

CONTACT

October 1970

K.B. THOMAS



DISCOTHEQUE DEBS
(see page 220)

WEDDINGS

CORNAH—HINKINSON

Congratulations to Mr. Len. Cornah, a clerical assistant in our Liverpool District on the occasion of his recent marriage to Miss Pat. Hinkinson, a domestic science teacher at Whiston County Secondary School.

The ceremony took place at St. Matthews Parish Church, Tipton, Staffordshire.

CARR—FAUGHEY

Our best wishes for a happy future go to Mr. Michael Carr, a computer programmer at Liverpool University and Miss Lorraine (*Lottie*) Faughey, a tracer with our Drawing Office at Sealand Road, on the occasion of their marriage a few weeks ago.

Going through the ritual prior to her wedding is Miss Lorraine Faughey



NORTHALL—OLIVER

Our congratulations go to Mr. Wilfred Northall, a senior engineering draughtsman at Head Office and Mrs. Dora Oliver of Moreton on their recent marriage.

TUBEY—DIXON

We offer our best wishes for a happy future to Mr. William Tubey, a student engineer, presently studying for his final B.Sc.



Mr. and Mrs. Tubey

examinations at Salford University, and Miss Patricia Dixon a former accounts clerk at Derby House, Liverpool, who were married a few weeks ago at St. Margaret's Church, Anfield. Their honeymoon was spent in Majorca.

JONES—DONNELLY

Best wishes for the future to Mr. David Jones and Miss Margaret Donnelly who were married recently at Our Lady's Church, Kirkdale.

Margaret works in the Records Office in our Liverpool District at Lister Drive.

ARNOLD—BURNETT

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Mr. Colin Arnold, an assistant consumers' engineer, working in the Southport District and to Miss Joan Burnett, a



Mr. and Mrs. Arnold

senior clerical assistant with the Work Study Section working from Lister Drive, who were married a short time ago at Oakville Congregational Church, Broadgreen, Liverpool.

*'The Girl from
MANWEB'*

—1971

**HAVE YOU
ENTERED
YET ?**

Closing date Nov. 20th

... hurry !

BIRTHS

Our congratulations go to :

Mr. Richard Jones, Commercial clerical assistant at Lister Drive, and Mrs. Jones on the birth of a son, Michael David.

Mr. Idwal W. Williams, assistant storekeeper at Caernarvon, and Mrs. Medwen Williams on the birth of a daughter, Delyth Wyn.

Mr. John Ralphs, a linesman's mate based at Crewe and his wife Pamela on the birth of a second son, Andrew.

Mr. John Harrison, a service electrician at Crewe and his wife Sheila, on the birth of a son, Nicholas John.



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Editorial Staff
 Keith Baldwin
 John F. Perry
 Sam Doughty

Price Prospects

A GAINST a general background of rocketing prices, the cost of electricity to the public has been a stabilising factor for some considerable time.

In MANWEB's particular case, prices have remained unchanged for three full years. In the current economic climate this has been a great achievement, made possible only by increased internal efficiency and economy.

With the prospect of yet another major increase in the price of power station coal, the writing is clearly on the wall, and this has been made plain by our own Chairman and by the industry's leaders at national level.

Speaking at a press conference in London the Chairman of the Electricity Council (Sir Norman Elliott) said :

"Generally speaking electricity tariffs have not been increased since 1967. The great majority of our customers have therefore had the benefit of three years' stability in prices. Indeed, in April this year seven of the Area Boards made modest reductions—somewhat of a postwar record in the general price field.

"However, Electricity's efforts to improve efficiency and to keep prices stable have been swamped by inflationary pressures. There have also been increases in the price of plant and equipment, transport and other costs during the year. Every effort has been made to absorb these but the cost of fuel, and in particular of coal, presents a major problem. These are, of course, factors entirely outside the control of the electricity industry."

Everyone who serves the electricity supply industry will feel a sense of disappointment that we are being compelled to increase our prices by factors over which we have absolutely no control.

At the same time we can take a measure of justified pride in our very real achievement of holding the line on the prices front for so long a period of time, when the prices of almost all goods and services have been increasing continuously.

* * *

The full text of the MANWEB Chairman's comments on the tariff situation, and details of our achievements during 1969/70, are published on the following pages.

Statement by Denis Dodds (Chairman MANWEB)

at a Press Conference in Liverpool, 6th October, 1970

1. Last year, wage and cost inflation, after smouldering dangerously for many years, burst into flames. This year there is danger of a conflagration! No industry and no member of the consumer public can escape the damage which this brings in its wake as the price of all goods and services rises inexorably to meet higher costs. Since October, 1967, electricity tariffs have been stable. Since October, 1967, however, the price index of all commodities has risen by 19% and is still rising.

