A.B. Rotherhithe
Sarah Digby; Wife; 44y + 11m; Married; Rotherhithe
Doris Ivy Digby; Daughter; 18y + 2m; single; Rotherhithe; biscuit packer, Peek Frean & Co, Bermondsey
Florence May Digby; Daughter; 16y + ?m; Rotherhithe; biscuit packer, Peek Frean & Co, Bermondsey
William Digby; Son; 15y + 4m; Rotherhithe; messenger Peek Frean & Co, Bermondsey
Frederick Chas Digby; Son; 11y + 8m; Rotherhithe; at school.
Lilian Maud; Daughter; 6y + 5m; Rotherhithe; at school.
Males = 3 Females = 4 Persons = 7 Rooms = 5

4 South Wharf Cottages: **Frederick Showell**; Head; 50y + 3m; Married; Greenwich; Thames Waterman, Mate of Steamer, Metropolitan Asylums Board
Charlotte Showell; Wife; 42y + 6m; Married; Port. Vale Common, Herts; household duties
Florence Showell; Daughter; 20y + 6m; Single Greenwich; Milliner's Asst, W Gant, Wholesale Milliner, Regent St
Herbert Showell; Son; 14y + 9m; Greenwich, Kent [at school]
Winifred Showell; Daughter; 12y + 7m; Greenwich, Kent [at school]
Males = 2 Females = 3 Persons = 5 Rooms = 5

5 South Wharf Cottages: **William Henry Hobbs**; Head; 42y + 9m; married; Bermondsey; Marine Stoker, River Ambulance Service, M.A.B.
Annie Hobbs; Wife; 37y + 8m; married; East Battersea, London; house duties
Ellen Mary Hobbs; Daughter; 11y + 11m; Lewisham
Annie Hobbs; Daughter; 9y + 4m; Rotherhithe
Lilian Elizabeth Hobbs; Daughter; 7y + 6m; Rotherhithe
William Hobbs; Son; 4y + 11m; Rotherhithe
Joseph Henry Hobbs; Son; 7m; Rotherhithe
Males = 3 Females = 4 Persons = 7 Rooms = 5

6 South Wharf Cottages: The head of the household, **James Hellyer**, was obviously away at census time so only the following are recorded:
James H. Hellyer; Son; 24y + 11m; single; Rotherhithe; analytical chemist (metallurgical), for Minerals Separation Ltd, ore testers, 2 King John Court, Holywell Lane, London EC2
Elizabeth A Hellyer; Daughter; 20y + 8m; single; Rotherhithe; dressmaker [self-emp]
Elsie V. Parr; Visitor; 22y + 4m; single; Kentish Town; shorthand typist, Robert Escombe Campbell & Co Share and Stock brokers.
Males = 1 Females = 2 Persons = 3 Rooms = 5

7 South Wharf Cottages: **William Alfred Kelley**; Head; 64y + 4m; Married; St Martins in the Fields, London; Captain, River Ambulance Service, Metropolitan Asylums Board
Susannah Kelley; Wife; 50y + 4m; Married; Portland, Dorset; home duties
Percy Kelley; Son; 21y + 6m; Single; Rotherhithe; Deckhand, River Ambulance Service, Metropolitan Asylums Board
Males = 2 Females = 1 Persons = 3 Rooms = 5

# 1922

***South Wharf used alternately for fever and smallpox patients; substantial dredging carried out; Master William Kelly retires***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1922-23

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1922-23; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1616)

Frontispiece:

- **Infectious disease admissions**: table showing main infectious disease admissions to M.A.B. hospitals: diphtheria (12,752), scarlet fever (15,279), measles (1,483), smallpox (72).

Pages 19-20

- **Report from the smallpox hospital**: 72 admissions, 23 deaths. Hospital closed from 19 Jan until end of July, when more cases started occurring.

Page 104

- **Conveyed 5,679 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 2,321
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 2,815
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 26
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 517
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1922 Vol. LVI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1922)

Pages 147, 195

- **Completion of dredging work, and levelling of berths**: dredging carried out by P.L.A., leaving a depth of 6 feet at low water ordinary spring tides, with approx. 5000 tons of material removed. Tenders now received for the next task – removing mud to level the bottoms of the mooring berths of the steamers. P. 195 – completion of the work to level the mooring berths (by a private co.).

Page 194

- **Arrangements for use of North and South wharves for smallpox**: description of current arrangements: smallpox cases taken firstly to either North or South Wharf, and when the diagnosis is confirmed there, they are conveyed by ambulance steamer to Long Reach. When cases are only sporadic, North Wharf is used as the receiving and diagnosing station – 'This wharf has only a small number of beds, and on 28 October, in consequence of the rise in the number of cases to be dealt with, its use was discontinued and the larger South Wharf took its place.'

Page 199

- **Superannuation for Senior Master Mr W. A. Kelley:** proposal to add one year to his actual years of service to calculate his superannuation, upon his compulsory retirement at 65. The reason being that it had been the practice when reducing staff numbers after a smallpox epidemic, for a steamer master to be demoted to the position of mate as they weren't required in the capacity of a master when there wasn't work to do, but they needed to be kept on staff for when things changed. Mr Kelley had completed 39 years' service, nearly 14 of those in position of Master, and they requested this due to his 'occasional reversions to subordinate rank …. being occasioned through no fault of his own, but entirely for the Board's advantage...'

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 24, 1922**

- **Retirement of W. Kelley**: [this section has been crossed out, as the date was changed to October, but some of it is included here for the relevant information on Mr Kelley]:
  Mr Kelly was due to retire on reaching the age limit of 65 - 'This officer has been with the Board since the inception of the River Service, has a very fine record throughout his long career in transporting patients to Long Reach and the wharves, neither accident, collision or loss of life having occurred with the steamers he has had charge of. He has rendered exceptional service and his retirement is a distinct loss to the River Service.'
- **Sick List**: all those sick over the previous month – Deckhand **Hawker**, Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat**, Engine Driver **Hellyer**, Stoker **Sissons**, Master **W. Kelley**, Deckhand **Griffiths**, Asst. Pierman **Webb**, Mate **F. Showell**, Stoker **Barron**, Watchman **Ague**, Watchman **Wallington**. 'In each case full pay for first week and ½ pay for remaining period has been paid.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **M. Lukey, E. Williams**; Sisters **E. Boyden** and **C. Gusswell**, Staff Nurse **Robb**; Asst. Nurses **Campion, Richardson, Bunton [?]**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Locke, Whitney, Head**; Wardmaids **McDonald, Wignall**; Staff Nurse **Corkery**
- **Pay increases**: for Marine Stoker **Barron**, Deckhand **Marriott**, Watchman **Ague**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 85
  'Admitted and sent by road' = 265 Recovered patients returned = 103
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1

**February 20, 1922**

- **Collision**: 'On the 13th inst. the barge Alice collided with the steamer "Geneva Cross" then laying at her moorings, South Wharf, doing damage to stern plates and rubbing band …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **R. Rossiter, L. Rossiter, S. Kendall**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **B. Palmer, R. King**.
- Sick List: Deckhand **Livett**, Stoker **Sissons**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 458 Recovered patients returned = 585
  Also gives **fever totals for 1921**: Feb to Dec conveyed to Long Reach = 4,198
  Feb to Dec recovered patients returned = 3,874

**March 21, 1922**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Cook **A. L. Bell**; Staff Nurse **Banks**; Asst. Nurses **Bonifos**, **Ripley**; Wardmaids **Henson, Fraser**.
  To Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Harris**; Asst. Nurses **Dyke, Nelson**; Wardmaids **Wheeler, Henson.**
- **Sick list**: Night Watchman **O. Brock**, and Mate **F. Fainton** - with lumbago.
- **Increase of pay**: for Deckhand **Sanders**, and Watchman **Bigg**.
- **Cabbage plants**: list of petty cash payments includes a purchase of 450 cabbage plants.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 365 Recovered patients returned = 554
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**April 18, 1922**

- **Piano tuning**: estimates received for 2 companies for the tuning of the piano.
- **Collisions**: 'On 28th March the Barge "Bankside" collided with the ship's boat of the Maltese Cross, then moored alongside Maltese Cross, and on the 15th inst. the Barge "Charles" collided with the "Geneva Cross" then moored alongside North Wharf doing damage to bulwarks and stanchions.
- **Dredging begins**: on March 25 dredging by the P.L.A. began at South Wharf, using a large bucket dredger – approx. 4600 tons removed already, and awaiting the arrival of a grab dredger to remove 'soil' from the areas inaccessible to the larger dredger.
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Brock**, Mate **Fainton**.

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **E. Gwalter / Givalter [?], J. Martin**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **L. Messon, E. Porris, A Goodsell**;
  Asst. Nurses **E. Durham, G. Sevestre, H. Norris, R. Wright**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 261  Recovered patients returned = 300

**June 13, 1922**

- **Dredging completed**: dredging at South Wharf completed; total quantity dredged approx. 5000 tons, leaving a depth of 6 feet water at low water spring tides.
- **Pay increase**: for Night Watchman **Hill** and Deckhand **Kelly**.
- **Sick list**: Stoker **Hobbs**, Carpenter **Walker** (cut foot while using adze), and Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** – had scarlet fever and was transferred to Joyce Green Hospital.
- **Resignation**: Night Watchman **L. Bigg**.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignations – Wardmaids **Kendall, Rossiter, Bone, R. Rossiter, Bentley**; Asst. Cook **Bell**, Kitchenmaid **Stringhill**; Kitchenmaid **Page**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Williams, Bacon, Bunter, Bonifos, Ripley, Sturgess, Richardson**; Sister **Jefferson**; Staff Nurses **Robb, Bank**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Kitchenmaids **Page, Pocock**; Asst. Nurses **Fownes, Scull, Grimson, Ballantyne**; Wardmaids **Gee, Chalfield, Sewell, Pearson**; Asst. Cook **Howard**;
  Staff Nurse **Rose**; Sister **Short**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 660  Recovered patients returned = 782

**July 11, 1922**

- **Sick list**: Carpenter **Walker** (returned to duty); Stoker **Barron**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignations – Wardmaids **Nelson, Parris, Frazer**; Kitchenmaid **Pocock**.
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Chalfield**; Asst. Nurses **Fownes, Norris**; Sisters **Goswell, Boyden.**
  From Joyce Green – Sisters **Boyden, Chittenden**; Wardmaids **Bates, Turner, Pollington, Ellwood, Ruddock;** Nurse **Crosbie**; Clerk **J. Blake**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 380  Recovered patients returned = 319

**October 3, 1922**

- **Retirement of Master W. Kelley, and his replacement**: due to retire on Oct 21, being at the age limit of 65. Had been working with the River Service since its beginning in 1883. [Repeats similar wording to report dated Jan 24, 1922 about his exceptional service]. '…it is necessary that a successor be appointed, hitherto there has been a reserve of men here trained in the old London River Steamboat Company to draw from, this source no longer exists and it would be most desirable if fresh blood could be introduced and would recommend … that the appointment of a qualified man with deep sea experience be considered, he should hold a Masters Certificate and Watermans licence…' Capt Kelley had requested the addition of 2 years to his period of service 'in consideration of loss of wages incurred by reversion from Master to Mate at varying periods.'
- **Mate Fainton declines promotion to Master**: 'For the filling of the vacancy from existing staff, F. Fainton, Mate with 12 years service would be eligible as a candidate, he however informs me, he is not desirous of promotion as his wife would object to reside in the staff cottages at South Wharf, and asks to be permitted to remain as Mate…'
- **Candidate to fill vacancy of Master**: 'I submit papers and credentials of **L. F. Apthorp**, age 29, Ships Master, Mercantile Marine, Freeman of the River, and Thames pilotage qualifications and with the concurrence of the Chairman recommend his appointment…'
- **New life belts needed**: 200 of their life belts 'are defective in the covering, obsolete in pattern and not to Board of Trade requirements.' Estimates obtained for new belts of the latest pattern. Darenth Industrial Colony have agreed to take the cork from the old life belts to make into fendoffs for the river service.
- **Further dredging**: further dredging carried out, of the area between the mooring dolphins. Approx. 950 tons taken, leaving a safe mooring berth at all states of tide.
- **Proposal of jetty at adjacent Trinity Wharf**: new proposal for a long jetty on Trinity Wharf (site adjacent on the north side), longer than that previously proposed in 1920. Gives his objections, the main one being that it would slow down the water and create more mud accumulation.

- **Collision**: 'On Sep 6th the Barge Premier owned by the Thames Steam Tug Co collided with the Albert Victor damaging Fore Sponson and Mooring bollard …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers and Changes:**
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **Durham, Sevestre, Wright, Scull, Grimson, Ballantyne, Crosbie**; Wardmaids **Hanson, Lukey, Goodsell, Sewell, Gee, Pearson**; Asst. Cook **Howard**; Sister **Chittenden**.
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **Pearson**; Wardmaids **A. Wood** & **J. Wood, West, Crowhurst.**
  Discharged – Wardmaid **Pollington**
- **Sick list**: Stoker **Sissons** – neuralgia.
- **Increase of pay**: for Night Watchmen **Wallington** and **Green**; Stoker **Sissons**; Deckhand **Griffiths**; Nightwatchman **Whinteringham**.
- **No. of fever patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 77 Recovered patients returned = 175
  **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 8 Sent home, not smallpox = 3
  Recovered patients returned = 3

**October 30, 1922**

- **Collision**: 'On the 13th inst. the Barge "Fire" owned by Trinity Wharf Co collided with the "Geneva Cross" doing damage to curtain board, iron struts and angle plate of paddle box…'
- **Smallpox patients at North Wharf – better lighting required**: 'Lighting of Long Reach Pier and North Wharf. With the influx of S.P. patients, improvements are required in the lighting arrangements at these places to cope with night work discharges …'
- **New Master of the Steamers appointed: L. F. Apthorp**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Pearson, Gee**; Asst. Nurses **J. Baker, H. Pearson**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Boosley [?], Crowhurst**;
  Asst. Nurses **J. Baker, E. Aldiss, M. Evans, O. Lowe.**
- **Sick list:** Stoker **Sissons** – 'chill'.
- **Increase of pay**: for Watchman **O. Brock**.
- **Smallpox outbreak – more staff needed**: 'Authority is asked to engaging staff for steamers and wharves as may be requisite in view of S.P. outbreak.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 22 Sent home, not smallpox = 1
  In shelters = 3

**November 28, 1922**

- **Fog causes delay:** on Nov 25th 'the Maltese Cross on returning from Long Reach after discharging patient @12.30pm was stopped by fog off Erith which only cleared at 3am 26th, the vessel arriving South Wharf 4am 26th …'
- **Nightwatchman requests change to day duty**: 'I submit letter received from Watchman **Warrington**, wishing for a change to Day post. I fear if this application is granted it will be the forerunner of many other enquiries.'
- **Change of Master and tenancy of cottage**: 'On Nov 21st No. 7 Staff Cottages was vacated by **W. Kelley** late Master and on the 23rd inst. possession taken over by the new Master **L. Apthorp**.
- **Sick list, and Fainton spotted out and about while off sick**: Pierman **McMahon** – pleurisy; Stoker **Barron** and Carpenter **Walker** – influenza; Mate **Fainton** – lumbago. 'In the case of Mate **Fainton**, he was personally seen by me on the evening of the 21st inst. 7.20pm walking along the Strand. On his return to duty 23rd inst. I asked him for an explanation and was told he was trying if [sic] "the lumbago had gone" and went out for a walk and some shopping.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Wetherall, Black, Whin, Bell, Pybus, Harrison, Bunce**; Sisters **Forbes** and **Jones**; Staff Nurses **Ford, O. Byrne**; Wardmaids **Sims, Simmonds, Marchant, Drain, Bailey, Ennis, Goss, Norman**; Kitchenmaid **Stronghill**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Ford**, Wardmaids **Dodd, Bates**
  Left the service without notice – Wardmaids **H. Sims** and **N. Simmons**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 31 Sent home, not smallpox = 13
  Transferred to Western Hospital = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 9

**December 26, 1922**

- **Collision**: 'On the 9th inst. the Barge "Annie & Alice" … collided with the Red Cross damaging sponson, fender beam and struts…'
- **Preparing South Wharf for change from smallpox to scarlet fever patients**: 'With the work of disinfecting the whole of the buildings at South Wharf from Small Pox for the purpose of receiving Scarlet Fever patients, some additional labour will be necessary …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Ruddock, Turner, Bradley, Goss, E. Crowhurst, M. Crowhurst, Rollings**; Staff Nurses **O. Byrne, Burgess**; Sister **Forbes**; Asst. Nurses **Evans, Lowe, Wetherall, Aldiss, Pybus.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Kirk**; Wardmaids **Webster, Rollings**; Staff Nurse **Burgess**.
- **Sick list**: Stoker **Hobbs** – asthma; Deckhand **Livett** – carbuncle.
- **Increase of pay**: to Piermaster **Webb**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2  Sent home, not smallpox = 3

# 1922 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael; **Knudson,** George<br>**Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte + Sydney Thomas |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Kelly**, William Alfred + Susannah + Percy |

# 1923

***Quiet year; South Wharf back to conveying (minimal) smallpox patients***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1923-24

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1923-24; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1617)

Frontispiece:

- **Infectious disease admissions** - (statistical extract): cases admitted of diphtheria = 10,374; scarlet fever = 10,115

Page 32

- **13 admissions to smallpox hospital** over the year; 2 deaths.

Page 94

- **Conveyed 92 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 13
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 20
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 18
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 41
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1923 Vol. LVII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1923)

Pages 25, 39, 41

- **Superannuation for Senior Master Mr W. A. Kelley**: further mentions/recommendations of this, but no additional information to that mentioned in the 1922 entry.

Page 27

- **Salary of second assistant matron Miss Ellis**: further discussion of her additional allowance; recommendation to continue previous agreement of 1919 [see 1919 entry]

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 23, 1923**

- **Collision**: 'On the 3rd inst. the Barge "Prince Edward" collided with the "Red Cross" at South Wharf damaging sponson and struts …'
- **New Master Lionel Apthorp passes his probationary period**: 'L. Apthorp, appointed Oct 18th as Master on 3 months probation, has now completed that period… I am able to report that he has rendered very efficient service and by his methods has brought about a great improvement in the discipline and working of the staff here, he is a most suitable man for the post and recommend the confirmation of his appointment as Master.'