2. *No industry has done more than Electricity Supply, through increased productivity and efficiency, to absorb the impact of inflation, but last year's record shows the extent to which inflationary rises in external costs beyond our control eventually exceeded our ability to absorb them.*

3. MANWEB has endeavoured, with considerable success, to absorb cost increases by a combination of sales expansion and greater efficiency. Unit sales, which increased by nearly 8% last year, are five times greater than they were 22 years ago. The year's profit of over £500,000 on our Appliance and Contracting Account compares with a profit of £6,000 22 years ago. Sales of appliances increased by 16.8% in the year. This expansion on all fronts has more than absorbed the increasing costs of direct overheads in the business.

4. **Capital efficiency, expressed as the Load Factor on the system, has increased by 12.4% in 22 years and by an additional 2.3% last year. Manpower productivity, expressed as the numerical relationship of employees to consumers, has improved by over 30% over the same period and increased by a further 6% last year.**

Despite four major pay increases aggregating about 22% in the past four years, the total wage bill has been held to within 5% of the level in 1965/66. The overall distribution costs per unit sold, directly controlled by MANWEB, have declined by 23% and fell again last year.

5. *These positive gains, secured only as a consequence of strong management direction, indicated last summer that MANWEB was reasonably well "on target" financially, but in the autumn external costs commenced to escalate as a result of inflationary wage increases in all industries and the temporary failure of some large generating sets.*

6. In Electricity Supply, by far the greatest of

these increases was in the cost of coal supplied to power stations. In a full year, this increase alone will cost MANWEB £3½m. gross, of which half is imposed automatically upon industrial consumers. In addition to these increases in coal prices, the Generating Board has had to incur higher costs as a result of an increasing shortage of coal supplies from the Coal Board.

7. **This is the primary reason why our revenue balance is over £1m. less in 1969/70 than in 1968/69. That the balance last year reached nearly £1.8m. despite these adverse factors, is due in part to our own measures to contain increased costs and in part to the fact that costs commenced to escalate half way through the year of account.**

8. It has now been announced by Lord Robens that a further "fierce" increase in the price of coal to power stations is inevitable as soon as the miners' wage claim has been settled. This will be superimposed upon the increases already costing MANWEB £3½m. a year gross. The extent of the new increase has not yet been indicated but is quite clear that its impact, together with those imposed last year, will be to cause significant trading deficits for MANWEB unless Retail Tariffs are soon increased. This is not only regrettable but, in the face of our own savings, acutely frustrating.

9. *It is, I am sure, well known that the Electricity Supply Industry has not, for many years, been free to burn the most economic fuel in power stations and that the support for coal has been based, as a matter of Government policy, on the assumption that the Coal Industry will become competitive as uneconomic collieries are closed and productivity in the remainder increases.*

10. In the light of dramatic increases in price and a worsening supply situation, the entire foundation of support for coal appears to have disappeared. My Board have accordingly strongly represented to the Minister that :

- (a) The Generating Board should be free to choose the most economic fuel for both existing and new power stations.
- (b) The 40% tax on oil should be removed immediately as an ameliorative measure, and
- (c) The social burden of carrying out the contraction of the Coal Industry should be removed from the backs of the Electricity Consumer.



Our Chairman, Mr. D. G. Dodds, *centre*, presenting the Board's Annual Report at the recent Press Conference. He is flanked by, Mr. M. M. Parker (*Secretary and Solicitor*) and Mr. D. G. Gwyn (*Deputy Chairman*), *on the left*, and Mr. H. Evans (*Chairman of the Consultative Council*) and Mr. M. R. Cowan (*Chief Commercial Officer*) *on the right*

BOARD REPORT.

YEAR OF EXPANSION AND EFFICIENCY —BUT WARNING OF PRICE INCREASE

SPEAKING AT A Press Conference in Liverpool recently on the publication of MANWEB's Annual Report and Accounts for 1969/70, our Chairman, Mr. D. G. Dodds, said that the Report reflected a year of commercial expansion and improved internal efficiency. Tariffs had remained unchanged for the third year running. Significant improvements in efficiency had been achieved, but inflationary increases in costs, particularly in the supply of coal to power stations, made the outlook for stability in electricity prices unpromising.

A substantial increase in the annual load factor from 60.1% to 62.4% in one year reflected the improved economic use of the generation and distribution systems and the results of the Board's off-peak sales development policy. Distribution and administration costs in relation to MANWEB's own system were now down to 0.152d. per unit sold as compared with 0.195d. in 1948, a reduction of 22%. Mr. Dodds commented that this and the improvement in the annual load factor from 50% in 1948 to its present level, were real achievements.

Progress continued with the gradual development of the new and more economic system of internal organisation and the Head Office of the Board had been transferred from Liverpool to the new Administrative Centre at Chester in December 1969. This would be followed, with attendant economies, by the integration of Area and Head Office work within the new building, and Districts would be reduced in number from 18 to 10.

A reduction of 330 in the number of employees during the year reflected the successful implemen-

tation of policy to optimise the work force during a period of reducing capital expenditure and increasing productivity.

Electricity Sales

Record total sales of 12,477 million units were 916 million (7.9%) higher than in 1969. Sales to industry generally increased by 10.1%. The increase would, no doubt, have been greater but for industrial unrest in some industries which restricted their output and led to a reduction in their electricity requirements. Sales to domestic users showed an encouraging improvement, rising by 5.7% as compared with last year's increase of 4.7%.

The increasing popularity of cheap, off-peak electricity in the home and factory is indicated by the high proportion of electricity sold under the appropriate tariffs and by the record number of more than 20,000 storage radiators installed during the year.

The number of units sold under all types of off-peak arrangements amounted to 2,277 millions and showed an unusually high increase of 616 millions in the year. Off-peak sales now represented 18% of all the electricity sold by the Board.

Sales of appliances reached a record level of £4½ million, showing an exceptional improvement of 16.8% over last year. Sales included a record number of storage radiators sold for use on off-peak tariffs and the White Meter night/day Tariff, which was gaining in popularity. Installation contracting turnover reached a new high level of £2.16 million.

During the year, 435 miles of new mains and overhead lines were commissioned. The strength

built into the distribution network in recent years contributed towards a reduction of nearly £1 million in capital expenditure which, during the year, amounted to £5.7 million compared with £6.6 million last year. In addition £2 million was expended on the 132-kV transmission system transferred to MANWEB from the Generating Board on the 1st April 1969. The transmission assets transferred to MANWEB consisted of 701 miles of 132-kV overhead lines, 102 miles of 132-kV underground cables and 57 transformer points. The total value at cost of the assets transferred was £24.6 million.

Rising Costs

The housewife and the man in the street, commented Mr. Dodds, well knew how the prices of most commodities had continued to rise—almost weekly, it seemed, in some cases. In this inflationary situation MANWEB's tariffs had remained unchanged during three successive years and the balance of revenue of £1.79 million secured in the

Report year, while less than last year's balance, was also noteworthy.

Nevertheless, MANWEB's finances were under very heavy pressure indeed. The price of coal supplied to power stations had risen in October 1969 and again, sharply in January 1970 and these increases had added £1 million to the Board's costs in the year of account.

Substantial pay increases to all categories of Board employees had also been negotiated during the latter part of the year, although these were linked to arrangements to secure greater productivity. A proportion of the increased costs had been and would continue to be absorbed or off-set by increased internal efficiency but, the combined effect of these and other increases in external costs would register sharply on the trading results of the current year which commenced on 1st April 1970. The higher coal prices alone would increase gross costs in a full year by £3½ million and there had been ominous warnings of still higher coal prices yet to come.

University Scholarships

The electricity supply industry is again offering this year a number of university scholarships to school-leavers who wish to read for an honours degree in electrical or mechanical engineering.

The scholarships—which are in addition to the industry's engineering studentships—are awarded to help ensure that the industry maintains its share of the country's best electrical and mechanical engineers, and thus its position in the forefront of technological progress.

Scholarships in both mechanical and electrical engineering are offered by the Central Electricity Generating Board, which generates and transmits power at high voltage over the national grid, while the twelve Area Electricity Boards, which distribute and sell electricity to a total of more than 18 million customers, offer scholarships in electrical engineering only.

Boys and girls aged between 16 and 21, with at least three 'A' level passes, including mathematics and physics, are eligible to apply for one of the scholarships.

The awards provide for the payment of a maintenance grant and of all approved fees. Last year the grant, which is now subject to review was £390—£420 according to the university chosen. No reduction is made on account of parents' income.

Details of the scheme and application forms have been sent to all schools with 'A' level students.

COMPETITION £5
WITH A PRIZE OF

What would you do with a £500,000 Christmas present—given with the proviso that you had to spend it all for the benefit of mankind in general?
—What would you do??

Send us a letter explaining as briefly as possible how you would use the money. Don't just dole it out at £100,000 a time to five charities YOU have to decide how it will be used.

There will be a £5 prize for the best letter. Send yours to: *The Editor, 'Contact,' MANWEB, Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR, to arrive not later than November 16th, 1970.*

Competition for MANWEB employees, pensioners and their families.