- **Stoker Hobbs ill with asthma**: '… Hobbs was taken ill on duty and was so bad that the services of a Medical Officer from the South Eastern Hospital were obtained, Hobbs returning to his home later in the day.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **West, Drain, Ennis, Marchant, Webster**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Palmer, Hatch, Wignall, Webb, Turnell**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Sent home, not smallpox = 3
  Transferred to Grove Hospital = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 9
- **Totals of patients carried in 1922:**
  Scarlet Fever patients conveyed to Long Reach = 2258
  Recovered Scarlet Fever patients returned = 2785
  Smallpox patients conveyed to Long Reach = 63
  Recovered Smallpox patients returned = 30
  Staff conveyed to / from Long Reach = 517
  Total passengers for the year = 5653

**February 20, 1923**

- **Skiff adrift and crushed at North Wharf, and criticism of watchmen**: the skiff stationed at North Wharf broke adrift and became fast under the pier brow and cross brace between dolphins, resulting in it being partially crushed. 'In this matter there appears to be a certain lack of attention to duty on behalf of watchmen **Horton** and **Fort** in not observing the dangerous position of the skiff.'
- **Cork from old lifebelts converted to fenders**: Requisition made to Darenth Industrial Colony for converting the cork from 125 condemned lifebelts into cork fenders.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Reduction of staff – Wardmaids **Marchant, Dodd, Norman, Bailey**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Crank [?], Barnes**; Asst. Nurses **Bruce, Maxfield**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Jones**; Asst. Nurses **Bell, Whin**.
- **Increase of pay**: to Night Watchman **Ague**

**March 20, 1923**

- **Collisions**: 'On Feb 27th the Barge "Abor" collided with the White Cross, damaging rails and stanchions, and on the 7th inst. the Barge Primrose, whilst adrift and not under control collided with the Pier Brow, West Wharf, doing damage to iron girder …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Left the service – Wardmaids **Webb** and **Turnell**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Bull, Chapman**; Sister **Fortnam**;
  Asst. Nurse **Mushette [?]**; Kitchenmaid **Chalfield**.
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **Bruce**; Kitchenmaid **E. Stronghill**. To Brook Hospital – Sister **Kirk**
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Kelly** – influenza.
- **Cabbage plants**: list of petty cash payments includes purchase of 400 cabbage plants.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Sent home, not smallpox = 1

**April 17, 1923**

- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Kelly** – influenza; Stoker **Barron** – diarrhoea; Deckhand **Livett** – bronchial catarrh.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Boyden**, who was transferred back the following week.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Transferred to S.E. Hosp. = 1

**May 15, 1923**

- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On the 8th inst. the steamer "Nuthatch" passed South Wharf at such high rate of speed, that the resultant wash caused damage to rails, bulwark plate and windlass of SS White Cross …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Hatch, Palmer, Wignall**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Fitzpatrick**; Wardmaids **J. Wheeler, Poole, R. Wheeler**.
- **Sick List**: Marine Stoker **Sissons** – bronchial catarrh.

**June 12, 1923**

- **Reduction and demotion of staff**: due to reduced workload, Deckhands **Kelly** & **Griffiths**, Stoker **Sisson** and Carpenter **Walker** were discharged, and Mate **Fainton**, Senior Deckhand **W. Livett**, Engine Driver **J. Hellyer**, Stoker Driver **C. Denny** and Piermaster **F. Webb** were all demoted to the next rank down.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Brewster**; Asst. Nurse **Dunk**; Kitchenmaid **Martin**; Wardmaid **Vine**.
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Crank [?], Barnes**; Asst. Nurse **Bruce**; Kitchenmaid **Chalfield**.
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Livett** – cellulitis of arm.

**July 10, 1923**

- **Fire alarm system at South Wharf**: in need of repair and renewal.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Brewster**; Wardmaids **Bull, Chapman**; Asst. Nurse **Mushette [?]**
  From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Williams, McDonald**.
- **Sick list:** Stoker **Hobbs** – asthma
- **Increase of pay**: for Watchman **Port**.
- **Request for shed at wharf frontage**: 'Sanction is asked to the erection of a "lean to" shed for use as a Bosuns Locker on the frontage of South Wharf near the Right of Way passage.'

**October 2, 1923**

- **Collisions and damage to steamers and dolphins**: 'July 16th Steamer "Ala" collided with the Lower Dolphin damaging stays and piles. Aug 28th Steamer "Royal Sovereign" passed South Wharf at excessive speed and damaged stern rails of Albert Victor. Sept 15th German Steamer "Franziske Kninue" [?] collided with the Lower Dolphin S. Wharf damaging piles and rubbing streak … Sept 27th German Steamer "Pallas" collided with the Maltese Cross damaging paddle box and stern chocks…'
- **Overalls ruined at laundry**: 'I submit for examination with a view to compensation painters overalls returned from laundry damaged and of no further use.'
- **Employment of 'exceptional' shipwright**: Temporary Shipwright **H. Spacey** – currently on a 3 month contract, had previously been employed there for 6 months over the year. 'As great difficulty is experienced in getting men to be vaccinated for short service, in this case the man is of exceptional ability …' - asks for special arrangements in his employment.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Left the service – Wardmaid **Vine**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Boyden**; Wardmaids **Poole, Wheeler**; Asst. Nurse **Fitzpatrick**; Kitchenmaids **Marten, Wheeler**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Eldridge, Owens, Fitzpatrick**; Wardmaids **Derrick, Coombs, Foreman, McGowan, Chiles**; Staff Nurse **Waters**. To N.E. Hospital – **J. Blake**, Clerk
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Hawker** off work with Hemorrhoids.
- **Increase of pay**: for Master **L. Apthorp**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 13 Returned home, not smallpox = 4 Recovered patients discharged = 1

**October 30, 1923**

- **Collision**: 'On the 9th inst. the steamer "Saltsted" collided with the Lower Dolphin South Wharf doing damage to Piles and Braces of the structure…'
- **Rescue of capsized rower**: 'On Sunday 28th inst. about 3.20pm a racing skiff capsized off South Wharf throwing the occupant into the River. As there was a danger of the man drowning, the steamers crew put the Red Cross boat out and rescued him, subsequently landing him at Commercial Dock Pier.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Left the service – Asst. Nurse **Owens**; Wardmaid **E. Williams** resigned
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Ennis, Gaiger**.
- **Sick list**: Stoker **Nightingale** off sick with influenza.
- **Increase of pay**: for Night Watchman **Whinteringham.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Returned home, not smallpox = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 10

**November 27, 1923**

- **Collision**: 'On Nov 13th the Barge Charrington collided with P.S. Maltese Cross damaging paddle wheel port side …'
- **Court case over damage to steamer**: 'An action for damages by the Insurance Co against the owners of the Steamer "Nuthatch" was tried in the Admiralty Court before Mr Justice Hill on the 8th inst. The claim was for damage to the White Cross by the "Nuthatch" in May last whose owners refused to pay. Judgement being for the Insurance Co.'
- **Getting rid of old jars**: 'There being a collection of jam and pickle jars etc here not returnable to suppliers and now a source of obstruction in the Stores, sanction to their sale is authorised by the Chairman. Prices are submitted herewith.'
- **Request for gas cooker: J. Masson**, tenant of No. 1 Staff Cottages, asks for permission to hire a gas cooker from the S. Met Gas Co.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Left - Wardmaid **Ennis** discharged, Wardmaid **Gaiger** 'left the service'.
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **Evans, Bruce**; Wardmaids **Lukey, Roberts, Bull, Essex**
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **Dunk, Eldridge.**
  Pay increase – for Housemaid **Williams** and Kitchenmaid **Griggs**.
- **Sick list**: Night Watchman **Wallington**

**December 18, 1923**

- **Old jars sold**: 'On the 8th inst. the empty bottles and jars were removed, the sum realized by the sale being £2-11-6.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Updates and Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Foreman** To Western Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Evans**
  Annual leave for Wardmaid **Derrick**, and Wardmaid **Williams** (on leaving service)
- **Sick list:** Watchman **Wallington** still off sick.

# 1923 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael; **Lipyeat**, William<br>**Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1924

***Quiet year; minimal smallpox cases***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1924-25

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1924-25; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1618)

Page 39

- **5 smallpox admissions** to the smallpox hospital during the year, no deaths.

Pages 131 - 137

- **History of smallpox and the M.A.B. :** a very useful 7-page report describing the management of smallpox since the formation of the M.A.B. Includes numerous photographs, including some of South Wharf.

Page 138

- **Report from smallpox hospital**: gives details of the origins of the smallpox cases; comments on the increasingly effective control of smallpox. Among the patients sent to South Wharf, 10 were found not be suffering from the disease: 'Of these patients five had chickenpox, one mumps, one rubella, one was suffering with syphilis, one from boils, one appeared to be in normal health and one was stated to have been in contact with smallpox.'

Page 148

- **Conveyed 59 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 5
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 5
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 26
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 23
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1924 Vol. LVIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1924)

Pages 10, 188

- **Fire alarm replacement**: mentions new fire alarm system tender and completion.

Pages 97, 99

- **Wages scale and list of staff positions**: new wages scale proposed for new entrants to the River Ambulance Service. The staff positions listed are:
  First engineer, Second engineer, Marine engine driver, Engine driver of launch, Marine stoker Ship's carpenter, Gate keeper (day), Gate keeper (night), Night watchman, Senior Master, Master Mate, Senior deckhand, Deckhand, Piermaster, Pierman, Assistant Pierman/

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 22, 1924**

- **Fire adjacent to North Wharf**: 'On the 7th inst. a heavy fire occurred at warehouse premises adjacent to North Wharf, Blackwall…' No structural damage was done to North Wharf, but windows, paintwork and fencing were damaged, and due to the obstruction of the roads and absence of gas and water supply, North Wharf was unavailable from Jan 7 – 16.
- **Clock repairs**: asks to be allowed to request prices for the cleaning, repair and overhaul of 18 clocks 'now out of repair' at the various wharves.
- **Watchman in hospital**: 'Watchman **Wallington** off duty since Nov 5th is now an inpatient at Guy's Hospital. Medical Certificate herewith for gastric ulcer. As he will probably be away some time yet, I ask for rate of pay after Feb 4th. Full pay for 1st week and half pay for 12 weeks having been paid and sanctioned.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Derrick, Coombes, McGowan, Chiles**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Pearson, Hatch**
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Brock** – bronchitis

**February 19, 1924**

- **Clock repairs, piano tuning and weighing machines**: estimates invited for the repair of the 18 clocks out of order, the tuning of the piano, and the regulation of the weighing machines.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Waters**; Asst. Nurse **Fitzpatrick**; Wardmaids **Lukey, Roberts.**
  From Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **North**; Asst. Nurse **Tyrell;** Wardmaids **Palmer, Bond.**
- **Sick list:** Watchman **Wallington** still in Guy's Hospital. Watchman **Green** – lumbago.
  Mate **Fainton** – influenza/cold. Watchman **Brock** – lumbago.

**March 18, 1924**

- **Collisions**: 'On the night of Mar. 5th-6th the White Cross was struck by unknown craft whilst laying at South Wharf resulting in damage to teak and iron rails, stancheons and bulwarks, and on Mar 6th the Barge "Lynx" collided with the South Wharf Pier Brow, damaging stays and struts…'
- **Watchmen on sick list**: Watchman **Wallington**; Watchman **Brock** returned to duty;
  Watchman **Whinteringham** – influenza.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Pearson**; Asst. Nurse **Bruce**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Pearson**; Wardmaid **Barlow**.

**April 15, 1924**

- **Collisions and damage**: 'On the 20th ult. the Barge "Hornet" collided with the "White Cross" then laying at South Wharf, doing damage to rails, stanchions and bulwarks; and about 11am on Sunday 23rd ult. the pontoon at South Wharf fouled the iron rubbing plate to the outer guide pile, resulting in the plate being stripped off, and damage to the dolphin and pontoon house …'
- **Clock for pontoon**: makes requisition for a ship's clock for the pontoon at South Wharf 'to enable steamers movements and hours of duty of staff to be recorded…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Bull, Hatch, Essex**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Bates, Royal, Venus.**
- **Cabbage plants:** in list of petty cash payments is a purchase of 200 cabbage plants.
- **No. of smallpox patients**: 1 admitted to South Wharf, then returned home – not smallpox.

**May 13, 1924**

- **Garden border:** Submits estimates for a 400 foot run of timber '…required for renewal of garden border at South Wharf …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**

From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Everett;** Sister **Boyden**; Asst. Nurse **Norris**.
To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Fortnam**; Asst. Nurse **Tyrell**; Sister **Boyden**.
Left the service – Wardmaid **Bond**.

- **No. of smallpox patients**: 2 admitted to South Wharf, then returned home – not smallpox.

**June 10, 1924**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Palmer, Bates** From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Price, Callcott**.
- **Purchases**: the petty cash payments include the usual purchases of veg & fruit, lymph, and also tracing ink from Stanley & Co.

**July 8, 1924**

- **West Wharf pontoon and pier**: repairs needed – mentions that this pontoon and pier was erected in 1886. Details the repairs needed and points out that after 38 years service it has never been docked for repair or repaired below the water mark.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Barlow** From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Henderson, Merrell**
- **Sick list:** Stoker **Hobbs** – bronchitis.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Port**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach: 1

**September 29, 1924**

- **Damage from speeding vessel**: 'On July 19th the "Clacton Belle" passed South Wharf at such high rate of speed that the wash caused the "White Cross" to collide with the "Red Cross" doing damage to teak and hand rails and stanchions of the "White Cross"…'
- **Fire alarms**: fire alarm system renewal completed by Messrs Agar in July.
- **Visitors**: on July 16, Mr McCarthy, Manager, and Mr Henderson, Supt, of the New South Wales Ambulance Service visited South Wharf to inspect the R.A.S. arrangements.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Pearson**; Wardmaids **Royle, Venus, Everett, Price, Callcott**; Asst. Nurse **Norris**; Staff Nurse **North**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Noble**; Nurses **Scott, Samson**;
  Wardmaids **A & W Hoadley, Jones, Russell, Grant**; Staff Nurse **Essery**.
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Brock** – neuritis; Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** – gastric ulcer.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Whinteringham** and Master **L. Apthorp**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2 Returned home, not smallpox - 2
  Sent to Joyce Green = 1 Sent to Grove Hospital = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 3

**October 27, 1924**

- **New noticeboards for piers**: submits detailed particulars for replacement noticeboards, with the wording as follows: 'METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD

  NOTICE

  No vessel nor craft to be moored to this pier or wharf.
  No person is allowed to land at this wharf without the Authority of the Board

  BY ORDER - DUNCOMBE MANN
  Clerk to the Board'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  Sister **Fortnam** transferred from, and then back to Joyce Green Hospital 5 days later.
- **Sick list, including Mr Sullivan himself:** Mate **Fainton** – sprained ankle. Also off sick himself – 'I have to report being absent from duty from Sep 29 to Oct 7th, suffering from chill of the liver.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to South Wharf, then returned home, not smallpox – 2

**November 25, 1924**

- **Damage from speeding steamer**: 'On Nov 1st the Southern Railway Co's Steamer "Riviera" passed South Wharf at excessive rate of speed, as a result of which damage was done to Albert Victor's sponson and 1 manilla rope and 1 wire rope broken…'
- **Wireless set for Chas Digby**: 'I submit application for permission to install wireless set at No. 3 Staff Cottages, South Wharf, occupant C. Digby, Master.'

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital - Asst. Nurses **Samson, Noble**; Staff Nurse **Scott**;
  Wardmaids **Merrell, Henderson.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Pearson, Samson**; Staff Nurses **Harris, Powley**;
  Wardmaids **Gibbard, Thompson.**
  Increase of pay: for Kitchenmaid **E. Griggs**, Housemaid **E. Williams**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2

**December 22, 1924**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Hoodley**; Staff Nurse **Powley**
  From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Davies, Janes**.
- **Collision**: 'On the 18th inst. the Steamer Heros collided with the Lower Dolphin and Albert Victor, doing damage to piles and struts of dolphin …'
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0
  Transferred to S.E. Hospital = 1  Recovered patients discharged = 2

# 1924 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael |
| | **Eyres,** John William [in later registers it's James William] |
| | **Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1925

***Quiet year; minimal smallpox cases***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1925-26

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1925-26; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1619)

Frontispiece:

- **Infectious disease admissions** to M.A.B. hospitals: table shows main admissions were for scarlet fever (10,508), diphtheria (10,251), measles (1,902), whooping cough (1,488), but only 11 smallpox.

Page 109

- **11 smallpox patients** admitted to smallpox hospital; 1 died. A further 8 patients 'were under observation at South Wharf' (none of whom turned out to have smallpox). The smallpox hospital was closed in August, with no patients admitted for the rest of the year. The only serious outbreak was in Bethnal Green, starting with a man who 'acquired the infection from samples of foreign rags which he handled in the course of his employment' and passed the infection to his wife and children.

Page 120

- **Conveyed 135 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 11
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 9
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 22
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 93
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1925 Vol. LIX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1925)

Page 175

- **Salary of Mr C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor:** recommendation of salary increase, having nearly completed 21 years' service. 'A large part of his duties is of a highly technical nature and includes works of reconstruction, renewal, maintenance and preparation of specifications for the periodic overhauling and dry-docking of the river ambulance steamers and pontoons. In addition he is the accounting officer for the whole of the river ambulance service. His special duties at Long Reach Hospital include the responsibility for the engineering plant and work there as well as the pier and pontoon …' Salary increase proposed from his current £660 per annum to £750 per annum

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service – Chief Officer's Report Book 1919-1925

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/06/004)

**Reports by Clement Sullivan, Chief Officer / Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 19, 1925**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Grant, Russell**; Home Sister **Boyden**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Pullen, Bateman**; Home Sister **Boyden**.
- **Sick list**: Deck Hand **Sanders** – gastritis; Night Watchman **Brock** – rheumatism.