ONE MAN SHOW

OUR COLLEAGUES in North Wirral District recently had the opportunity of viewing a number of paintings exhibited in the staff canteen at Craven Street. Their special interest in this was because all the work had been done by one of their friends on the district staff, Mr. Eric Coley, who when he is not using his paint brush is going about his job as distribution foreman with MANWEB.

Eric has been with the electricity supply industry for the past 31 years, most of this time at Birkenhead.

His interest in the world of art began about four years ago and since then he has painted many beautiful landscapes of local beauty spots. He is an active member of the Wallacey Arts Society.

Many of his clients are families who have emigrated from the Wirral and still yearn for the sights along the Mersey and around the Peninsula. Their home sickness is eased when they get one of Eric's paintings.

In his recent one-man exhibition there were paintings of Liverpool by night and the Mersey Ferry.

About 200 of his colleagues took time to view the exhibition and were unanimous in their praises. They voted on the picture they liked the best and this turned out to be one of Eric's own favourites, Port of Lochinvar.

The idea of putting the paintings on show came from the Local Advisory Committee. All the masterpieces are now back with their owners.

Electric Living

The largest annual exhibition in Europe of domestic electrical appliances will be the Electric Living

Trade Fair to be staged at Brighton next February. It is organised by The Electricity Council in conjunction with the Electricity Marketing Conference.

Nearly 30,000 square feet of stand space will be used by the 109 exhibitors. This exceeds in both respects the last Fair held at Harrogate. All space for the Brighton exhibition has been let.

Participation in the Fair is restricted to manufacturers of electrical appliances and associated products and services and, as far as possible, appliances and apparatus shown have been introduced since the previous event.

Crewe Quiz

Thirteen members of the District staff got together recently to pit their wits against each other in order to find two teams to enter the Crewe and District Hospitals Broadcast Association Quiz.

With **Mr. R. Jenkins** as Question-master—ably assisted by his wife, and **Mrs. M. Morse** as the scorer, a variety of questions was offered.

At the conclusion of the session, prizes were presented by **Mr. G.**

Mr. Eric Coley stands behind the picture selected by his colleagues as 'their favourite'

Birkenhead News picture



Zeiber (*District Engineer*) to the "Brains" of the evening—Messrs. **G. Osborne** (*records draughtsman*), **E. W. Foster** (*engineer*) and **H. Machin** (*records draughtsman*).

The teams selected were as follows: **MANWEB "A"**—Messrs. **G. Osborne**, **E. W. Foster**, **H. Machin** and **J. Harrison**.

MANWEB "B"—Miss **I. Isherwood**, Mrs. **T. Boyer**, Mrs. **G. Dickinson** and Mr. **T. Nicholas**.

The 70 people who attended and were entertained during this very pleasant evening then settled down to enjoy a hot-pot supper.

Glee Club

A few weeks ago, members of the MANWEB Glee Club at Rhosyllen got together after their summer rest.

Mr. Ray Williams was re-elected as Chairman and **Mr. Hubert Evans** was re-elected as Treasurer. **Miss Pamela Bobby** was elected as the Secretary in succession to **Mrs. Pat. Jefferson**, who received the Committee's thanks for her many years of valuable service.

The choir has a pretty full engagement book and conductor **Mr. Emyr James** has arranged nine new songs to add to their already varied repertoire.

The Whitest Men We Know

Rumour has it that a national company—manufacturers of a well-known brand of washing powder—has approached Southport District painters, **Mr. Bill Lowans** and **Mr.**



Bill and Ken—the paintpot men!

Ken Enccott, for permission to include them in a new TV commercial. Rumour has it!!

Party Time

Advance notice of Christmas parties in the Caernarvon area is hereby given.

First there is the Sports and Social Club Dinner Dance to be held at the Royal Victoria Hotel in Llanberis on Friday, 4th December.

Transport will be available and the cost will be 10/- each for members (or £1 double) and 27/6d each (50/- double) for non-members.

Then there is the Children's Christmas Party which is to be held at the Plas-y-Bryn Hotel, Bontnewydd on Saturday, 12th December. Again, transport will be available.

For any further details contact members of the Sports and Social Club.

COVER GIRLS

Our cover picture shows two members of the Head Office staff, **Miss Sue. Holmes**, left, and **Miss Ann Lewis**, all decked out in their discotheque gear.

During the day, Sue sits at the reception desk answering queries and directing people to various offices, while Ann works as a punch card operator.

In the evenings, the girls change their clothes, outlook and style as they take on the job as hostess and go-go girls with local disc jockey Dave Vendor and his mobile discotheque.

The girls wear twin outfits of either white lace mini dresses or gold lame trouser suits as they tour private parties and wedding receptions in the Chester area, encouraging people to dance and enjoy themselves.

(Photo by Ron. Broster, Liverpool Echo)

Rescue

When a van overturned on the A458 trunk road near Welshpool recently, the driver was trapped in his badly damaged cab.

Fortunately some members of the Board's staff found the van and released the driver by cutting through the steering column.

Visit of V.I.P.

Recently we were very pleased to welcome to our new Head Office **Mr. Tony Lingard**, a Member of the Electricity Council, who was visiting our Chairman, Mr. D. G.



Mr. Webb Jones, left, explains the "Weathermaster" system to **Mr. Lingard**

Dodds, for discussions.

Mr. Lingard took the opportunity for a lightning tour of the building. He showed a keen interest in the operation of the heat reclaim ventilation system which was effectively explained to him by **Mr. D. S. Webb Jones** (*Senior Assistant Engineer, Energy Sales*) on whom the relevance of Mr. Lingard's searching questions was not lost.

On his return to the Chairman's office, Mr. Lingard offered his congratulations, saying "You have a very fine office and the ventilation system is working well—you must be very pleased with it."

We echo Mr. Lingard's sentiments.

Leaving Crewe

Our best wishes for a happy future in his new job go to **Mr. Graham C. Farrington**, who until recently was a service electrician in the Crewe District.

Graham served his apprenticeship with the Board and has now taken up an appointment as Electrical Engineer at the new Leighton Hospital in Crewe. The hospital is scheduled for opening next year and will have 729 beds and a staff in the region of 1,500.

We know they will have a fine electrical engineer.

Also leaving our Crewe District is **Miss Janice G. Wright** who worked with us as a clerk.

Janice has taken up the post as Nanny to the family of a Lieut.-Colonel with the British Embassy in the Hague in Holland.

Her friends at Crewe presented her with a fountain pen to encourage her to 'keep in touch.'

Demonstrator Departs

Our highly popular demonstrator at the Birkenhead Shop, **Mrs. Susan Aspinall** will be greatly missed by her colleagues now that she has given up her work for family reasons.

At an informal gathering recently, many tributes were paid to Susan before **Mr. G. Bowers** (*District Commercial Engineer*) presented her with a parting gift on their behalf.

To the B.B.C.

After 23 years in the Board's service as a shorthand typist in the Anglesey District, **Miss Dilys Hughes** left us a few weeks ago to take up an appointment with the B.B.C.

A most popular member of the staff, Dilys has served on the Local Advisory Committee and was the District's NALGO representative for many years.

Gone South East

Rather belatedly we report the departure of **Mr. Roy Edward Butler**, formerly an assistant consumers' engineer in our Conwy Valley District who has now moved to the Sutton District of the South Eastern Electricity Board.

Good luck with your new job Roy!



Above : Mr. Bowers wishes lots of luck for Mrs. Aspinall as he presents her with a parting gift from her colleagues

Below : Mrs. Hughes holds the gift presented to her by her friends at Llangefni



CUP WINNERS FOR SECOND TIME

We are pleased to report that once again our cricket team from Rhyl were successful in winning the Evening Cricket League Consolation Cup which we show here being presented by Councillor Eric Davies (*Chairman of Rhyl R.D.C.*) to P. Espin (*captain*). Also in the picture, *from left to right*, are, Messrs. R. Davies, J. Evans, I. Hayes, N. Whitworth, P. Lewis, W. Pendleton, M. Mellor, R. Heywood, J. Parry and D. Tomkinson. The team were also runners-up in the league





From left to right : Messrs. John Bridson (St. Helens), Barry Judd (North Wirral), Philip Shaw (Crewe), Geoffrey Ravenscroft (Warrington) and John Ashton (St. Helens)

Student Engineers on Course



From left to right : Messrs. Jonathan Rose (Runcorn), Ray A. Kelly (Runcorn), Brian Coyne (North Mersey), Terry Keenan (Liverpool) and Philip Ramsey (Southport)

Special feature of Power System Measurement



From left to right : Messrs. Philip Oxtan (North Wirral), Peter Phillips (North Wirral), John Robinson (Dee Valley), Fred Houghton (North Wirral), Michael Toon (North Wirral) and Mervyn Bellis (Dee Valley)

A SHORT time ago, sixteen of the Board's student engineers went along to Head Office to take part in a course designed to keep them in touch with the latest engineering techniques and equipment and to polish-up their knowledge on management and organisation.

Covering a wide range of subjects, the course lasted for a full week. At one particular lecture given by Mr. Brian Nield (2nd assistant engineer, Technical), equipment worth about £8,000 was used to illustrate power system measurement.