**February 17, 1925**

- **Collision**: 'On Feb 9th the Barge "Dane" collided with the "Albert Victor" doing damage to Port Forward Sponson and rubbing plate …'
- **Piano tuning and weighing machine tenders**: estimates for tuning the piano and regulating the weighing machines were requested
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Harris**; Asst. Nurses **Pearson, Samson**; Wardmaid **Jones**.
  From Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Ellerby**, Asst. Nurses **Bruce, Huckle**; Wardmaid **Clement**.
- **Sick list:** Watchman **Brock** – rheumatism; Stoker **Hobbs** – pleurisy.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1

**March 17, 1925**

- **Collision**: 'On the 14th inst. the Barge Monarch in tow of tug "Ulco" collided with the "White Cross" then laying at South Wharf, doing damage to bulwarks and teak deck house etc …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Essery**, Wardmaids **Cooper, Price**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Essery**, Wardmaids **Gibbard, Thompson**
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Green** – influenza
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 0 Recovered patients discharged = 1

**April 14, 1925**

- **Collision**: 'On Mar 26th the barge "Cullars" [?] collided with the Red Cross doing damage to the Paddle Box and moulding on the starboard side …'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Janes** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Price**
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Livett** – bronchitis; Watchman **Brock** – influenza.
- **Cabbage plants**: included in the list of petty cash payments are 300 cabbage plants.
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to South Wharf, but returned home, not smallpox = 1

**May 12, 1925**

- **Collisions**: 'During the night of 17th-18th April, an unknown barge or craft collided with the Inner and Centre dolphins at South Wharf doing damage to diagonal stays of each structure and on the 7th inst. the Barge "Bucks" owned by the Anglo American Oil Co collided with the "White Cross" doing damage to bulwark, teak rail and stanchions …'
- **Request for salary increase**: submitted application for a 'revision' of his salary
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Ellerby**; Asst. Nurses **Bruce, Huckle**; Wardmaids **Pullen, Clement.**
  From Joyce Green – Staff Nurse **Waters**, Asst. Nurse **Bobby, Scriven**; Wardmaids **Wheeler, Alkins**; Sister **Fortnam**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 6 Returned home, not smallpox = 2
  Died = 1

**June 9, 1925**

- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On the 6th inst. at dead low water, the steamer "Royal Sovereign" passed South Wharf at such rate of speed, that damage was caused to the launch "White Cross" …'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Clerk **H. Essery**; Sister **Fortnam**; Wardmaids **Price, Cooper**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Keatch, Collins**.
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Whinteringham**
- **Deckhand Hawker disappears**: Deckhand Hawker absent without leave since June 1st. Mr Sullivan asks for instructions as to filling the vacancy.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 3

**July 7, 1925**

- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On the 13th June the steamer "Middlesboro" passed South Wharf at such rate of speed that damage was caused to the Geneva Cross mooring bollard and sponson decking …'
- **Watchman Whinteringham returns from sick leave after finding out his rate of sick pay:** 'On June 13th this man attended for his pay as on previous week ends during period of illness, after being informed that his rate of pay for further period off duty would be …. [?] weekly, he secured medical certificate of discharge and commenced duty that evening.' Then on June 27 he was again off sick, suffering from septic foot.
- **Sick list:** Deckhand **Hawker** – inflamed jaw.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Price** From Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Hollingshurst**
- **Increase of pay**: for Watchman **Port**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 1? Sent to S.E. Hospital = 1
  Detained = 1 Recovered patients discharged – from Long Reach = 3, from South Wharf = 1

*Reports for 1925 continue in the following report book:*

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**September 29, 1925**

- **Gratitude for his pay increase**: 'I beg to thank you for so kindly granting my application for increased remuneration and for so substantially improving my position, it is very gratifying to me and feel grateful at such recognition.'
- **Collision**: 'on July 27th the Barge Bristol collided with the Lower Dolphin doing damage to stays and braces…'
- **Resignations of Sanders, Whinteringham and Hawker**: 'Aug 1st Deckhand Sanders resigned to take another post…. Sep 1st Watchman Whinteringham reported ill, suffering from nervous debility and on the 2nd inst. tendered his resignation and left the service forthwith owing to ill health… Deckhand Hawker absent since Sep 19th a letter being received on 24th inst. saying he wished to resign, Hawker having left without notice, and on receipt of 3 days excess annual leave is liable for the sum of £4.17.4 and ask if he is to be requested to pay such sum.'
- **Sick list**: Watchman **Wallington** – acute catarrh; Stoker **Barron** – gastroenteritis.
- **Increase of pay**: for Master **L. Apthorp**.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Etches**; Asst. Nurses **Durling, Annette, Scriven**; Wardmaids **Watkins, Bates, Cracknell**; Home Sister **Boyden**; Sister **Fortnam**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Bobby, Scriven**; Wardmaid **Collins**; Staff Nurse **Etches**; Home Sister **Boyden**
  Transferred to N.E. Hospital – Clerk **J. Blake** Discharged – Wardmaid **Wheeler.**
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 2 Returned home, not smallpox = 1
  Recovered patients discharged = 2

**October 27, 1925**

- **Planning for fever service**: 'In view of the probability that the River Service may be utilized at an early date for the transport of fever patients to Long Reach, the occasion is a suitable one to ask for Committee's sanction to the revised wages scale of May 1924 being adopted …'
- **New staff**: **J. Shaw** and **A. Cobb**, Deckhands; **E. Hutchings**, Watchman.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Fortnam**
- **Sick list:** Stoker **Barron;** Watchman **Hutchings** – vaccination.

**November 24, 1925**

- **Collisions:** 'On the 8th inst. the Barge "Mable" … collided with and became fixed under the pier brow at South Wharf, doing damage to the brow and decking of structure … this barge was adrift and was moored, on floating to South Wharf until removed by the owners… On the 14th inst. the barge "Kuty" [?] … collided with the Red Cross and damaged the sponson of the Port Paddle box…'
- **Staff changes:** Night Watchman **E. Hutching** resigned; replaced by **F. Norton**.
- **Sick list:** Stoker **Hobbs** – bronchitis; Stoker **Nightingale**.

**December 22, 1925**

- **Resignation:** Deckhand **J. Shaw**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Wardmaid **Hollingshurst**; Asst. Nurse **Scrivens**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Cracknall**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Baptist**, **H. Rattee**; Asst. Nurse **Corrie**.

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

**10 June, 1925** Report by Dr A Cameron, Medical Superintendent

- **Domestic staff reluctant to work at South Wharf:** 'I have to direct the attention of Sub-Committee to the difficulty we are experiencing in the supply of domestic staff to the River Service. Many of the domestic staff at Joyce Green have refused to be transferred and as a consequence we have lost their services. The method of staffing the River Service by transfer from Joyce Green Hospital is the only one which seems practicable because if we are to avoid the expense of maintaining a large excess of female staff on the River Service, we must be able to meet the sudden demand which may arise at any time. The position is a difficult one and I shall be glad of the advice of the Sub-Committee and of any other suggestions for over-coming the difficulty.'

# 1925 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael; **Eyres,** James William<br>**Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1926

***Quiet year; minimal smallpox cases***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1926-27

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1926-27; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1620)

Frontispiece:

- **Main infectious disease admissions** to M.A.B. hospitals were diphtheria (11,635), scarlet fever (10,653), measles (2,959), whooping cough (775), but only 5 smallpox.

Page 40

- **Smallpox report**: a total of 5 admissions and 1 death, over the year.

Page 115

- **Smallpox hospital report**: smallpox hospital closed on Aug 10 1925, and stayed closed for 1 year and 2 months until 1 Oct 1926, when the first new case of smallpox was admitted. During the year 11 patients were under observation at South Wharf who turned out not to have smallpox. The infection was brought from Paris to London on 2 occasions during the year – from a male visitor from Paris who stayed in a hotel and passed the infection to his wife as well as 3 hotel staff.

Page 130

- **Conveyed 171 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 5
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 4
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 26
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 136
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1926 Vol. LX

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1926)

Pages 211, 259

- **Superannuation for Miss Ella L. H. Ellis, second assistant matron at South Wharf:** proposal to award a superannuation allowance, in respect of 32 years completed service.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 18, 1926**

- **Domestic Staff Transfers:** from Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Barnden.**
- **Sick list:** Senior Deckhand **Fainton**

**February 16, 1926**

- **Piano tuning and weighing machine regulating**: estimates obtained.
- **Wheeled litters**: items to be disposed of include '6 old type 2 wheeled ambulance litters, owing to the introduction of the 4 wheel type of litter the 2 wheeled type are now obsolete…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**

To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Waters**; Asst. Nurses **Durling, Norris**; Wardmaid **Watkin**; Home Sister **Boyden**. From Joyce Green Hospital – Home Sister **Boyden**; Staff Nurse **North**; Asst. Nurses **Evans, Norris**; Wardmaid **Barnden**.

- **Sick list**: Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** – gastroenteritis.
- **No. of smallpox patients**: admitted to South Wharf = 5, all transferred to Southern Hospital

**March 16, 1926**

- **Patient trolleys**: submits specifications for the purchase of two 4-wheeled trolleys for ambulance litters, as replacement for the six 2-wheeled types 'now condemned'.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Resigned – Wardmaid **Atkins** From Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Jarvis**; Sister **Fortnam**. On sick leave – Asst. Matron Miss **Ellis**

**April 13, 1926**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Corrie** From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Norris**
- **Change of watchmen**: Watchman **Port** resigned; replaced by **A. Bird**.
- **Cabbage plants**: petty cash payments include the purchase of 300 cabbage plants.

**May 15, 1926**

- **Collision**: 'On the 3rd inst. the sailing barge Whamp collided with the Maltese Cross and White Cross doing damage to each vessel…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Left the service - Wardmaid **Rattee** To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Fortnam** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Harris**
- **Sick list**: Mate **F. Showell**; Sempstress **G. Eyres** (since April 6). Asst. Matron **Miss Ellis** returned.

**June 8, 1926**

- **Collision with West Wharf pier:** 'On the 28th May the barge "Delta" collided with the pier brow at West Wharf and remained fast till the next tide, doing damage to struts, frames and pier brow…'
- **Sick list:** Sempstress **G. Eyres**, still off sick.
- **Pay increases**: for Asst. Cook **E. Griggs** and Housemaid **E. Williams**.

**July 6, 1926**

- **Damage caused by speeding steamer**: 'On June 10th the steamer "Grutto" passed South Wharf at such high rate of speed that damage was caused to the Geneva "Cross" as follows: 1 mooring wire broken; mooring bollard and poop deck started…'
- **Diseased potato delivery**: 'On June 26th ½ cwt of potatoes supplied by Messrs Gridly were rejected on account of disease, the contractor refusing to replace.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Jarvis**, Asst. Nurse **Evans** From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Sims**, **Ashdown**; Asst. Nurse **Shrigley**.
- **No. of smallpox patients**: admitted to South Wharf = 1 [doesn't specify what happened to them]

**September 28, 1926**

- **Newspaper coverage**: 'During the vacation representatives of the "Evening News", "Weekly Graphic" and "Sunday Pictorial" visited South Wharf to acquire particulars of the River Service for publication in the above newspapers.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **P. Bornden**, Asst. Nurse **Norris**, Staff Nurses **Hancox, Brewster.** From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Mitchell, Page**; Asst. Nurse **Gannaway**; Staff Nurses **Hancox, Brewster.** Resigned - Wardmaid **E. Bornden**
- **Pay increases**: **L. Apthorp**, Master, and **A Cobb**, Deckhand.
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to South Wharf, and then returned home, not smallpox = 4

**October 26, 1926**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Edwards**; Sister **Fortnam**; Home Sister **Mills**
- **Sick list**: Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** - gastroenteritis, and Mate **Showell** – dental ailment.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Norton**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** conveyed to Long Reach = 5 Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**November 23, 1926**

- **Sick list:** Mate **Showell** returned to duty; Stoker **Barron** injured his wrist - treated at Guy's Hospital.
- **Pierman left:** Asst. Pierman **Lipyeat** 'left the service'.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Left the service – Asst. Matron Miss **Ellis** To Joyce Green – Home Sister **Mills**, Asst. Nurse **Shrigley**, Wardmaids **Bates, Page, Ashdown.**
- **No. of smallpox patients (**recovered) returned from Long Reach = 3

**December 21, 1926**

- **Collisions**: 'On the 26th ult, the Barge "Fire" collided with the "Red Cross" damaging the sponson deck, and on the 11th inst. the tug Lizard with barges in tow collided with the White Cross doing damage to rails and bulwark plate…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Wardmaid **Bateman** To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Gannaway**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Norris**, Wardmaid **Murphy**
- **No. of smallpox patients (**recovered) returned from Long Reach = 1

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

**29 September, 1926** Report by Dr A Cameron, Medical Superintendent

- **Replacement of South Wharf matron Miss Ellis with Miss Mills**: 'It is necessary to consider the replacement of Miss Ellis, who, under the Matron, is in charge of nursing and domestic arrangements at the Wharves and on the River and is about to retire on account of ill health. The duties and responsibilities of this position comprise the supervision of the treatment at times of large numbers of patients, the direction and control of varying numbers of nursing and domestic staff, the housekeeping and catering necessary and the care of the valuable stock required for a small hospital unit and for the ambulance steamers. It seems necessary therefore that the officer appointed should be of a grade not lower than that of second assistant matron. It is also essential that she should be intimately acquainted with the smallpox arrangements not only at the receiving station and on the River but also in the hospital. Otherwise serious trouble may easily arise. This position in the River Service is a very isolated one. The specialised character of the work required tends, I believe, to preclude prospect of further promotion and for these reasons the personality as well as the experience of the officer to be appointed, is of considerable importance. I have therefore to suggest that Home Sister K. Mills should be appointed as Second Assistant Matron in succession to Miss Ellis. Miss Mills is 50 years of age. She joined the service here as charge nurse in December 1904 and was appointed Home Sister in 1914. During the war she undertook the duties of housekeeping and the supervision of the domestic staff and since then has been continuously employed in that capacity. Miss Mills in my opinion has the knowledge, experience and temperament necessary for the position.'

# 1926 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael; **Eyres,** James William<br>**Lipyeat**, William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1927

***Quiet year; minimal smallpox cases***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1927-28

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1927-28; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1621)

Frontispiece:

- **Main admissions of infectious diseases** to M.A.B. hospitals:
  diphtheria 10,320; measles 2,350; scarlet fever 11,470

Page 50

- **Effects of Thames flood**: 'During the overflow of the River Thames which occurred in the early hours of 7 January 1928, and resulted in considerable damage and loss of life, South Wharf, the Board's smallpox receiving and diagnosing station, at Rotherhithe, was flooded to a depth of about 4 feet. Fortunately, the damage caused was only slight.'

Page 140

- **Conveyed 82 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 7
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 3
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 33
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 39
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1927 Vol. LXI

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1927)

P. 158

- **Telephone extension bell**: 'Two telephone lines are installed at South Wharf, viz., one private line from the head office and the other a Post Office exchange line.' Extension bell needed for the Post Office exchange line as the bell wasn't audible in the gate lodge.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 18, 1927**

- **Sick list:** Deckhand **Livett** – catarrh; Asst. Pierman **Webb** – influenza
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Edwards**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Whelan**, Asst. Matron **K. Mills**.

**February 15, 1927**

- **Wireless for Matron Mills**: 'Sanction is asked to the erection of a wireless aerial for a crystal set at South Wharf for use of the Asst. Matron Miss Mills.'
- **Master Apthorp's child gets scarlet fever**: 'On the 6th inst. a child of L. Apthorp (Master) No. 7 Staff Cottages was removed to Hospital suffering from scarlet fever. The home was subsequently disinfected by the sanitary authorities.'

- **Chairman's visit**: Mr Benson the Chairman visited on Jan 20.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Prescott**, Wardmaids **Martin, Chapman**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **Fortnam**; Asst. Nurse **Norris;** Wardmaid **Paige**.
- **Sick list**: **L. Apthorp**, Master – influenza; Deckhand **Cobb** – influenza.
- **New blinds**: requests purchase of material to replace worn out blinds at all windows at South Wharf; this work to be carried out by the Sempstress.

**March 15, 1927**

- **Piano tuning**: estimates requested for piano tuning for the next 12 months.
- **Collision**: 'On Mar 1st the barge "Dora" collided with the steamer "Red Cross" damaging the sponson etc …'
- **Repapering after scarlet fever**: '…the work of papering the Piermaster's bedroom after a case of scarlet fever was completed …'
- **Sick list:** Stores Porter **Dockery** – influenza
- **Pay increase**: for watchman **Bird**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green – Nurse **Norris**; Wardmaid **Dumpleton** From Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Patrick**

**April 12, 1927**

- **New linen baskets needed**: linen baskets for the use of the female staff were in need of replacement and repair – had been in use for approx 25 years.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Murphy** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Collins**.
- **Sick list**: Mate **Fainton** – enteritis
- **Cabbage plants**: petty cash payments list includes a purchase of 200 cabbage plants.
- **No. of smallpox patients** – admitted to South Wharf, then returned home, not smallpox = 1

**May 10, 1927**

- **Pierman who lasted a week**: Asst. Pierman A. **B…dale** [?] started on May 2nd, resigned on May 7.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Norris, Keable**; Wardmaid **Collins**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Whelan**, Wardmaid **Murphy**.
- **Radio for Engineer Masson**: 'Sanction is asked by Engineer Masson to the erection of an aerial wire at No. 1 South Wharf cottage for valve receiving set.'
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 4

**June 7, 1927**

- **New Pierman**: **F. Bailey** employed as Asst. Pierman.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers and pay increases:**
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Chapman, Martin, Patrick**
  From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **Gower, Glover, Rogers, E. Bloomfield**; Asst. Nurse **Cooke.**
  Pay increases: for Asst. Cook **Griggs**, Housemaid **E. Williams**, Messroom Maid **A. White**.
- **Telephone lines**: 2 telephone lines at the wharf - '…one private line from the Head Office – the other direct or exchange line. In the case of the Head Office line an extension bell is provided for night use in the Gate Lodge. With the exchange line no extension bell is provided and considerable difficulty is experienced at night time in getting through on this telephone due to the office bell not being audible on the wharf …' Asks for an extension bell to be provided.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 2 Transferred to Eastern Hospital = 3 Returned home, not smallpox = 2

**July 5, 1927**

- **Sick list:** Watchman **Wallington** – gastric ulcer. 'In 1923 this man was off duty for a period of 5 months suffering from the same complaint…' Also temp. Ships Carpenter **Greenland** – vertigo.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Cook** From Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Bloomfield**.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 1 Transferred to S. Eastern Hospital = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 3

Contacts from Hackney Casual Ward returned home, not smallpox = 4

**September 27, 1927**

- **Watchman's son gets scarlet fever**: 'On September 17th a son of Watchman **Edwards** (aged 13) of 2 Manager's St, North Wharf, was removed to the S.E. Hospital with Scarlet Fever.'
- **Telephone extension**: bell fitted from offices to Gate Lodge [further to request in June 7 report]
- **Sick list:** Ship's Carpenter **Greenland** – vertigo; Watchman **Wallington** – gastric ulcer; Asst. Pierman **Webb** – influenza.
- **Pay increases**: for Master **L. Apthorp**, and Deckhand **A. Cobb**.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Wardmaids **Mitchell** and **Glover**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Clerk **H. Essery**; Staff Nurse **Waters**; Wardmaids **Jewess, Blackstone, Farnell, Milligan**; Asst. Nurse **Elston;** Sister **Fortnam**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Collins, Bloomfield**; Asst. Nurses **Prescott, Keable**; Clerk **H. Essery**; Staff Nurse **Waters**; Sister **Fortnam**.
- **Flower pots**: in the list of out-of-contract requirements is a purchase of 100 flower pots.