Over many years, MANWEB's Technical Section has maintained a close watch on the load characteristics of our large consumers because their processes, in some instances, could effect the electrical distribution network. This check is becoming increasingly necessary now that thyristors (large power transistors) are being used for load control. Often, controlled rectifier plants, arc and induction furnaces and



Mr. Bill Rogers (3rd assistant engineer) and Mr. Brian Nield (2nd assistant engineer) taking on-site measurements at Brymbo Steelworks.

large electric motors can produce voltage dips or harmful harmonics.

Sometimes, at the request and expense of the customer, our engineers assist in the early stages of plant design and through

this liaison many difficult situations are averted.

In order to take measurements on working plant, and later be able to reproduce the results in detail, a complicated system of electronic instruments, including a seven-channel tape recorder, has been designed by Mr. Nield. This equipment will make almost every type of measurement required on the power system.

This is just one example of how the application of electronics helps the power engineer.

The very instructive course concluded with the final afternoon devoted to an Open Forum when Messrs. F. J. Brown (Chief Engineer), J. Fisher (Deputy Chief Engineer), L. J. Scudamore (Management Services Officer) and R. T. Gales (Assistant Chief Engineer, Planning) answered questions put by the students.



Left: Mr. Brian Nield, left, shows colleagues Mr. Jim Parrish (general assistant engineer), centre, and Mr. Harold Wilson (2nd assistant engineer) an oscillogram taken from a recording made of power system conditions at Pilkington Glassworks



The Merchants of Calicut seized and chained to a barren rock by order of Tipoo Saib

Gunpowder Plots

Story by Mr. D. LANG (*Principal Asst. Computer Services*)

GUY FAWKES day is again imminent, and by the time this article appears preparations for the annual celebration of the thwarting of the Gunpowder Plot on November 5th, 1605, will be in full swing.

The seasonal warnings regarding the dangers of explosives cannot be over-emphasised for, even today, gunpowder is a dangerous commodity. In earlier times it was even more dangerous and the gunners of the day, particularly those serving at sea, were often in as much, if not more danger from their own artillery pieces as they were from those of the enemy. Fire and explosion in the old wooden men of war were terrifying occurrences which were far too frequent for comfort.

British successes in the wars against her rivals during the struggle for overseas trade and dominion were due to several factors, one of which was the greater reliability of the gunpowder used by our forces. This was due to the superiority of the saltpetre used in making the powder and which was imported by the East India Company from Bengal.

The battle for trade in India developed keenly between the British and French East India Companies, the two largest companies, and eventually resulted in open warfare. Various battles were fought in the region known as the Coromandel Coast and culminated in the defeat of the French

and her supporters further north in Bengal at the Battle of Plassey on 23rd June 1757, thereby establishing the foundation of the British Empire in India and, of course, ensuring the continued supply of saltpetre for battles yet to come.

In order to complete and secure her hold on India, it was necessary for Britain to bring the Southern States under control and this was achieved by defeat of her brilliant arch-enemy Tippoo Saib, Sultan of Mysore, at Seringapatam in May 1799.

For those in search of a hobby or interest, this period in history opens up a wealth of exciting reading and even if you are not interested in gunpowder, you may find the trade in silk, spice, indigo, opium or tea has something of interest to offer or perhaps the ships in which these cargoes were carried will appeal to those with a nautical turn of mind.

If a tinge of local flavour is needed to set you going, Robert Clive was born at Styche, Market Drayton, and was buried at Moreton Say, also in Shropshire. Many items of militaria from Indian campaigns are present in the Royal Welch Fusiliers museum in Caernarvon Castle and for our Liverpool readers, the libraries in William Brown Street contain years of reading on such subjects as the struggle by Merseyside traders to break the monopoly of eastern trade held by the Port of London through the East India Company.



THE INDIGO MANUFACTORY

1 Vat. 2 Pounding Tub. 3 Receiver. 4 The Water-filtrating.
 from the Indigo. 5 Indigo Plants. 6 Indians carrying D^o in Sacks.
 7 Drying Cases. 8 Indians carrying Indigo to the drying Cases.

MANWEB PLANS FOR 'D DAY'

STAFF IN STRICT TRAINING

TO THOSE of our readers under 30 years of age, the expression "D Day" will probably not mean very much. The 'over 30's' will remember it as D for Deliverance Day when on June 6th, 1944 our troops invaded France during the last war.

However, a new 'D Day' is coming which will concern everyone, under and over 30. This time it stands for Decimalisation Day when a completely new money valuation system will be adopted. The effective date for the changeover is February 15th, 1971.

To help us all to get some idea of what is to happen at that time, Mr. J. L. W. Ladner (*Education and Training Officer*) has given us some general facts and outlines the scheme already in practice to prepare the Board's sales staff for the great changeover.