**October 25, 1927**

- **Collisions**: 'On Sept 27th the Barge Q.M.S. collided with the Red Cross and on Oct 10th the sailing barge Britannia collided with the Red Cross, doing damage in both instances…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignation – Wardmaid **Gower** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Waller**
- **Pay increase:** for Watchman **Norton**
- **No. of smallpox patients** admitted to South Wharf, then returned home, not smallpox = 1

**November 22, 1927**

- **Collision**: 'On the 3rd inst. the Steamer "Valborg" of Copenhagen on berthing at the adjoining wharf collided with the "Red Cross" damaging sponson deck and mooring bollard…'
- **Retirement of Night Watchman Horton**: due to leave in Jan 1928 after 39 years' service at the wharves, 11 years as deckhand, 28 years as watchman. 'he has been a very trustworthy officer - during his long service here, [he] has been absent from duty on one occasion only (ie) 5 days sick leave …' He asks for one year addition to his superannuation due to his transfer from deckhand to watchman and consequent reduction in wages.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignation – Wardmaid **Rogers** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Upson**

**December 20, 1927**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignation – Housemaid **E. Williams** From Joyce Green Hospital – Messroom Maid **V. Neville**

# 1927 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael; **Eyres,** James William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah + William |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1928

## *Increase in smallpox - road transport used temporarily; Thames Flood*

**Thames Flood of January 1928:** See previous year's annual report (1927-28, above) as well as the Engineer-Surveyor's report below.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1928-29

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1928-29; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1622)

Frontispiece:

- **Main infectious disease admissions** to M.A.B. hospitals:
  diphtheria 8,981; measles 7,307; scarlet fever 13,065

Page 124

- **Conveyed 55 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 18
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 11
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 10
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 16
- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1928 Vol. LXII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1928)

Page 4

- **Installation of wireless (radio) for staff**: proposal that staff in outlying hospitals be provided with wireless sets, to improve their living conditions due to the lack of entertainment and recreation opportunities; this included the smallpox service and South Wharf 'where the staff are liable to be confined on the premises for varying periods.' Wireless sets were recommended for recreation rooms and common sitting rooms; in sitting rooms head-phones only 'as we feel that the installation of loudspeakers in these rooms may interfere with the general comfort'. At South Wharf it was proposed to install a valve set with 6 pairs of head-phones – 4 in the female staff quarters and 2 in the male staff quarters.

Page 152

- **Use of South Wharf for smallpox, use of Kingsbury Hospital, and temporary change to road transport**: report on smallpox accommodation - 'Up to 1 April the cases were sent, after the diagnosis had been confirmed at South Wharf, to Long Reach Hospital.' (Continues to explain that subsequent local Willesden cases were treated at Kingsbury Hospital). 'On 1 May, when there were 18 cases under treatment at Kingsbury and 4 under observation at South Wharf, it was clear that the time had arrived when Joyce Green Hospital should be got ready for smallpox.' All fever patients were removed from Joyce Green Hospital and on 3 May, 8 smallpox cases were transferred there from South Wharf. 'In order that the work of demolishing and reconstructing Long Reach Hospital, which began on 11 April, may not be interfered with, smallpox patients will, during the progress of the contract, be conveyed from South Wharf to Joyce Green Hospital by road, instead of by river ambulance service.'

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 17, 1928**

- **Effects of Thames flood on South Wharf:** 'Further to my report re flooding at South Wharf of the 8th inst. The roads have been repaired by the Engineer in Chief's Dept. Messrs Hobman contractors carrying out the work, and the wharf was available for the admission of patients on Sat 14th inst.; and on the 10th inst. in accordance with instructions 1 cwt of coal was issued to the tenant of each staff cottage for the purpose of drying up the property. Apart from the removal of creosote oil and the drying off of certain stores, the work of which is now in hand, conditions are now normal. … In accordance with instructions, estimates were invited from 3 firms for the repair of 12 clocks … consequent to these clocks getting wet by flood water'.
- **Resignation**: of Asst. Pierman **Bailey**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **E. Milligan** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Ellis**
- **Butterworth unsuitable for Nightwatchman's job**: 'In connection with filling the vacancy created by Night Watchman Horton's retirement, application has been received from Asst. Pierman Butterworth for the post, as I do not consider him a suitable man for the post, cannot recommend him.'
- **Sick list**: Night Watchman **Edwards** – malaria; Pierman **McMahon** – pleurisy;
  Night Watchman **Brock** – gastritis.
- **Flood-damaged stores**: list of stores damaged by flood water includes potatoes, flour, silver sand, soft soap, glue, fireclay, whiting – all to be written off the books.

**February 14, 1928**

- **Piano tuning and weighing machine:** 'As the contracts for tuning the piano at the nurses' quarters and for regulating the weighing machines at South Wharf terminates on March 31st, estimates have been invited from 3 firms for tuning the piano and from 3 firms for regulating weighing machines for next 12 months …'
- **New Nightwatchman: E. Horton** appointed.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:** Resigned – Asst. Cook **E. Griggs**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **North**, Asst. Nurse **Elston**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurses **Waters, Freed** (?), Asst. Nurses **Kearle, Kennedy, Bobby**; Wardmaids **Stokes, Gallagher, Longman** Pay increase: for Asst. Matron **K. Mills**.
- **Sick list:** Pierman **McMahon** – pleurisy; Watchman **Brock** – gastritis (had been on sick leave 5 weeks); Pierman **Webb** – influenza.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 17
  Sent home, not smallpox = 3 Detained in shelters = 4 Recovered patients discharged = 2

**March 13, 1928**

- **Collisions and damage**: 'Feb 20th – damage to rails and bulwarks of White Cross.
  Feb 22nd – damage to paddle box of Geneva Cross by unknown craft in foggy weather…'
- **New Pierman**: **W. Bird** appointed as Asst. Pierman
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Asst. Cook **Norris** To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Upson**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Huckle**; Wardmaids **Jones, Raggatt**.
- **Sick list:** Watchman **Brock**; Watchman **Ague** – bronchitis; Wardmaid **Gallagher** – in S.E. Hospital for treatment.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Bird**
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 12 Discharged to S.E. Hosp. =1
  Sent home, not smallpox = 10 Remaining in shelters = 2 Recovered patients discharged = 18

**April 10, 1928**

- **Collisions**: 'On Mar 21st the Barge "Dee" owned by the General Lighterage Co. Ltd collided with the "White Cross" and damaged the bulwarks, rails and stanchions, and on Mar 29th the Barge "Galway"

(owners Marriott & Son) collided with the "Albert Victor" doing damage to paddlebox beam and stays…'

- **Death of Master Digby's son**: 'On Mar 21st the death of son of C. Digby, Master, from tuberculosis took place at No. 3 Staff Cottage, South Wharf.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **M. Sheehan, R. Howells**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Ellis, Blackstone**
- **Sick list:** Senior Deckhand **Fainton** – gastritis
- **Rabbits and cabbage**: petty cash payments include purchases of rabbits, and 200 cabbage plants.
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Long Reach = 3 Transferred to Kingsbury Hosp. = 3
  Sent home, not smallpox = 2 Remaining in shelters = 4 Recovered patients discharged = 8

**May 8, 1928**

- **Collision**: '…during the week ending May 7th some unknown craft collided with the Red Cross doing damage to bulwark plating and starting internal lining…'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Farrell, Sims**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – **H. Essery**, Clerk; Wardmaids **P. Beynon, L. Beynon, Venus**; Sister **O'Byrne**; Asst. Nurses **Bennett, Elston, Jones.**
- **Sick list:** Deckhand **Livett** – bronchitis; Clerk **J. Roche**
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 13 Transferred to Kingsbury Hosp. = 17
  Sent home, not smallpox = 3 Remaining in shelters = 3 Recovered patients discharged = 5

**June 5, 1928**

- **Storage of Clerk's motor bicycle**: 'Sanction is asked to the storage at this wharf of a motor bicycle owned by **E. J. Tutt**, Junior Clerk for a period of 2-3 months.'
- **Clerk Roche sent to hospital**: Clerk J. Roche 'transferred to Joyce Green Hospital for medical treatment.'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Price**; Sister **O'Shea**; Staff Nurse **Whittingham**
  From Tooting Bec Hospital – Clerk **E. J. Tutt**
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 17 Transferred to Kingsbury Hosp. = 15
  Sent home, not smallpox = 3 Remaining in shelters = 8 Recovered patients discharged = 4

**July 3, 1928**

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green and other hospitals – Wardmaids **Venus, Raggatt**; Sister **O'Shea**,
  Staff Nurses **Whittingham, Field.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Glover, Cotton, Lines, Williams, Major, O'Connor**; Nurse **Bunce**; Clerk **Mr Roche**.
- **Sick list:** Master **L. Apthorp** – influenza; Watchman **Green** – influenza
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 60 Transferred to Kingsbury Hosp. = 15
  Sent home, not smallpox = 17 Remaining in shelters = 2 Recovered patients discharged = 1

**Sept 25, 1928**

- **Collision**: mentions a previous report of damage done to the steamers by the steamer "Galea" – repairs now completed.
- **Automatic telephone system installed**: South Wharf's phone number now Bermondsey 1216.
- **Sick list:** Deckhand **Livett** – injured head; Watchman **Norton** – erythema
- **No. of smallpox patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 7 Transferred to Willesden = 31
  Transferred to S.E. Hosp. = 1 Transferred to Downes Hosp. = 1
  Sent home, not smallpox = 5 Recovered patients discharged = 2
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green and other hospitals – Asst. Nurses **Bobby, Elston, Howell, Price, Bennett, Bunce**; Sister **O'Byrne**; Messroom Maid **O'Connor**; Staff Nurses **E. Cole, A. Waters**; Asst. Matron **Mills;** Wardmaid **Cotton;** Clerk **E. Tutt.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Skerritt, Whelan, Tester**; Wardmaids **Day, Milligan, Collins, P. Bornden**; Staff Nurses **Cole, Field**; Asst. Nurse **Johnson**; Matron **Boyden**.

Left the service – Wardmaids **Gallagher, P. Beynon, L. Beynon, Williams, Stokes, Day, Line**; Asst. Nurse **Huckle**.
- **Increase of pay**: for Deckhand **A. Cobb**

**October 23, 1928**
- **Chairman's visit**: Chairman Mr Sawyer visited on Oct 16.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Cotton**; Staff Nurse **Field**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **Dorke**, Staff Nurse **Waters**.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Norton**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Willesden = 8 Transferred to S.E. Hosp. - 1
  Sent home, not smallpox = 1 Recovered patients discharged = 1 Remaining in shelters = 1

**November 20, 1928**
- **Collision**: 'On the 6th inst. the tug Lizard with craft in tow collided with the White Cross doing damage as previously reported …'
- **Christmas meal**: estimates obtained for the supply of turkey and Christmas extras.
- **Gale damage to receiving room screen**: 'As a result of the gale on 16th inst. the galvanised iron screen in front of the Receiving Room was blown over…'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green and other hospitals – Asst. Nurse **Skerritt;** Clerk **H. Essery**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Sheehan**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Willesden = 21 Sent home, not smallpox = 2
  Remaining in shelters = 1

**December 18, 1928**
- **Wireless for clerk**: 'Application is made by **K. Ould**, Clerk II for sanction to install wireless set at his quarters.'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Northern Hospital – **K. Ould**, Clerk II
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Gannaway**; Wardmaids **E. Wheeler, D. Wheeler**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Tester**, Wardmaids **Collins, Bornden**
- **Pay increase:** for Night Watchman **Horton**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Willesden = 14 'Discharges' = 3 Remaining in shelters = 1

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

**January 18, 1928** Report by Dr A Cameron, Medical Superintendent
- **Matron Miss Mills finds South Wharf too isolated**: 'On 29th September, 1926, I recommended the promotion of Miss K. Mills from Home Sister to the position of Second Assistant Matron for duty in the River Service…. The reasons given … were Miss Mill's knowledge and experience of smallpox work, her experience of housekeeping duties and her temperament. I have to acknowledge that my estimate as regards the last factor was in error because Miss Mills has apparently found that the condition of isolation at South Wharf is too difficult for her to tolerate. I have ascertained that it will be possible to give the Second Assistant Matron here (**Miss Boyden**) a turn at South Wharf and so allow Miss Mills relief from her solitude for a time… if Sub-Committee is willing, I have to suggest that the two second assistant matrons should take duty at South Wharf alternately for a year at a time.'

**June 6, 1928** Report by Dr A Cameron, Medical Superintendent
- **Clerk Roche with gout**: Clerk Mr Roche under treatment in hospital with gout.
- **Problem of Lady Dock Bridge for ambulances**: this hump-back bridge on Redriff Road leading to South Wharf was over 100 years old, only wide enough for one vehicle, and its roadway was in bad condition and in need of constant repair, with a defective junction of the bridge and roadway – 'transit of the bridge is difficult and dangerous for ambulances and severe jolting of the patient cannot be avoided. I have known this bridge for 27 years and I do not hesitate to say that it has

caused discomfort and very often considerable risk to many thousands of patients who have been carried over it.'

## London County Council Annual Report of the Council, 1928
## Vol III – Public Health

Wellcome Library – online catalogue, ref: .b18252758 [Publ. 1929]

Page 92

- **Smallpox spread through hop-picking:** 'The bringing together in a crowded encampment of families derived from many of the poorer districts of London gives special opportunity for the spread of infectious disease, and, as a result, the return of the hop-pickers to London is the signal for the outbreak of infection in new centres…This year for the first time smallpox was a danger, and an outbreak amongst the hop pickers was followed by the appearance of the disease in new schools in London, in the first place amongst children who had been away hopping. Of 31 cases of smallpox occurring in London between 26th July and 18th October, 12 cases …. were infected in connection with the hop gardens at Marden, Kent. The first case came to notice when a girl, aged 14, living in North Street, Lambeth, was diagnosed as suffering from smallpox…. Enquiries revealed that she had returned from Marden that day and that the rest of her family was still in the hop gardens. It was also ascertained that her brother, aged 3 years, had had a rash before the family left London. On 8th September this brother and a sister aged 5, were removed to South Wharf from Marden, as suffering from smallpox. About 2000 hoppers returned to London from Marden on 12th September and were followed up as contacts of smallpox. As stated above, 9 further cases of smallpox have resulted from this source.'

# 1928 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf: | **Butterworth**, Henry; **Dockery**, Michael<br>**Eyres,** James William; **Roche**, James; **Webb**, Alfred |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah + William |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + James Henry + Elizabeth |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May |

# 1929

***New epidemic of mild form of smallpox; road transport used instead of river***

## Metropolitan Asylums Board: Annual Report for the Year 1929-30

(Wellcome Library, ref: WX 28 .BE 5 M62 1929-30; London Metropolitan Archives, ref: MAB/1623)

Frontispiece:

- **Main admissions of infectious diseases** to M.A.B. hospitals: diphtheria 9,009; measles 2,322; scarlet fever 13,596

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- **Smallpox cases**: admissions = 3,242; discharges = 2,830; deaths = 10

Page 99 - 103

- **Smallpox report – mild form of smallpox, and lament for the neglect of vaccination**: gives analysis of the cases that turned out not to be smallpox, and of the actual smallpox cases, and the types of smallpox, with a mild form now being predominant – 'only a small minority of the cases are actually in need of hospital treatment, and the provision of expensive hospital accommodation for the great majority of cases can be justified only if it is effective in staying the spread of infection … The neglect of vaccination, if the practice be regarded merely as a means of saving an enormous public expense in maintaining smallpox segregation hospitals, is the more unfortunate because there is no doubt that the mild type of the disease at present existing in London is much more amenable to the influence of vaccination than the more severe type with which London has been familiar in former years.'

Page 116

- **Conveyed 6 patients and other passengers**, consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 0
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 0
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 4
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 2
  (These low figures will be due to the fact that road transport was now instead of the steamers).

- **Total number of patients and other passengers conveyed by the ambulance steamers between 1884 and 1929 = 141,091,** consisting of:
  Patients conveyed to Long Reach = 45,248
  Recovered cases returned from Long Reach = 36,352
  Visitors conveyed to and from Long Reach = 17,674
  Staff conveyed to and from Long Reach = 41,817

- **Ambulance steamers / vessels listed**:
  Albert Victor, Geneva Cross, Maltese Cross, White Cross, Red Cross.

## Metropolitan Asylums Board – Board Minutes 1929 to Mar 1930 Vol. LXIII

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark: 26.03 MAB 1929-30)

Page 82

- **Retirement of stoker Chas Denny**: recommendation of superannuation; described as a stoker with the R.A.S., age 65, with 32 years' service. [from minutes dated 27 April 1929]

Page 110

- **Repair of dolphins**: dolphins at North, South and West Wharves all in need of repair – recommendation of renewal of that portion of the woodwork, piles, stays and braces not already renewed when last done in 1920. Some portions of the camp sheeting to the wharf frontage was showing signs of decay and also needed repair. P. 189 – recommendation of tender from Chafen & Newman Ltd of Trundleys Rd, Deptford. P. 260 – work completed, cost £1,225.
- **Proposal of use of White Cross by London County Council**: the L.C.C. enquired about the use of the White Cross for their routine chemical and biological observation of the river, involving mainly two trips a week between Woolwich and Barnes Bridge over several months. There was no objection from the R.A.S., on the condition that they could interfere with the timetable if necessary for conveying patients. [from minutes dated 25 May, 1929]

Page 314

- **Surgery for Sister A. E. Hope, Joyce Green Hospital:** on 13 March Sister Hope was operated on by Mr Tudor Edwards at Colindale Hospital for multiple abscesses at the base of the right lung. The cost was mostly covered by the M.A.B., with a third contributed by her. This was while she was a Sister at Colindale Hospital. (Sister Hope was matron at South Wharf at the time of the Blitz).