The basis of the scheme is that the present £.s.d. coinage is to be replaced by the pound (£) which will be made up of 100 new pennies. The original intention was that the present coins and notes should be replaced by six new coins, as follows: Cupronickel—50p (*introduced October 1969*), 10p and 5p (*introduced April 1968 and interchangeable with the two shilling and one shilling pieces*). Bronze: 2p, 1p and ½p (*these will not become legal tender until "D Day"*).

The sixpenny piece (worth 2½p) was to be gradually withdrawn from circulation like the rest of our present coinage, but it was decided recently to leave this coin in circulation and review its position later.

There is to be a changeover period (*not exceeding 18 months*) when **cash transactions** may be carried out in £.s.d. or £p, or a mixture of both. At the end of this period, the 3d piece and the 1d will be demonitised.

Banks will close on Thursday, February 11th and re-open on Monday, February 15th 1971. From that date all cheques must be for decimal amounts.

The 50p piece is legal tender for amounts up to

£10. After "D Day," the 10p and 5p coins will be legal tender up to £5 and the bronze coins legal tender up to 20p.

It is estimated that within 10 days of "D Day," three-quarters of the business and trading in this country will be conducted in the decimal currency. Therefore it is important that we should know how MANWEB is preparing.

A Decimal Currency Working Party was set up within the Board soon after the passing of the Decimal Currency Act. One of the first things to be decided was the training required for the 500 or so members of the staff whose work involved the handling of money—in the majority of cases, in face-to-face situations with our customers.

It was decided that full-time courses, with a two-day minimum, should be instituted. These have now started, and problems involving the choice of location and the release (*and relief*) of staff concerned were overcome. Senior Officers from Head Office and senior staff from the Districts had the training proposals outlined before the programme was put into operation.

Now one of the most concentrated training ventures ever undertaken by MANWEB is well and truly under way.

Two training centres have been established, one at Head Office in Chester and the other in a Liverpool hotel. Attendance at these centres is allocated on a geographical basis in order to avoid, as far as possible, overnight absence from homes.

The first full course was held at Chester a few weeks ago and was for the District Sales Supervisors. Another course was held in Liverpool shortly afterwards. Preliminary reports indicate that the training and knowledge gained has been well worth while and very well received.

Training sessions will continue until mid-December and then from early in the new year right up to "D Day," there is to be a series of half-day refresher courses held at various centres throughout the Board's area.

Our two Sales Training Instructors, Mr. Eric Richardson and Mr. Anthony Dobson, are in charge of the training programme, but in order to preserve their sanity and to permit the normal sales training to take place at the Wallasey School during the period, arrangements have been made for seconding to the Education and Training Department a quartette of very competent ladies from the Commercial Department, Miss Pat Fowkes (*Wallasey*), Miss Anne Johnson (*Chester*), Miss E. V. Jones (*Area 4*) and Miss Anne Semple (*St. John's Precinct*).

By the time "D Day" dawns, we can rest assured that they—and the rest of MANWEB staff taking these courses—will know all there is to know about the new money and its attendant problems!



◀ Cautious counting with the new decimal currency. From left to right: Miss Ann Semple, Messrs. D. Jones (Shotton), A. E. Evans (Crewe), V. Collard (South Lancashire), T. Saladine (Liverpool) and R. Schollick (North Mersey)

▶ Instructors Mr. Eric Richardson and Miss Pat Fowkes keep a watchful eye on the cash transactions carried out by, from left to right: Messrs. N. Kenyon (Head Office), R. K. Hughes (Aberystwyth), R. Hewitt (Clwyd), D. Wilmot (North Wirral), W. Wakelin (Gwynedd) and I. Maddocks (Oswestry)



▶ The special instructors—

◀ at the tills, Miss E. V. Jones, left, and Miss Pat Fowkes.

▶ ... and with the visual aids, Miss Ann Semple, left, and Miss Anne Johnson.



What do you know about D.e.c.i.m.a.l.i.s.a.t.i.o.n ???

1. Which two systems of currency will be in operation on "D Day"?
2. Which system will MANWEB be using on "D Day"?
3. Can customers choose to tender either currency?
4. Can MANWEB choose to give change in either currency?
5. If a customer gives 9d for an article priced at 4p, what action would you take?
6. What would you do upon receiving a cheque by post on February 12th, 1971, drawn for £12.12.0d?
7. Is the 6d a decimal coin?
8. How would you write £2.13.0d in new currency figures?
9. What change would you receive in a 'decimal shop' if you offered 1/- for an article priced at 3p?
10. Which three new coins have no exact equivalent in value in terms of the old coinage?
11. How many new coins will be in circulation after "D Day"?

Answers given on page 235



Opening of the Social Season at Head Office

With well over 400 people present, the opening dance of the season was held at Head Office recently. Once again the "Beeliners" provided the excellent music in styles varying from the waltz to the drag—or whatever name is given to the current walk-about dances.