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 15, 1929**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned - Asst. Nurse **Gannaway** Discharged – Wardmaid **D. Wheeler**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Waters**, Asst. Nurse **Elston**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Field**, Asst. Nurse **Flegg**, Wardmaid **Morphew**
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **Cobb** – bronchial catarrh
- **Pay increase:** for Asst. Pierman **Bird**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 17 Transferred to Willesden = 18
  Remaining in shelters = 1

**February 12, 1929**

- **Staff sick with influenza**: Stoker **Nightingale**, Watchman **Brock**, Watchman **Bird**, Stoker **Denny**.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – **K. Ould**, Clerk II; Wardmaid **R. Mafor**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **B. Jones**; Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**, Wardmaids **S. Briggs**, **A. Kerkham**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills**.
- **Washing baskets**: requisition made for 2 dozen new linen baskets for conveying washing between South Wharf and Joyce Green.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 24 Transferred to Willesden = 19
  Remaining in shelters = 1 Returned home, not smallpox = 7

**March 12, 1929**

- **Piano tuning**: estimates for piano tuners invited.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Wardmaids **Glover**, **Milligan, Morphew**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Waters**; Wardmaids **Elkin, Waldman**; Asst. Nurse **Searle**; Clerk **W. Butcher**.
- **Lots of staff sick with influenza**: Stoker **Nightingale**, Watchman **Brock**, Watchman **Bird**, Stoker **Denny**, Asst. Pierman **Butterworth**; Watchman **Ague**, Stoker **Barron**, Asst. Pierman **Eyres**.
- **Pay increase**: for Watchman **Bird**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 67 Transferred to Willesden = 32
  Remaining in shelters = 9 Returned home, not smallpox = 1

**April 9, 1929**

- **Need for further staff due to rise in smallpox**: makes request for 2 more Asst. Piermen on a temporary basis – 'this is to cope with the extra work involved by the rise in smallpox admissions, many of whom are received after 5pm, and in addition to allow of annual leave being commenced next month.'
- **Chairman's visit**: Mr Sawyer visited on March 20.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **D. Elston, Bunce**; Wardmaid **E. Austen**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **N. Kennedy**; Wardmaid **E. Wheeler**; Staff Nurse **A. Waters**.
- **Sick list**: Clerk Mr **Roche**; Engineer **Masson** – laryngitis.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 163 Transferred to Willesden = 32
  Remaining in shelters = 10 Returned home, not smallpox = 6

**May 7, 1929**

- **L.C.C. inspects the White Cross for their possible use**: 'On the 29th April Dr Butler L.C.C. visited South Wharf and inspected the White Cross, with the view of obtaining the services of this vessel for the Public Health Department L.C.C.'
- **Another pierman needed due to evening arrivals:** 'With the present influx of patients after 5pm it will be necessary to place 2 Asst. Piermen on night duty in transferring patients to the Wards etc, and I ask for sanction to the engagement of another Asst. Pierman for this purpose.'
- **Dustbins and London map requested**: Requisitions dust bins for staff cottages and office, and '1 Philips map of London and its Environs 5' x 3.6' on rollers to replace existing one 30 years old.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **Whelan** and **R. Flegg.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **M. Waller, M. Patrick**; Staff Nurse **E. Smith**;
  Asst. Nurses **E. Mapps, E. Sheehan, B. Price, B. Jones**; Sister **K. Davies**.
- **New piermen**: **J. Richardson** and **W. Rayner** appointed.
- **Sick list**: Engineer **Masson** – laryngitis.
- **Food and cabbage plants purchased**: list of petty cash payments includes veg & fruit, 5lb fish, 12 pints milk, 1 syphon soda, 4 bottles Camp Coffee, lymph, 250 cabbage plants, 'drugs'.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 359 Transferred to Willesden = 27
  Remaining in shelters = 12 Returned home, not smallpox = 23
  Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 3

**June 4, 1929**

- **New Pierman**: **A. Thomas** employed as Asst. Pierman
- **Resignations**: Stoker **C. Denny** – superannuation; Master **L. Apthorp**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Asst. Nurses **D. Elston** and **B. Sheehan**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **V. Darke**; Asst. Nurse **E. Johnson**
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurses **F. Williams, M. Reed, E. Codling**; Wardmaid **E. Edwards**.
- **Purchases, including infant food**: petty cash payments include purchases of veg & fruit, ale, minerals [mineral water?], 6 doz lymph, 1 tin infants food, 2 syphons soda.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 289 Transferred to Willesden = 20
  Remaining in shelters = 16 Returned home, not smallpox = 33
  Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 5

**July 2, 1929**

- **White Cross used by L.C.C. for Thames water sampling**: 'As per instructions the "White Cross" has been running to the requirements of the L.C.C. since June 20. The work involved at present consists in running about 2 trips a week from the Northern Outfall Beckton and working up to Barnes and Kew, thence returning after the necessary samples are taken and tests made, to land chemist and bottles at North Woolwich Pier. I am given to understand from the responsible officer that everything is working satisfactorily.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **E. Mapps, Searles, B. Jones**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **Couchman, Forster, Hughes**; Asst. Nurse **Blades**.
- **Sick list: C. Digby**, Master – abscess.

- **Difficulty in finding replacement Master**: 'In connection with the instruction to obtain another Master for this Service, I have to report that so far, I have not been successful in getting hold of the right type of man for this post…'
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 224 Transferred to Kingbury = 21
  Remaining in shelters = 8 Returned home, not smallpox = 13
  Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 6

**September 24, 1929**

- **Repairs to wharf front and dolphins**: repairs commenced on wharf frontage of South Wharf, and the dolphins at all the wharves.
- **Underground phone lines installed**: the G.P.O. Telephone Dept changed the telephone system at South Wharf from overhead to underground cable; in doing so they damaged the tar paving, and hadn't yet put it right.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignations – Asst. Nurses **B. M. Price, M. Blades**; Wardmaids **M. Walter, L. Cheeseman**; Staff Nurse **G. Field**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **M. Patrick, E. Austen, J. Kendall, E. Elkin, M. Longman, A. Kirkham**; Asst. Nurses **E. Codling, J. Williams, P. Reed, A. Lewis, A. Coughlan, S. Lynch, E. Sheehan**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills.**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **A. Coughlan, A. Lewis, D. Pursall, E. Templeton, M. Sheehan, D. Barrett, E. Parker, G. Lynch, W. Anderson**; Wardmaids **F. Kendall, M. Therton, G. Wilson, M. Patrick, L. Cheeseman, H. Jenkins, L. Gigney, R. Ward, G. Willcocks**; Staff Nurses **B. Lynch, D. Mather, N. Pawley, D. Tadman**; Asst. Matron **E. Boyden.**
  Transferred to Southern Hospital – Clerk **H. E. Essery**.
- **Discharged:** Asst. Pierman **J. Richardson**
- **Purchases, including infant food:** petty cash payments include purchases of veg & fruit, 2 syphons soda, 14 pints milk, lemons, fish, serum, ales, 4 doz lymph, numerous tins of infant food.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 496 Transferred to Kingbury = 29
  Remaining in shelters = 19 Returned home, not smallpox = 38
  Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 5 Died = 1

**October 22, 1929**

- **Wharf and dolphin repairs complete**: repairs to South Wharf frontage and dolphins at all wharves, completed by contractors Chafen & Newman.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **C. Hughes, C. Wilson, M. Patrick, G. Willcocks**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Lillis, A. Harden, V. Wells, L. Gibbard**.
- **Sick list:** Marine Stoker **E. Barron** – injury to eye.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 205 Remaining in shelters = 9
  Returned home, not smallpox = 8 Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 1

**November 19, 1929**

- **Christmas turkey**: estimates invited for supply of turkey for Christmas.
- **White Cross finishes water sampling service for L.C.C**.: 'On the 30th Oct the White Cross terminated service for the L.C.C., having run to Barnes and back to Woolwich and discharging testing apparatus at Barking on the 30th Oct.'
- **Lorry collides with gate pier**: 'On the 14th inst. the South Eastern Lorry No. 133 in attempting to enter South Wharf to discharge stores, collided with the entrance gate brick pier, doing slight damage to ornamental brick work…'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignation – Wardmaid **A. Harden** To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **M. Bunce**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **G. Johnson**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 279 Remaining in shelters = 17
  Returned home, not smallpox = 13 Recovered smallpox patients discharged = 1

**December 17, 1929**

- **Collision**: 'On Nov 28th the Barge Ely collided with the Maltese Cross doing damage to Port Paddle box etc …'

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resignation – Wardmaid **V. Lillis** Increase of pay: for Asst. Cook **M. Everard**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **P. Reed**, Kitchen Asst. **M. Swain**, Wardmaids **L. Barnes, E. Duffey, L. Heldrew** To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **R. Ware, L. Gigney**
- **Sick list:** Senior Deckhand **Fainton** – influenza; Watchman **G. Wallington** – gastritis.
- **Pay increase**: for **E. Horton**, Night Watchman.
- **Purchases of rabbits and Xmas extras**: petty cash payments include purchases of coffee, veg & fruit, 'Xmas extras' and rabbits.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 478 Remaining in shelters = 8
  Returned home, not smallpox = 22

# 1929 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Boyden**, Emma; **Burd**, William; **Butterworth**, Henry (Freeman); **Collins,** Adelaide; **Dexter,** Hilda; **Dockery**, Michael; **Essery,** Herbert George; **Everard**, Millie; **Eyres**, Grace; **Eyres,** James William; **Harris,** Beatrice; **Johnson**, Georgina; **Jones**, Bessie Louisa; **Kennedy**, Nora; **Milligan,** Elizabeth; **Roche**, James; **Sperritt**, Martha [ prob. an error – in later registers it's Skerritt ]; **Waters**, Alice; **Whelan**, Josephine Annie; **White**, Annie

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby**, Charles + Sarah + Doris + Florence
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte + Herbert Leonard
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Apthorp,** Lionel Frank + Eva May

# 1930

***M.A.B. abolished and all their sites transferred to the London County Council; epidemic continues; steamers brought back into use for the final time***

## See also the M.A.B. Annual Report and Board Minutes for 1929, as these volumes cover also the beginning of 1930.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 14, 1930**

- **New Master F. Norton appointed:** F. Norton selected after an interview as Master of the River Ambulance Service.
- **Patient service resumed**: 'On the 7th inst. the steamers resumed the service of transporting patients to Long Reach.'
- **Wireless for Gate Keeper Ernest Lake**: 'Sanction is asked to the erection and installation of a wireless set by E. Lake occupier of No. 2 Staff Cottages.'
- **New staff: J. H. Griffiths** appointed as Deckhand, **W. J. Lanning** as Marine Stoker, **S.H. Rose** and **D. Peake** as Asst. Piermen.
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Transferred from other hospitals – Clerks **G. Lawn** (who resigned 8 days later), and **A. Kirkham**
  Resignations – Wardmaids **Gladys Willcock, Eleanor Cochran**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Beechy, E. Roberts**; Staff Nurses **D. Cole, E. Smith, E. Catto**; Asst. Nurses **T. Williams, G. Atkinson, R. Jarnett**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **E. Templeton, E. Parker**
- **Crews promoted**:
  **J. Hellyer**, Engine Driver of Launch to Engine Driver
  **F. Fainton**, Senior Deckhand to Mate
  **W. Livett**, Deckhand to Senior Deckhand
  **F. Nightingale**, Marine Stoker to Engine Driver of Launch
  **J. Eyers**, Asst. Pierman to Piermaster.
  Asks to be able to engage a fitter and make further promotions and appointments 'for the running of 2 steamers as may be necessary.'
- **Pay increase**: for Asst. Pierman **W. Bird**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 434 Transferred by steamer = 152 Remaining in shelters = 34 Returned home, not smallpox = 50 Died = 2
- **Ernest Lake applies for promotion**: E. Lake, Gate Keeper, applied for promotion to rank of Gate Porter.

**February 11, 1930**

- **Washing baskets**: '24 linen baskets for conveying washing to Joyce Green Hospital' requisitioned.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **Todmon**; Asst. Matron **Boyden**.
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **C. Searle**; Wardmaid **S. Briggs**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills.**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 44 Transferred by steamer = 716 Remaining in shelters = 26 Returned home, not smallpox = 51

**March 18, 1930**

- **Entertainment for wardmaids**: 'The Asst. Matron here, Miss **Mills** has asked if a "loud speaker" could be supplied to the Wardmaids mess room to provide some sort of entertainment for the domestic staff when off duty of an evening. At present there are 14 maids resident and there is an installation of 3 headphones only.'
- **Retirement of Clerk Roche**: '… Mr J. Roche Clerk … who after 29 years service at South Wharf retires on the grounds of ill health. His retirement is a distinct loss to the service.'
- **Change of Piermen**: Asst. Pierman **H. Rose** resigned and Asst. Pierman **G. Robinson** appointed.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **E. Duffy**; Kitchen Asst. **M. Swain**.
  From Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**; Wardmaid **K. Laming**, Kitchen Asst. **E. Sarn [?]**
- **Purchases, including infant food**: list of petty cash payments includes purchases of veg & fruit, 2 syphons soda, chicken, ironmongery, infants' food, and ales.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 68 By steamer = 1045
  Remaining in shelters = 26 Returned home, not smallpox = 65
  Recovered smallpox cases discharged = 1

**April 8, 1930**

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green – Clerk Mr **Morgan**; Wardmaid **A. Holmes**; Asst. Nurses **A. Lewis, E. Jones**.
  To Joyce Green – Wardmaid **L. Gibbard**, Asst. Nurses **E. Sheehan, M. Sheehan**
- **New stoker: E. Pilgrim** appointed as Marine Stoker.
- **Piano repairs and poultry**: Petty cash payments include repairs to piano, and poultry.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 44 By steamer = 586
  Remaining in shelters = 23 Returned home, not smallpox = 46

**May 8, 1930**

- **New writing desks needed for clerks due to increased cases and bigger books**: '…requisition is made … for 3 pedestal writing desks and 3 desk chairs, this is necessitated by reason of the desire to improve the facilities for the increased clerical work now carried out with the rise in small pox admissions… The existing office furniture consists of one of the old type vertical desks for which high stools are provided, this method does not lend for efficiency and with the larger books introduced by the L.C.C. more accommodation is required.'
- **Appointments: H. Fletcher**, temporary Deckhand.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **A. Coughlan**, Wardmaids **A. Hawksworth, E. Royle, V. Carter, E. McGourley, M. Thexton.**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **Williams**; Wardmaids **S. Briggs, S. Forster, L. Bance**.
  Resigned – Wardmaid **E. Atkinson**
- **Male staff transferred**: Pierman **McMahon** and Night Watchmen **W. Green** and **O. Brock** all transferred to 'Mead Works'. [this will probably be at West Wharf, where Mead Ambulance Station also is]
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 54 By steamer = 768
  Remaining in shelters = 28 Discharged, not smallpox = 52 Recovered cases discharged = 2
  Deaths = 1

**July 3, 1930**

- **New clerks' desks**: Old double desk replaced with 3 new pedestal desks in the Clerk's Office.
- **New temporary staff**: Carpenter **H. Spacey**, Deckhand **A. Gate**, Asst. Pierman **E. Watts.**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  Resigned – Wardmaid **H. Jenkins**. To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **K. Laming**
  From Joyce Green – Wardmaids **C. Hughes, D. Collins, S. McGuire**; Staff Nurse **E. Osborne**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 19 By steamer = 1131
  Remaining in shelters = 5 Discharged, not smallpox = 97 Recovered cases discharged = 5

**July 24, 1930**

- **Collision**: 'On the 11th inst. the steamer Belg..en [?] of Copenhagen collided with the Lower Dolphin at South Wharf and steamer Albert Victor doing damage in each instance…'

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Kitchen Assistant **F. Bean**; Staff Nurses **E. House, J. Nicholson**; Asst. Nurses **K. Whyte, E. Beckett, L. Redgate, M. Lester**.
  From Western Hospital – Clerk Mr **E. Giblin**. To Joyce Green – Kitchen Assistant **R. Town**
- **Death of nurse Clarice Searles**: 'Died July 6th Asst. Nurse **C. Searles'**. [Matron's report book states that she died at Guy's Hospital 'where she had been operated on for appendicitis']
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 2 By steamer = 169
  Remaining in shelters = 1 Discharged, not smallpox = 17 Recovered cases discharged = 0

**October 23, 1930** *(this report covers the summer months since his previous report)*

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **A. Blackburn, E. Harvey**; Sister **J. Corcoran**; Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**; Staff Nurses **C. Herd, E. Loder, D. Mather**; Wardmaids **M. Singlewood, M. Martin, M. Oake, K. Todd, A. Holmes, E. Nolan, A. Johnson, B. Harris**; Kitchen Assistants **M. Swain, M. Holyoake.**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **E. Beckett, M. Tester, W. Anderson, P. Reed, A. Coughlan, L. Jarratt, M. Blackburn**; Wardmaids **E. Boyle, C. Hughes, W. Hawkesworth, V. Carter, A. Holme, B. Harris, L. Hildrew, E. Gourley**; Staff Nurses **E. House, J. Nicholson, D. Mather**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills**; Kitchen Asst. **M. Swain**
  Resigned – Asst. Nurses **A. Lewis, F. Bean**; Wardmaid **D. Collins**.
  Transferred to Western Hospital – Clerk **E. Giblin**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 539 By steamer = 74
  Remaining in shelters = 3 Discharged, not smallpox = 38 Recovered cases discharged = 2

**November 26, 1930**

- **Reduction in staff due to decreased cases:** 'Due to the reductions in admissions of patients and the transport of patients by road the number of temporary male staff is found to be in excess of requirements at the present time. It is proposed therefore to reduce the male staff by 4 …'
  Followed by a list of temporary employees to be dismissed: Deckhand **H. J. Fletcher**, Marine Stoker **R. Pilgrim**, Fitter **E. Moss**, Asst. Pierman **C. Robinson**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 206 By steamer = 0
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 6 Recovered cases discharged = 0

**December 18, 1930**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **C. Deacon, J. Allen, E. Atkinson, A. Ward, E. Armour**; Kitchen Asst. **A. Linnott**; Staff Nurse **E. Osborne**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **E. Nolan, M. Martin**; Staff Nurses **E. Osborne, C. Herd**; Asst. Nurses **D. Pursall, E. Harvey**; Kitchen Asst. **M. Holyoake**.
  Resigned – Wardmaid **B. Harris**; Wardmaids **D. Oakes, K. Todd.**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 273 By steamer = 0
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 15 Recovered cases discharged = 1

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

**January 15, 1930** Report by Dr A Cameron, Medical Superintendent

- **River ambulances brought back into service**: 'The rise in the number of admissions has brought the River Ambulance Service into use and one boat per day has been run since 7th January. A further rise in the number of admissions will make a second boat necessary in the near future and I am afraid that it will be impossible to avoid making the journey after nightfall on account of the time when the majority of patients arrive at the Wharf and the limited accommodation on the Wharf.'

# 1930 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Beeching**, Annie; **Browne,** William; **Burd**, William; **Butcher**, William Mayne **Butterworth**, Henry (Freeman); **Carter,** Violet; **Catto,** Elsie Bella; **Coughlan,** Alice **Coughlan,** William; **Darke,** Violet; **Davis,** Kathleen; **Dockery**, Michael; **Everard**, Millie **Eyres**, Grace; **Eyres,** James William; **Harris,** Beatrice; **Hawksworth,** Winifred **Hildrew,** Lily; **Holmes,** Annie; **Hughes,** Cissie; **Jarrett,** Lily; **Jenkin,** Hetty **Johnson**, Georgina; **Jones**, Gwendoline; **Lewis,** Agnes; **Mather**, Doris; **McGuire,** Sarah **Mills**, Kathleen; **Morgan**, Edmund; **Neville**, Violet; **Osborne**, Elizabeth Jane; **Peake**, Daniel **Powley**, Norah; **Pursall,** Doris; **Rayner**, Thomas; **Reed,** Phyllis; **Robinson**, Charles **Royal,** Elizabeth; **Searles,** Clarice; **Skerritt**, Martha; **Smith**, Elsie; **Thexton**, Margaret **Thomas**, Alfred James; **Waters**, Alice; **Watts**, Edmund; **Webb**, Edward; **White,** Annie

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby**, Charles + Sarah + Doris + Florence
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Showell**, Frederick James + Charlotte + Herbert Leonard + Winifred Alice
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth Mary Ann
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Norton**, George + Mary Dorothy

# 1931

## *Epidemic slowly easing; ambulance steamers not used, and Albert Victor sold*

### London County Council Minutes of Proceedings January-June 1931
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 21

- **Damage to steamer and mooring**: mention of cost of damage to Albert Victor and the lower mooring dolphin.

Page 91

- **L.C.C. flag on steamers**: 'The Council's "house flag" and red ensign are to be flown by the Council's ferryboats and the river ambulance steamers whenever on duty between 8 a.m. and sunset, and by the Council's sludge vessels...'

Pages 30, 810-12

- **Arrangements for South Wharf to continue to admit cases for observation**: Lengthy reports from the Central Public Health Committee on arrangements for dealing with doubtful / suspected cases of smallpox, which were previously under the M.A.B. kept in the shelters for observation at South Wharf. The L.C.C. decided that this was no longer required and that only definite, certified cases of smallpox should be admitted to South Wharf. Several objections from London boroughs resulted, pointing out in particular the difficulties in diagnosis of smallpox (even by medical officials) and the risks of leaving possible cases in their homes until clearer symptoms developed. There is mention of the 457 cases received at South Wharf in 1930 without a clear certificate of smallpox, of which 94 proved not to have the disease. Taking into account these objections, a new proposal is submitted and agreed, allowing for admission of cases for observation, under the stated conditions: '… that patients suspected to be suffering from smallpox, but not certified to be so suffering, be admitted to the receiving station for observation on the conditions: (1) that the metropolitan borough medical officer of health shall have called in to the case one of the Council's consultants; (2) that the patient shall have been examined by the metropolitan borough medical officer of health and one of the Council's consultants, in addition to having been examined by the general medical practitioner in cases in which one has been called in, and that they shall all have been unable to say definitely that the case is smallpox, although there is a strong presumption in the affirmative; (3) that the application for admission shall be made by the borough medical officer of health; (4) that the former arrangements whereby the borough medical officers of health can obtain information early each evening from the Victoria-embankment offices of the council as to the result of the final diagnosis of cases admitted for observation shall continue; and (5) that the responsibility for the initiation and carrying out of all preventive action in such cases shall remain with the metropolitan borough councils.'

Page 498

- **Increase in cases and staff numbers:** '…The river ambulance service is brought into use only at times when the number of cases to be transported is more than can be conveniently dealt with by the land ambulance service. It is impossible to forecast even approximately the number of smallpox cases which will be admitted in any future period, but the number admitted in 1930 largely exceeded those in the previous year. The staff of the river ambulance service … had to be increased accordingly...' – leading to higher staff cost than that budgeted. [from Central Public Health Committee report of 3 March 1931]

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July - December 1931
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 14
- **Smallpox hospital:** with the fall in numbers of smallpox cases, the Central Public Health Committee propose to use the smaller Long Reach Hospital for smallpox instead of Joyce Green as at present, to leave Joyce Green available for other infectious diseases.

Page 333, no. 116
- **Arrangements for other infectious disease patients at South Wharf**: Central Public Health Committee report - slight variation agreed on arrangements for receiving suspected cases at South Wharf, to allow the transfer of patients with other infectious diseases received at South Wharf to a fever hospital.

Page 336
- **Sale of ambulance steamer Albert Victor**: tender accepted from T.W. Ward & Co of Sheffield for the Albert Victor, for £92.

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports by C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 15, 1931**
- **Pierman Peake promoted to permanent**: asks to be able to put temporary Asst. Pierman D. Peake on the permanent list, and increase his pay on having completed 12 months' service.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **J. Watts**. Resigned – Wardmaid **A. Holmes**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 247 By steamer = 0
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Recovered cases discharged = 0

**February 12, 1931**
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Dixon, S. Bird, M. Haines**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Ward, S. McGuire**; Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**.
  Resigned – Wardmaid **A. Beeching**.
- **Sick list**: Deckhand **A. Cobb**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 284 By steamer = 0
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 9 Recovered cases discharged = 1

**April 16, 1931** *(the following covers two months, since the February report)*
- **Preparing the Albert Victor for sale**: 'On the 2nd inst. the steamer "Albert Victor" was transferred from South Wharf to the Council's mooring berth at Woolwich ferry, for the purpose of inspection by intending buyers.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **W. Hawkesworth, J. Burk, N. Lippard, E. Armour**; Kitchen Assts. **L. Eves, A. Linnott.**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **A. Deacon, A. Johnson, E. Armour, E. Nolan**; Kitchen Asst. **A. Linnott**.
- **Sick list:** Mate **F. Fainton** and Nightwatchman **G. Edwards** – influenza;
  Senior Deckhand **W. Livett** – catarrh.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 584 By steamer = 0
  Remaining in shelters = 10 Discharged, not smallpox = 34 Recovered cases discharged = 5

**May 7, 1931**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  To (?) Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **C. Roche**; Wardmaid **S. Middleton**.
  Left before expiration of notice – Wardmaid **N. Lippard**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 258 Remaining in shelters = 11
  Discharged, not smallpox = 12 Recovered cases discharged = 0

**May 28, 1931**

- **Sick list**: Deckhand **R. Marriott** – septic finger
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **L. Gardiner**
- **Temporary pierman to cover holidays**: Asst. Pierman **C. Robinson** appointed temporarily 'for holiday duty' (to cover staff taking annual holiday).
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 167 Remaining in shelters = 6
  Discharged, not smallpox = 12

**June 25, 1931**

- **Pierman injured**: Asst. Pierman **A. Thomas** on sick list with concussion from motor accident.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green – Sister **A. Warnes**, Sister **Tormey**; Staff Nurses **E. House, J. Nicholson**; Wardmaid **E. Gardiner**; Asst. Nurse **S. Laws**.
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Nurse **K. Whyte, L. Redgate**; Wardmaid **S. Bird**; Sister **A. Warnes**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 152 Remaining in shelters = 3
  Discharged, not smallpox = 17

**July 23, 1931**

- **Pierman Webb asks to live out**: Asst. Pierman Webb asks to be allowed to become non-resident.
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **A. E. Coughlan**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **E. Tormey**; Wardmaid **L. Gardiner**.
  Resigned – Wardmaid **W. Hawkesworth**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green = 79 Remaining in shelters = 3
  Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Recovered cases discharged = 2

**October 15, 1931** *(this report covers the summer months since his last report in July)*

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**; Kitchen Assts. **M. Swain, R. Weller**; Wardmaids **I. Fairish, V. Smith, V. Darke**; Staff Nurse **D. Sanderson**; Asst. Nurse **M. Skerritt**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurses **N. Powley, D. Mather, J. Nicholson**; Asst. Nurses **M. Skerritt, G. Jones, S. Law**; Asst. Matron **K. Mills**; Wardmaids **E. Gardiner, V. Darke, A. Dixon, V. Smith**; Kitchen Asst. **M. Swain.** Resigned – Kitchen Asst. **L. Eves**.
- **Reduction and demotion of male staff:** the following left the service 'on reduction of staff' – Deckhands **J. Griffith, A. Gale**; Asst. Piermen **D. Peake, E. Watt, C. Robinson**; Marine Stoker **W. Lanning**. Some of the permanent staff were demoted to the next rank down – Mate **F. Fainton** to Senior Deckhand; Senior Deckhand **W. Livett** to Deckhand; Engine Driver **J. Nightingale** to Marine Stoker.
- **Other staff eating at South Wharf**: people listed as paying for meals onsite include (as well as Mr **Sullivan** himself) the following: **Dr. W. Browne, Dr E. Greenfield, Mr Buckle, Mr Beauchamp**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Joyce Green by road = 78 Transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 116
  Remaining in shelters = 3 Discharged, not smallpox = 12 Recovered cases discharged = 1

**November 12, 1931**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **F. Morley**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurse **E. House**, Asst. Nurse **G. Johnson**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach = 145
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Recovered cases discharged = 5

**December 10, 1931**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurses **J. Old, D. Wilson**
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Staff Nurses **E. Catto, E. Smith**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach (Hospital?) = 177
  Remaining in shelters = 8  Discharged, not smallpox = 12  Recovered cases discharged = 3

# 1931 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Browne,** William; **Burd**, William; **Butcher**, William Mayne; **Butterworth**, Henry (Freeman) **Catto,** Elsie Bella; **Corerian,** Julia [prob. an error – Julia '**Corcoran'** in 1932 register] **Darke,** Violet**; Davis,** Kathleen**; Dockery**, Michael; **Everard**, Millie**; Eyres**, Grace **Eyres,** James William**; Hawksworth,** Winifred**; House,** Edna**; Johnson**, Georgina; **Jones**, Gwendoline; **Loder,** Edith; **Mather**, Doris**; Mills**, Kathleen; **Morgan**, Edmund **Neville**, Violet; **Nicholson**, Jennie; **Osborne**, Elizabeth Jane; **Peake**, Daniel **Powley**, Norah; **Raynor**, Thomas; **Robinson**, Charles; **Skerritt**, Martha; **Smith**, Elsie **Thexton**, Margaret; **Thexton**, May; **Thomas**, Alfred James; **Waters**, Alice; **Watts**, Edmund; **Webb**, Edward; **White**, Annie

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles + Sarah + Doris + Florence + Frederick Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick James + Charlotte + Herbert Leonard + Winifred Alice |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie + Ellen Mary |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth Mary Ann |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Norton**, George + Mary Dorothy |

# 1932

***Decision taken to discontinue the River Ambulance Service; moderate number of smallpox cases; Engineer-Surveyor Mr Sullivan retires.***

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings January - June 1932

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 231

- **Retirement of Engineer-Surveyor, C. E. Sullivan**: joined the service on 1st Nov 1904, and reached the age of 65 on 4th Dec 1931. No immediate successor identified, so agreed to retain him until 30 June 1932 to keep the river service available until a replacement found. 'The vessels are used principally for the conveyance of smallpox cases, and as it is impossible to foresee the incidence of this disease in the near future the service should be maintained so as to be available at any time.'

Page 423

- **Use of White Cross for river water surveying**: 'For some years now, samples of the water from the upper tideway have been taken during the summer months, the ambulance steamer "White Cross" being used for the purpose… We consider that it is desirable that the collection of the necessary data should not be confined to the summer months and that the most satisfactory means of obtaining the information required is by a weekly examination throughout the year conducted from the "White Cross". However if the vessel is required for the conveyance of smallpox cases, the arrangement will cease.'

Pages 894-5

- **Nursing staff salaries and numbers of beds**: the Central Public Health Committee decides to re-grade the salaries of female nursing staff, as the full numbers of beds the nurses are responsible for determines their salary scale, but most beds are only for epidemics and rarely in use. It mentions the arrangements with relation to South Wharf: 'Joyce Green hospital, Long Reach hospital and the river ambulance service and station at South Wharf are administered as one unit under the charge of the medical superintendent at Joyce Green hospital.' South Wharf is counted as having 24 beds.

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July - December 1932

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Pages 159-60

- **Discontinuance of River Ambulance Service, with summary of its history:**
  'The river ambulance service was established nearly half a century ago for the conveyance of smallpox patients between London and the smallpox hospital, which then consisted of hulks moored in the Thames seventeen miles below London Bridge. The service now comprises two smallpox receiving stations, namely, South Wharf, Rotherhithe, and North Wharf, Blackwall, and four steamers. The vessels, the dates of their first service as ambulance steamers, and patient-carrying capacity are as follows:-
  Maltese Cross, 1884, 32 patients;
  Geneva Cross, 1894, 52 patients;
  White Cross, 1897, 4 patients;
  and Red Cross, 1902, 68 patients.
  The Albert Victor, 1884, 22 patients, was sold in 1931 for £92 10s.
  Established at a time when horse-drawn ambulances were the only alternative, the service has, with the introduction of faster moving and smoother running motor ambulances, become obsolete. Use has been made of it only in epidemic periods, the last occasion being 1929-30. At other times patients have been conveyed by the land ambulance service. The river service is costly to maintain

and its intermittent use has raised questions as to the justification for its continuance. The late Metropolitan Asylums Board, shortly before the transfer of its duties to the Council, had the matter under consideration, but in view of the impending change, no decision was taken.
An emergency service to deal with any possible outbreak of smallpox is essential. If the river ambulance service is to be closed down, a satisfactory land service of sufficient capacity must first be available. We are advised that any provision of this nature must be capable of dealing with an admission rate of 50 patients a day in epidemic periods. The question of the type of ambulance which would be suitable has received the close attention of officers in the public health department and a vehicle is in contemplation which should be capable of carrying six recumbent adult cases. Taking into consideration the relative times occupied on a run between the receiving station and the hospitals by a steamer and by a motor ambulance, it is estimated that three such ambulances should be sufficient.
It is considered to be advisable to obtain one vehicle only in the first instance and after sufficient experience has been gained in its working, to obtain the other two, in which should be embodied such alterations and additions as may be found necessary or desirable.
The vehicles would form part of the standing fleet of ambulances. They would be available for use, when not required for smallpox cases, in connection with the land ambulance service generally and could be used, as far as circumstances would allow, instead of the present small ambulances for the conveyance of patients between the receiving station at South Wharf and the smallpox hospital in non-epidemic times. Their use for purposes other than the conveyance of smallpox patients would be subject to arrangements for their immediate mobilisation to meet any steep and sudden rise in the number of smallpox patients requiring admission to hospital.
The estimated cost of the three vehicles is £4,200. The annual maintenance charges (including depreciation) based on a mileage of 10,000 for each vehicle, and on the assumption that no additional staff will be necessary, is estimated to be about £1000 ….
On the other hand, the estimated gross saving which will be effected by the closing down of the river ambulance service is £5,075 a year. Only one receiving station will be required. The retention of North Wharf is not practicable and it is on the wrong side of the river for easy conveyance by land of cases to the hospital at Dartford. We propose, therefore, that South Wharf should be retained for the present as the receiving station. Nevertheless, South Wharf has serious disadvantages when used from the land side. It is in a cul-de-sac about a mile from the nearest west to east route. Ambulances on the way to and from the wharf are liable to be held up by the opening of dock bridges, and we are of opinion that ultimately a new receiving station should be provided in a more suitable situation.
The closing of North Wharf and the disposal of the ambulance steamers will permit of considerable staff reductions. A large proportion of the staff employed at the wharves and on the vessels are, however, transferred officers and we hope to be able to find suitable occupation for them elsewhere. We are making arrangements for the continuance of those duties of the engineer – surveyor of the river ambulance service who has retired on 30th June 1932, which will not cease with this disbandment of the service.
There are further potential savings on the dredging which would be necessary at South Wharf to enable the ambulance steamers to come alongside the pier at all states of tide. When this work was undertaken in 1915 and 1922, the cost amounted to £915 and £1,738 respectively. If there had been any prospect of the river service being again brought into active operation, further expenditure on dredging would probably be necessary at an early date. We propose to give further consideration to the question of dealing with the piers at South Wharf and Long Reach hospital. So long as those piers are retained expenditure must be incurred in watching and lighting them.
As regards the time at which the change could take effect, we are advised that the disbandment of the river service might be put in hand as soon as the first of the special ambulances has been supplied and found to be satisfactory. More definitely this may be said to be about the end of December, 1932, provided that the approval of the Council is given to the principle involved before it adjourns for the summer recess…
We recommend… (c) That, as from a date to be arranged, the river ambulance should be discontinued. {Agreed}'
[from Central Public Health Committee report dated 18 July 1932]

# M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports up until the end of June 1932 are by Clement Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor of the R.A.S., (those thereafter are by the Clerk), addressed to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee**

**January 7, 1932**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Changes and Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **V. Smith**; Kitchen Asst. **M. Faint**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaid **R. Weller** Resigned – Wardmaid **D. Watt.**
- **Sick list:** Marine Stoker **F. Nightingale** – sprained ankle; Asst. Pierman **A. Thomas** – influenza.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 122
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 4 Recovered cases discharged = 1

**February 4, 1932**

- **Sick list:** Asst. Pierman **Thomas** – influenza, and Deckhand **W. Livett** – catarrh.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach = 152
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Recovered cases discharged = 3

**March 3, 1932**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **A. Greenhill, L. Redgate, A. Jones, C. Roche**.
  To Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **A. Coughlan, B. Roche**.
- **Sick list:** Mate **F. Showell**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach = 172
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 7 Recovered cases discharged = 5

**March 31, 1932**

- **Stores Porter Dockery asks to live out:** 'I submit herewith application from Stores Porter M. Dockery asking to be allowed to "live out"; he has made several attempts of late to obtain a non-resident post under the Council but has not been successful. He is an excellent officer and his conduct and character, exemplary. This matter has been placed before the Med. Supt. Dr Cameron and the application has his approval.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Matron **K. A. Mills**
  To Joyce Green – Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**, Asst. Nurse **A. Greenhill**, Wardmaid **E. Fairish.**
- **Sick list:** Mate **F. Showell** – gastritis; Deckhand **W. Livett** – pyrexia.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 151
  Remaining in shelters = 13 Discharged, not smallpox = 10 Recovered cases discharged = 1

**May 5, 1932**

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Wardmaids **J. Fairish, J. Allinson, A. French**
  From High Wood Hospital – Clerk Mr **E. Giblin**
  To Paddington Hospital – Clerk Mr **W. Butcher** To Archway Hospital – Clerk Mr **A F Kirkham**
- **New temp. nightwatchman: J. Griffiths** employed as temporary Nightwatchman.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 204
  Remaining in shelters = 3 Discharged, not smallpox = 10 Recovered cases discharged = 3

**June 2, 1932**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurses **A. Pritchard, E. Maloney**; Sister **F. Parry**.
  **To Joyce Green Hospital** – Wardmaid **V. Smith**; Asst. Nurse **A. Pritchard**; Sister **K. Davies**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 147
  Remaining in shelters = 5 Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Recovered cases discharged = 3

**June 31, 1932**

- **Clerk Mr Morgan asks to live out**: 'I submit application from Mr Morgan, Clerk class II asking permission to become non-resident, letter herewith.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:** From Joyce Green Hospital – Sister **M. Sanders**
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 73
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 11 Recovered cases discharged = 0

**July 28, 1932** *(report written and signed by Clerk **E. G. Giblin**)*

- **Mr Sullivan retires**: 'Mr C. E. Sullivan, Engineer-Surveyor retired on superannuation on the 30th ult.'
- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Domestic Asst. Gladys **A Cook**; Asst. Nurse **Elizabeth R. Bevan**
  Temporary clerk **Alfred J. S. Belcher** joined on 16 July and left on 23 July.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 68
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 17 Recovered cases discharged = 1

**October 21, 1932** *(report written and signed by Clerk **E. G. Giblin**)*

- **Domestic, Clerical and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Asst. Nurse **W. Moyles**; Domestic Asst. **N. Bridges**; 2nd Asst. Matron **E. Boyden**; temp. Clerk **A. J. S. Belcher** (who left on 12th Oct).
  To Joyce Green and other hospitals – Sisters **F. S. Parry** and **M. A. Sanders**; Staff Nurse **J. H. Old**; Wardmaid **J. E. Burke**; 2nd Asst. Matron **K. A. Mills**; Domestic Asst. **A. French**; Clerk **E. Morgan**.
- **Sick**: Wardmaid **E. Wilkinson**, Deckhand **W. Livett**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 127
  Remaining in shelters = 1 Discharged, not smallpox = 22

**November 18, 1932** *(report written and signed by Clerk **E. G. Giblin**)*

- **Lamp knocked down by ambulance**: 'A lamp standard illumination of the main road was broken down by a South Eastern Station ambulance…' Was replaced by the staff.
- **Collision**: 'The steamer "White Cross" sustained slight damage to the bow, by a collision with a drifting barge.'
- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Domestic Assistant **Marjory Grimes**
  Resigned – Domestic Assistant **Elizabeth Wilkinson** and Asst. Nurse **Elizabeth Rhoda Bevan**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 81
  Remaining in shelters = 1 Discharged, not smallpox = 3

**December 16, 1932** *(report written and signed by Clerk **E. G. Giblin**)*

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green Hospital – Sister Katherine **H. Davies**; Domestic Asst. **Betsy Railton**
  Transferred to Highgate Hospital – Sister **Julia Corcoran**
  Transferred to Joyce Green – Wardmaid **Eleanor Armour**
- **Carpenter Greenland allowed leave for mother's funeral**: 'Ship's Carpenter W. Greenland was granted one day's leave on the occasion of the death of his mother and one day for the funeral as allowed by the Council's scale of leave …'
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 68
  Remaining in shelters = 6 Discharged, not smallpox = 8 Discharged, recovered smallpox = 1

**London County Council Annual Report of the Council, 1932**
**Vol. III (Part I): Public Health**
Wellcome Library online catalogue - ref: .b18252795

Page 7

- **Smallpox cases from ships:** 'During the year four ships on which cases of smallpox had occurred during their voyages from eastern ports arrived in the Port of London. On two of these the patients had been landed at foreign ports whilst on another the patient had died and was buried at sea. On the fourth ship, the patient had been unwell for some days and on the arrival of the ship at Bellamy's wharf he developed a rash and attended the Seamen's hospital, where he was detained as a suspected case of smallpox. He was admitted to the Council's receiving station at South Wharf and was found to be suffering from the type of smallpox prevalent in the east.'

# 1932 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Allison,** Isabella; **Burd**, Walter; **Butterworth**, Henry (Freeman); **Burke,** Joan Edith **Coughlan,** Alice Elizabeth; **Corcoran,** Julia; **Darke,** Violet**; Everard**, Millie **Eyres**, Grace; **Eyres,** James William; **Faint,** Margaret Marion; **French**, Annie **Giblen**, Elsan George [in later register it's Elson Giblin]; **Greenfield**, Charles Richard **Loder,** Edith; **Mills**, Kathleen; **Morgan**, Edmund; **Morley,** Frances Mitchell **Neville**, Violet; **Old,** Iris Hide**; O'Mahoney,** Ellie; **Osborne**, Elizabeth Jane **Parry,** Frances Sarah**; Rayner,** Walter; **Redgate,** Lucy Cranshaw **Roche,** Anna Christine**; Saunders,** Martha Ann**; Sanderson,** Daisy Emily **Skerritt**, Martha**; Thexton**, Margaret; **Thexton**, May**; Thomas**, Alfred James **Waters**, Alice**; Webb**, Edward; **White**, Annie**; Wilson**, Dorothy Una

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Digby**, Charles Robert + Sarah + Doris Ivy + Florence May + Frederick Charles
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte + Herbert Leonard + Winifred Alice
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie + Ellen Mary
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth Mary Ann
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Norton**, George + Mary Dorothy

# 1933

***Ambulance steamers sold; R.A.S. staff made redundant or redeployed; moderate number of smallpox cases***

## M.A.B. River Ambulance Service - Engineer Surveyor's Report Book 1925-1933

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/07/001)

**Reports written by the Clerk, E.G. Giblin, to the River Ambulance Sub-Committee:**

**January 13, 1933**

- **Domestic and Nursing Staff Transfers:**
  From Joyce Green – Staff Nurses **Anne Robertson MacLeod, Doris Mather, Norah Powley**
  To other hospitals – Staff Nurses **Daisy Emily Sanderson, Frances Witchell Morley, Dorothy Una Wilson** On leave: Asst. Nurse **A. E. Coughlan** absent on leave without pay Dec 25 – Jan 2.
- **Pierman given leave for brother's death and funeral: '**Assistant Pierman **W. Rayner** was granted leave in accordance with the Council's scale on the death of his brother (1 day) … and for the funeral … (1 day).'
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 70
  Remaining in shelters = 4 Discharged, not smallpox = 0 Discharged, recovered smallpox = 1

**February 10, 1933**

- **Medical officer:** temporary Assistant Medical Officer **Dr R. F. Fidler** joined Jan 26th, left Feb 2nd.
- **Stoker Barron's mother dies**: 'Marine Stoker E. Barron was granted leave to visit his mother at Grimsby on 22nd January and was absent until the 25th incl. on account of her death and funeral. He has been allowed full pay in respect of this leave in accordance with the Council's regulations.'
- **Sick List**: Senior Deckhand **F. Fainton**.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 60
  Remaining in shelters = 3 Discharged, not smallpox = 2 Discharged, recovered smallpox = 0

**March 10, 1933**

- **Disposal of ambulance steamers, and their crews:** 'The steamer "Geneva Cross" left South Wharf on the 21st February, the "Maltese Cross" on the 28th February, and the "Red Cross" on the 6th March for mooring at Erith, preparatory to disposal, after being disinfected and certified as such by the Port Sanitary Authority. The first two proceeded under their own steam and the "Red Cross" in tow as instructed by the Chief Engineer. All the members of the ships' crews attended at the Chief Engineer's department on the 17th February, for interview concerning their qualifications.'
- **Sick list: Charles Digby**, Master.
- **No. of patients** transferred to Long Reach Hospital = 66
  Remaining in shelters = 2 Discharged, not smallpox = 4 Discharged, recovered smallpox = 0

*This is the final report from South Wharf itself; the following Joyce Green Hospital Superintendent's report books include reports on matters from South Wharf.*

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

These monthly reports give the number of patients admitted to South Wharf since the previous report, and the number sent to Long Reach by road, summarised as follows. (The other patients not sent to Long Reach were either not smallpox, or were being detained at South Wharf.)

January 13, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 76, of which 74 were sent to Long Reach by road.
February 10, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 64, of which 60 were sent to Long Reach by road
March 10, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 69, of which 68 were sent to Long Reach by road
April 7, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 68, of which 59 were sent to Long Reach by road
May 5, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 93, of which 88 were sent to Long Reach by road
June 2, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 76, of which 59 were sent to Long Reach by road
June 30, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 53, of which 51 were sent to Long Reach by road
November 10, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 6, of which 5 were sent to Long Reach by road
December 8, 1933: admitted to South Wharf = 21, of which 18 were sent to Long Reach by road

Other reports with news from South Wharf:

**April 7, 1933:**

- **Staff accommodation requests:** refers to a letter received from Stoker **W. H. Hobbs**, asking to be allowed to occupy one of the larger cottages, and a letter from Piermaster **J. W. Eyres** requesting to be permitted to live out. 'Consideration of these requests should … be postponed until the adjustments of staffing at South Wharf consequent on the abandonment of the River Ambulance Service are carried out.'

**June 2, 1933**

- **Patient falls from broken stretcher**: 'I have to report that an accident occurred at South Wharf when a patient was being carried on a stretcher from ward "D" to the ambulance for transfer to Long Reach. One of the handles of the stretcher broke and the patient rolled off on to the road. The patient, Florence Blaber, 19 years, made no complaint of hurt and there was no apparent injury. The remainder of the stretchers in use at South Wharf have been examined and although no evidence of the risk of a similar mishap was found, the stretchers have been ordered to be replaced since they are very old and the carrying poles have probably, to some extent, decayed.'

**June 30, 1933**

- **Occupation of South Wharf cottages:**
  'The arrangements made so far for the occupation of the cottages at South Wharf are as follows:-
  No. 1. **F. Webb**
  No. 2. **E. Lake**
  No. 3. **E. Webb** when vacated by **C. Digby**
  No. 4. **J. Eyres**
  No. 5. **W. H. Hobbs**
  No. 6. Vacant. Handyman to be appointed.
  No. 7. **G. Edwards** when vacated by **G. Norton**.'

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July - December 1933

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Pages 223-224

- **Discontinuance of River Ambulance Service – disposal of staff:** further to the decision to discontinue the R.A.S. (at a date to be arranged) they now report on the arrangements for the redundant staff.
  'The first of the new land ambulances was ready to be brought into service in February, 1933, and arrangements were made to absorb the staff employed in the river ambulance service a far as possible into other positions. This staff comprised 31 officers and employees, nearly all of whom

were “transferred officers” within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1929. Thirteen of these men were graded as “marine” staff, and these we have dealt with as follows – the services of two, for whom no suitable positions could be found in the Council’s service, have been terminated; two have been certified as permanently unfit for further service and have been retired, and the remaining nine have been transferred to other positions in the public health and chief engineer’s departments.
The staff employed on shore at North and South Wharves otherwise than on engineering or stoking duties, numbered 18, including the engineer-surveyor, who left the service on 14th July 1932. North Wharf has been handed over to the Improvements Committee for disposal and the three men employed there will be redundant as far as the public health department is concerned. The disbanding of the river service has made no material difference in the amount of work falling to be carried out by the male staff at the South Wharf receiving station. We have decided however, that the arrangements which have hitherto obtained for watching the pontoon and the dolphin should be discontinued, and the three men employed on this work therefore became redundant to the requirements of the smallpox receiving station. We are of opinion moreover, that the present portering staff at South Wharf (hitherto graded as assistant piermen) could be reduced by one, on the understanding that temporary assistance will be authorised when necessary.
The South Wharf smallpox receiving station is administered under the supervision of the medical superintendent of the River hospitals. An engineer-surveyor was formerly in local charge, but since the recent retirement of the last holder, the position has not been filled. The present officer in local charge is a clerk, and we consider that the position should be upgraded to that of senior clerk. In addition to the senior clerk, the staff required for the proper carrying out of the work is as follows:- 1 foreman porter, class II, 1 storesman, class II, and 7 general porters, class I. Of the 18 staff formerly employed on shore at North and South Wharf 10 only are therefore required under the new arrangements.
We have approved the arrangements made for the absorption of 6 of the surplus staff into positions on the hospital establishments. One night watchman has been seconded to the valuers department pending the disposal of North Wharf. Subject to the approval of the staffing rearrangements, we have approved the allocation of the 10 members of the staff remaining at South Wharf to positions on the proposed new establishment….’
(Continues by listing the amounts to be saved in that and the following financial years - roughly around £4000 - £4,500 each year.) [from Central Public Health Committee report, 25 July 1933]

Page 298, 299

- **Cost of pier upkeep, and watching of South Wharf pier**: mention of the cost of upkeep of piers, bridges and dolphins at Long Reach and South Wharf, as £30 a year for each pier. Regarding South Wharf: ‘We have discontinued the arrangements for watching the pontoon pier and dolphins’.

Page 300

- **Sale of steamers**: ‘We have accepted the tender of George Cohen, Sons and Company, Limited, of Commercial-road, E14, for the purchase of river ambulance steamers, “Geneva Cross”, “Maltese Cross” and “Red Cross” for sums of £175, £60 and £110, respectively, and the tender of Mr H. G. Lancaster of 308 West Ferry-road, Millwall, for the purchase of the river ambulance steamer “White Cross” for the sum of £63.’

Page 713

- **Admission of suspected cases of smallpox to South Wharf:** further to the regulations agreed in 1931 [see L.C.C. Minutes of Proceedings 1931], special arrangements are agreed if smallpox occurs in any of the L.C.C.’s establishments, to call in the smallpox consultant directly rather than through the borough medical officer of health.

# 1933 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Allison,** Isabella; **Browne**, William Henry; **Burd**, Walter; **Butterworth**, Henry (Freeman) **Coughlan,** Alice Elizabeth; **Darke,** Violet; **Davies,** Katherine Hannah**; Everard**, Millicent **Eyres**, Grace; **Eyres,** James William; **Faint,** Margaret Marion; **Giblin**, Elson George **Grimes,** Marjory; **Howe,** Lottie Geraldine Louise**; Johnson,** Georgina; **Loder,** Edith **MacLeod,** Anne Robertson**; Mather,** Doris; **Mills**, Kathleen; **Noyles,** Winifred **Neville**, Violet; **O'Mahoney,** Ellen; **Osborne**, Elizabeth Jane; **Powley,** Norah **Rayner,** Walter**; Redgate,** Lucy Cranshaw**; Skerritt**, Martha; **Smith**, Catherine Mabel **Thexton**, Margaret; **Thexton**, Esther May; **Thomas**, Alfred James; **Tierney,** Margaret **Waters**, Alice; **Webb**, Edward Alfred; **White**, Annie

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Masson**, John Stewart + Annie Elizabeth + John Alexander |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Digby**, Charles Robert + Sarah + Doris Ivy + Florence May + Frederick Charles |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Showell**, Frederick + Charlotte + Herbert Leonard + Winifred Alice |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie + Ellen Mary + Annie, Jnr |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hellyer**, James John + Elizabeth Mary Ann |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Norton**, George + Mary Dorothy |

# 1934

***Number of smallpox patients declines - final case seen in June***

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

These monthly reports give the number of patients admitted to South Wharf since the previous report, and the number sent to Long Reach by road, summarised as follows. (The other patients not sent to Long Reach were either not smallpox, or were being detained at South Wharf.)

January 5, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 20, of which 18 were sent to Long Reach by road.
February 9, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 51, of which 49 were sent to Long Reach by road.
March 9, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 38, of which 33 were sent to Long Reach
April 6, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 26, of which 23 were sent to Long Reach.
May 11, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 19, of which 18 were sent to Long Reach.
June 1, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 10, of which 10 were sent to Long Reach.
June 29, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 8, of which 5 were sent to Long Reach.
July 27, 1934: admitted to South Wharf = 1, of which 0 were sent to Long Reach.
October 19, 1934: no smallpox cases since the last report; only 5 admitted to South Wharf and kept under observation before being discharged, not smallpox.
November 16, 1934: no cases of smallpox.
December 14, 1934: no cases of smallpox; only 3 admitted to South Wharf and kept under observation before being discharged, not smallpox.

*Also in this report book:*

December 14, 1934

- **Suicide of nurse at South Wharf**: 'I regret to have to report that Staff Nurse A. Waters died at South Wharf on 19th November. An inquest was held on 20th November, when a verdict of "suicide" was returned by the coroner.'

# 1934 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Allison,** Isabella; **Butterworth**, Henry Freeman; **Corcoran,** Julia; **Darke,** Violet **Davies,** Katherine Hannah; **Emmert,** Violet Lily; **Everard**, Millicent; **Eyres**, Grace **Eyres,** James William; **Faint,** Margaret Marion; **Giblen [Giblin]**, Elson George; **Grimes,** Marjory; **Johnson,** Georgina; **Mark,** Jemima; **Osborne,** Elizabeth Jane; **Powley,** Norah; **Rayner,** Walter**; Smith**, Catherine Mabel**; Thexton**, Esther May**; Thexton**, Margaret; **Thomas**, Alfred James; **Waters**, Alice; **White**, Annie

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Webb,** Frank William + Lilian Grace
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Eyers**, James William + Louisa
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie Snr + Ellen Mary + Annie, Jnr
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Petley,** William + Ethel
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary

# 1935

***No smallpox cases***

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings January - June 1935
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 203
- **Flood prevention works at South Wharf:** £120 estimate of cost to carry out flood prevention works required at South Wharf to comply with new standards adopted in 1933.

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July - December 1935
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 211
- **Fire extinguishers**: 'South Wharf receiving station' is amongst the institutions listed as requiring fire extinguishing equipment.

Page 496
- **Maintenance**: a contract is listed for cleaning and painting works, to the value of £647.

Page 657
- **Employment of cooks, and 'South Wharf hospital'**: The Hospitals and Medical Services Committee sets working hours and numbers for 'domestic and subordinate staff'; within this is a clause that refers to 'South Wharf hospital', as follows: '…as from and including 1st April, 1936, the number of additional positions of assistant cook, class II, be fixed at 4 for the periods of both minimum and maximum occupation of the River hospitals and South Wharf hospital.'

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)

These reports give the number of patients admitted to South Wharf - there were **no smallpox cases** all year; only the Nov 15 report mentions one case of suspected smallpox, which turned out not to be smallpox.

April 5, 1935
- **South Wharf Cook Sick**: '…**Millicent Everard**, Assistant Cook at South Wharf, was granted 4 days' leave after an attack of otitis.

October 18, 1935
- **Porter asks to live out:** mention of a letter received from Porter **H. F. Butterworth** from South Wharf, asking permission to live out. 'While sympathising with this man's request, it is hardly possible to leave the wharf with no resident male staff…'

# 1935 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Burke,** Joan Edith; **Butterworth**, Henry Freeman; **Coughlan,** Alice Elizabeth **Davies,** Katherine Hannah; **Dunne,** Johanna; **Everard**, Millicent; **Faint,** Margaret Marion **Giblen [Giblin]**, Elson George; **Johnson,** Georgina; **Mills**, Kate Alice; **Rayner,** Walter **Thexton**, Esther May; **Thexton**, Margaret; **Thomas**, Alfred James; **White**, Annie

1 South Wharf Cottages: **Webb**, Frank William + Lilian Grace
2 South Wharf Cottages: **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose
3 South Wharf Cottages: **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith
4 South Wharf Cottages: **Eyers**, James William + Louisa
5 South Wharf Cottages: **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie Snr + Ellen Mary + Annie, Jnr
6 South Wharf Cottages: **Petley,** William + Ethel
7 South Wharf Cottages: **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary

# 1936

***No smallpox cases; pier repaired***

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37

(London Metropolitan Archives, ref: H48/A/04/009)

These monthly reports by the Medical Superintendent give the number of patients admitted to South Wharf – **no cases of smallpox**, or suspected cases, were admitted to South Wharf during the year.

March 6, 1936

- **Pier repairs**: repairs to South Wharf pier had begun, whereas at Long Reach, the pier was being demolished. (The L.C.C. Minute Book gives the cost of these pier repairs as £1,500)

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July-December 1936

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 10

- **Absence of smallpox cases, and reduction of male porters**: 'For some time there have been no admissions of smallpox cases at South Wharf receiving station and by a re-arrangement of duties it has been found possible to reduce by two the number of general porters class I, employed at this station. In the event of there being an epidemic of smallpox (i.e. an admission rate of ten or more a day), the question of increasing the staff will have to be considered.' [from report of 7 July 1936]

Pages 162, 275 - 276

- **Retirement of Dr A F Cameron:** Medical Superintendent of the River Hospitals and also Chief Medical Superintendent of the Infectious Hospitals Service**;** due to reach age of 65 on 16 Sept 1936; arranged for him to retire on 18 Dec 1936. Brief summary of his career on pages 275-276.

Pages 563 - 565

- **Numbers of nursing staff at infectious hospitals:** detailed proposals on the numbers of nursing staff and grades required at hospitals to allow for large variations in the numbers of patients, with mention also of South Wharf coming under the same administration as the River Hospitals.

# 1936 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Bunce**, Martha; **Burke,** Joan Edith; **Butterworth**, Henry Freeman; **Corcoran,** Julia **Davies,** Katherine Hannah; **Everard**, Millicent; **Flockhart,** Ann McColl Conway **Giblin**, Elson George; **Grounsell,** Annie; **Johnson,** Georgina; **McCollock,** Isabella **White**, Annie

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb**, Frank Richard + Lilian Grace |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Eyers**, James William + Louisa |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie Snr + Annie, Jnr + **Bryan**, Frederick William |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Petley,** William + Ethel |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary + William Albert |

# 1937

***No smallpox cases***

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1923-37
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/009)
*and* **Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1937-54**
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/010)

These monthly reports by the Medical Superintendent give the number of patients admitted to South Wharf since the previous report: no cases of smallpox, or suspected cases, were admitted during the year.

**January 8, 1937**

- **Influenza epidemic affecting staff**: staff numbers of the river hospitals 'considerably depleted' by the influenza epidemic, and nurses withdrawn from South Wharf for work in other hospitals.

**March 5, 1937** and **April 2, 1937**

- **Pierman Butterworth off sick**: Asst. Pierman Henry F. Butterworth certified as unfit for work; leave of absence and sick pay recommended.

**May 7, 1937**

- **Pierman Henry Butterworth to be retired**: Asst. Pierman Henry F. Butterworth certified as permanently unfit to return to duty, so his date of retirement was given as 1st June.

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July-December 1937
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 135

- **Management**: 'South Wharf smallpox receiving station' appears in a list of institutions under the management of the L.C.C.'s Hospitals and Medical Services Committee.

# 1937 Electoral Register

South Wharf: **Burke,** Joan Edith; **Butler,** Alice; **Davies,** Katherine Hannah; **Evans,** Ernest Reuben **Everard**, Millicent; **Faint,** Margaret Marion; **Flegg,** Ruby Harriett; **Gardiner,** Emmeline **Giblin**, Elson George; **Grimes,** Marjory; **Johnson,** Georgina; **Revill,** Margaret Isabel **White**, Annie

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb**, Frank Richard + Lilian Grace |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Lake**, Ernest + Ethel Rose |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Eyers**, James William + Louisa |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie |
| | **Bryan**, Frederick William + Annie |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Petley,** William + Ethel |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary + William Albert |

# 1938

***No smallpox cases***

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1937-54
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/010)

**No smallpox, only suspected case**s: the only mentions of smallpox at South Wharf are the following -

March 4, 1938
- 'South Wharf was re-opened on Friday, 25th February for the admission of a patient suspected to be suffering from smallpox. The diagnosis was not confirmed and the patient was discharged on 28th February.'

July 22, 1938
- 'South Wharf was re-opened on 17-7-38 for the admission of a patient suspected to be suffering from smallpox.'

October 14, 1938
- 'A patient was admitted to South Wharf on 17th August for observation. The diagnosis of smallpox was not confirmed and the patient was discharged on 20th August.'

## London County Council
## Report of the County Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1938
(Bound within L.C.C. Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health 1938-50)
London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.7 (5) LCC

Page 7
- **No smallpox cases for several years**: 'No case of smallpox was notified in London during the year. London has now been free from this disease since June, 1934.'

# 1938 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf, 311 Rotherhithe St | **Algar,** Rose Mary Maud**; Briggs,** Susan**; Bulbeck,** Albert Edward **Burke,** Joan Edith; **Evans,** Ernest Reuben; **Everard**, Millicent **Faint,** Margaret Marion; **Farrant,** Joyce Mary; **Giblin**, Elson George **Grimes,** Marjory; **Hope,** Annie Elizabeth; **Johnson,** Georgina **Kempton,** Dorothy Eliza; **Revill,** Margaret Isabel; **Smith,** Winifred **White**, Annie |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb**, Frank Richard + Lilian Grace |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **-** |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Eyers**, James William + Louisa |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie + William |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Petley,** William + Ethel |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary + William Albert |

# 1939

***No smallpox cases; South Wharf being considered for closure***

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1937-54
(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/010)

No reports of any cases being admitted to South Wharf.

Staff report for meeting on May 27, 1939:

- **Porter Arthur Bannister in hospital:** General Porter Arthur C. Bannister, transferred 'from South Wharf S.P. Receiving Station' to Lewisham Hospital on May 30, 1939.

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings July-December 1939
(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 299

- **Discontinuance of South Wharf Receiving Station**: 'With the concurrence of the Finance Committee, we have agreed in principle to the discontinuance of South Wharf as a smallpox receiving station and to the establishment of a reception and observation unit within the curtilage of the main smallpox hospital at Long Reach, Dartford.'

# 1939 Electoral Register

| | |
|---|---|
| South Wharf, 311 Rotherhithe St: | **Algar,** Rose Mary Maud; **Bannister**, Arthur Cyril; **Briggs,** Susan **Burke,** Joan Edith; **Everard**, Millicent; **Faint,** Margaret Marion **Giblin**, Elson George; **Grimes,** Marjory; **Hope,** Annie Elizabeth **Johnson,** Georgina; **Kempton,** Dorothy Eliza; **Price,** Victor **Watson,** Isabel Johnstone**; Whelan,** Annie Josephine**; White**, Annie |
| 1 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb**, Frank Richard + Lilian Grace |
| 2 South Wharf Cottages: | **Winks,** Stephen + Harriett Ellen |
| 3 South Wharf Cottages: | **Webb,** Edward Alfred + Eleanor Edith |
| 4 South Wharf Cottages: | **Eyers**, James William + Louisa |
| 5 South Wharf Cottages: | **Hobbs**, William Henry + Annie + William |
| 6 South Wharf Cottages: | **Petley,** William + Ethel |
| 7 South Wharf Cottages: | **Edwards,** George + Louisa Mary + William Albert |

# The 1939 Register

Accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

The following were listed as resident at 'L.C.C. South Wharf Special Hospital' on September 29, 1939:

**Annie E Hope** d.o.b: 17 Sep 1890, Nursing Sister, single
**Rose M M Algar** d.o.b: 11 Jan 1899, Nursing Sister, single
**Georgina Johnson** d.o.b: 5 Apr 1881, Nurse, single
**Margaret M Faint** d.o.b: 14 Dec 1905, Domestic Maid, single (surname when later married: Price)
**Annie White** d.o.b: 15 Mar 1898 ??, Domestic Maid, single
**Joan E Burke** d.o.b: 11 Dec 1910, Domestic Maid, single (surname when later married: Bannister)
**Marjory Crimes** d.o.b: 9 Jun 1905, Domestic Maid, single (surname when later married: Greer)
**Susie Briggs** d.o.b: 1907, Domestic Maid, single (surname when later married: Bullock)
**Dorothy E Kempton** d.o.b: 1913, Domestic Maid, single (surname when later married: Yallas?)
**Elson G Giblin** d.o.b: 15 ? 1880, Hospital Clerk, single, male

The following were listed as resident at South Wharf Cottages on September 29, 1939:

1 South Wharf Cottages:
**Frank R Webb** d.o.b: 7 Oct 1876, Hospital Pierman, married
Frank W Webb d.o.b:18 Oct 1918, Apprentice Electrician, single
Joan L Webb d.o.b: 10 Nov 1921, Woolwich Arsenal T……?, single

2 South Wharf Cottages:
**Stephen Winks** d.o.b: 20 Mar 1890, Hospital Porter, married
Harriett Winks d.o.b: 20 Jun 1886, unpaid domestic duties, married
Alec S Winks d.o.b: 26 May 1920, Metal Polisher, heavy worker, single
**Victor M Price** d.o.b: 29 Aug 1916, Hospital Porter, single
+ another person – record still closed.

3 South Wharf Cottages:
Not listed

4 South Wharf Cottages:
**James W Eyers** d.o.b: 21 Oct 1902, Piermaster, L.C.C. Hospital, married

5 South Wharf Cottages:
**William Hobbs** d.o.b: 8 Sept 1878, Domestic Stoker, married
Annie Hobbs d.o.b: 22 Oct 1883, unpaid domestic duties, married
Joseph H. Hobbs d.o.b: 29 Nov 1920, Apprentice Turner, single
**Frederick Bryan** d.o.b: 16 Sep 1911, Painter and Paperhanger

6 South Wharf Cottages:
**William Petley** d.o.b: 6 Sep 1881, General Mechanic, married
Ethel Petley d.o.b: 10 Jun 1889, unpaid domestic duties?, married
William G. Petley d.o.b: 1 Oct 1925, at school, single
+ one other whose record is still closed, suggesting there was a second child?

7 South Wharf Cottages:
**George Edwards** d.o.b.: 3 Nov 1883, General Porter, married
Note in further column: PWC 122/14454
Louisa M. Edwards d.o.b: 2 July 1887, unpaid domestic duties, married
+ there may be further records on the following page, but these are currently closed.

# 1940

## *South Wharf largely destroyed on the first night of the Blitz, all staff rescued*

## Recommendations for awards for gallantry – London Fire Brigade and London Auxiliary Fire Service – Awards made

(London Metropolitan Archives, London County Council collection, ref: LCC/CL/CD/01/311)

Report from L.C.C. Public Health Department, dated 29th November 1940, addressed from Joyce Green Hospital:

'**Air raid damage – South Wharf**

South Wharf was involved in the extensive riverside fire which affected the south London docks as the result of enemy action on the 7th/8th September 1940.

At about 5pm on Saturday 7th September, an air raid warning was sounded and was followed by considerable aerial activity overhead. High explosive and incendiary bombs fell in large numbers all around the wharf, and in a short time, fires were raging. The wax / paper mills to the north, the timber yard and flats to the south and buildings to west were alight. Sparks began to set the nurses' home alight and the staff, consisting of the sister-in-charge, two other members of the nursing staff, five domestics, and three male staff, worked hard to keep these down until the water supply inside the wharf failed. General mechanic **W. Petley** was particularly active and turned off the gas service. Meanwhile, incendiary bombs had fallen onto buildings within the wharf. "A" and "C" shelters, a coke dump and trees were burning, and the fires were spreading to other buildings. The pier was alight in several places, as were barges and barge moorings in the river to the east of the wharf. There were thus fires inside the Wharf and all around. The Fire Brigade had meanwhile been removing local residents, chiefly women, old men, and a man on a stretcher, to a boat moored to the pontoon. General mechanic **W. Petley** reported to the Sister-in-charge, that the Fire Brigade had ordered the wharf to be evacuated, and that their only chance of escape was by the river. The tide was going out, the pier was alight, and petrol was stored on the pontoon. The Fire Brigade were therefore anxious that they should leave at once. All the female staff, except **Sister Hope**, ran down the burning pier, 264 feet long, to the boat alongside the pontoon. Before Sister Hope could follow, another incendiary bomb fell on the pier and it collapsed. The staff in the boat were taken across to Millwall on the north side of the river, where kindly people took them into their homes and gave them tea. They spent the night in public shelters. Attempts to get into telephonic communication with Joyce Green were unsuccessful and next morning they tried to make their way to Dartford. Normal traffic was disorganised, so they travelled to Aldgate and attempted to reach New Cross. This route was impassable, so they made their way to Charing Cross and entrained for Dartford. They could get no further than New Cross and therefore appealed to the police, who got into communication with the South-Eastern Ambulance Station. An ambulance was provided and they reached Joyce Green in an exhausted state at 12.25pm on Sunday the 8th of September.

Meanwhile, **Sister Hope**, left at the pier head, took shelter with Stoker **W. H. Hobbs** in a corrugated iron shed. Shortly afterwards, firemen came to take them out. They were led between burning wards and trees to the road outside. Sister Hope stated that she wouldn't have attempted to get past if the firemen hadn't come. She was put into a fire trailer. Bombs were still falling and in the middle of the night the Fire Brigade decided to evacuate because of the presence of an unexploded bomb. The trailer, driven through the darkness and smoke, fell into a crater in the middle of the road. The crater was full of water and Sister Hope had to be lifted out by the firemen. She was taken in a car to Cherry Garden Fire Station and kept there the night. Next morning, after the "All Clear" was sounded, she was taken to Paradise Road Police Station and after a long and roundabout journey she reached Joyce Green at 3.15pm on Sunday the 8th of September.

Sister **Hope**, in reporting the fire, praised the behaviour of the staff and the fine work of the men (particularly **Petley** who never ceased working throughout the afternoon and night). She was particularly grateful to the Fire Brigade, to whom she undoubtedly owed her life.

Stoker **W. H. Hobbs**, a sufferer from asthma who lives in one of the cottages and came into the Wharf when the trouble started, was taken to hospital next day and remained there for a month suffering from the effects of the smoke to his chest.

General porter, **G. Edwards** (a one-armed man) suffered from a burn on the nose.

The following buildings were completely destroyed:-

Medical Officers' quarters, all wards (i.e. Shelters "A", "B", "C" and "D"), the receiving rooms, male staff quarters, stores, boat shed, engineer's and carpenter's shops, greenhouse, No. 5 cottage and their contents. Minor damage was done to other buildings. The pier was destroyed also.

The following staff were in the Wharf during the fire:-

Sister **Hope**
Deputy Sister **Dexter**
Assistant Nurse **Whelan**
Domestic assistants **Margaret Faint, Alice Martin, Florence Goldby, Lilian Holderness** and **Grace Thomas**
General Porter **G. Edwards**
General Mechanic **W. Petley**
Stoker **W. H. Hobbs'**

[Signed by **M. Mitman**, Medical Superintendent, and **A. E. Hope**, Sister-in-Charge, South Wharf Hospital]

## London County Council Minutes of Proceedings 1940-42

(London Metropolitan Archives, shelfmark 18.6)

Page 287

- **Use of South Wharf by Fire Brigade**: 'We have agreed terms with the Hospitals and Medical Services Committee for the temporary use by the fire brigade of a part of South Wharf smallpox receiving station, including the river pontoon.' [from report of 1st April to 30 Sept 1940]

Page 451

- **Use of Clandon Smallpox Hospital**: 'We have arranged with the Surrey County Council to receive into its Clandon smallpox hospital sporadic cases of smallpox from London or from out-county areas from which such cases are, under agreement, admitted to the Council's hospitals.'
  [from report dated 1st Oct 1940 to 31 March 1940]

## London County Council Interim Report of the County Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer for the Year 1940

(Wellcome Library online catalogue, ref: .b18252862)

Page 10

- **Smallpox cases and arrangements**: 'No patients were admitted to the smallpox hospitals during 1940. As South Wharf Receiving Station ceased to be available, arrangements were made with the Surrey County Council for the admission to the Clandon Hospital of any sporadic cases of this disease which might occur.'

# After 1940

## L.C.C. Interim Report of the County Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer for the Year 1944

(Wellcome Library online catalogue – ref: .b18252886)

Page 37

- **Replacement for South Wharf:** 'Shortly before the war, it had been decided to discontinue the use of the "South Wharf", Rotherhithe, as a smallpox diagnosing and receiving station, and plans were under consideration for its replacement by a unit in Long Reach Smallpox Hospital by the adaptation and extension of the "Pier Buildings", but the outbreak of war prevented further progress. South Wharf was practically destroyed by enemy action in 1940, and although emergency arrangements had been made for the provision of accommodation for sporadic cases, it was felt, in view of outbreaks of smallpox which had occurred elsewhere in Great Britain and the wide responsibilities of the Council in regard to hospital accommodation … that the replacement of the lost accommodation at South Wharf should not be further delayed.'

## Joyce Green Hospital: Medical Superintendent's Report Book 1937-54

(London Metropolitan Archives reference: H48/A/04/010)

April 28, 1947

- '**Long Reach Hospital – Observation and Reception Station for Cases of Smallpox**. I have to report that the necessary alterations having been completed, part of Long Reach Hospital has been ready since 19-3-47 for the reception and observation of doubtful cases of smallpox. This accommodation replaces South Wharf, destroyed during the war and is distinct from the rest of the accommodation at Long Reach Hospital, which is for definite cases of smallpox.'

*THE END!*