An appetising buffet supper was laid on by Mr. G. Warburton (restaurant manager) and his assistant Mr. R. Bastin and their staff. The bars were kept reasonably busy.

This was yet another outstanding success for the organisers.



Some 'Candid Camera' shots taken at the Dance





Mr. H. Telfer, (*Manager, Area 1 and Chairman of No. 4 L.A.C.*) opening the Southport Staff Conference. With him on the platform, from left to right, are Messrs. D. E. Noad (*District Commercial Engineer*), A. W. Hawley (*District Engineer*), T. D. Hamilton (*District Administrative Office, Liverpool*) and Mr. H. Reynolds (*meter fixer, and Vice Chairman of No. 4 L.A.C.*).

Quiet Opening to first of the Season's Employees' Meetings

SOUTHPORT DISTRICT were first in the field when they held their Employees Annual Open Meeting at the Floral Hall earlier this month. Keeping up their new ideas policy, members of the No. 4 Local Advisory Committee invited three full-time union officials to join Mr. D. G. Gwyn (*Deputy Chairman*) and Mr. H. Telfer (*Manager, Area 1*) on an "Any Questions" panel. All are members of the No. 9 District Joint Advisory Council. This was probably the first time the idea has been tried at this type of meeting within the Board's area.

Opening the proceedings, Mr. Telfer welcomed

Union officials at the Southport Meeting. From left to right: Mr. S. Procter (*General and Municipal Workers' Union*), Mr. G. E. Knighton (*Electrical Power Engineers' Association*) and Mr. L. Tarpey (*NALGO*)



everyone who had made the effort to attend. He then gave a brief resume covering the activities of the Local Advisory Committee during the past year. He said that although much of the emphasis had been on safety, there was still a regrettably high number of accidents in the District. He mentioned that the trial run of safety sampling started in Southport District some time ago had now been adopted by all the Local Advisory Committees in the Board's area.

Many other matters had been considered including Education and Training, both academic and practical and efficiency, with several exercises and projects being discussed. He made special mention of the problem of discipline over the radio telephone network and suggested that methods now being used by staff at Southport should be passed on to the rest of the Board.

Mr. Telfer concluded his remarks by thanking all the members of No. 4 L.A.C. and the various sub-committees and panels for the excellent work they had put in and for the fine results achieved.

Mr. A. W. Hawley (*District Engineer*) was then invited to give a report on the engineering activities in the District. He said that there had been a reduction in capital expenditure because of the fall-off in the amount of work required in the District. Large amounts of money spent on the network in previous years for major development had enabled us to reduce spending now on consolidating the mains system, enabling our Commercial colleagues to go all out in their drives to increase the load demand.

He said that there had been a lot of work carried out in the re-grouping of the supply network in



Mr. D. Hudson (*Regional Safety Officer*), extreme left, with some members of the Southport District staff at the Conference

preparation for the new 132kV supply coming into the town. He commended all the engineering staff who had worked on the new earthing system, which used aluminium instead of the traditional copper, on the Neville Street substation. Here again, Southport were in at the beginning.

Then Mr. Hawley said a few words about rates, which he said was his pet 'hobby horse.' We were informed that a sum of £42,000 in Southport and £7,000 in Formby had been paid in rates. This amounted to about £1 a year on every customer's account.

Ending on a happier note, Mr. Hawley expressed his appreciation to the jointers and their mates who had obtained 100 per cent production and bonus payments over every review period under the Productivity Payment Scheme which was

first introduced in the Southport District about a year ago.

The next speaker was Mr. D. E. Noad (*District Commercial Engineer*) who had a few words to say about the Commercial progress in the District. He began by thanking Mr. W. Isaacs (*Acting D.C.E.*) for his help in getting together some very interesting figures which showed a £151,000 sales turnover which was £11,000 up on the previous year. He said that cookers and space heaters led the field.

The programme for conversion to North Sea Gas had come to the town earlier in the year and had no doubt greatly affected our cooker sales. In the first five months some 561 cookers had been sold—a startling 121 per cent. higher than last year over the same period. All this had obviously kept our sales staffs very busy.

Concentration shows on the faces of the staff as they listen to one of the speakers





In the front row, is a quartette of retired members of the Southport District staff who were able to join their friends again

Mr. Noad said that already in the first half of this year, sales turnover had increased by 41.5 per cent. over last year's figures. He made mention of the Formby Shop where, since it had been re-designed, sales have been leaping.

Then he went on to say that since the introduction of the White Meter Tariff, coupled with the high capacity storage radiator publicity, satisfactory sales had resulted.

On the contracting side, 11,000 calls had been made by our service electricians and energy sales had increased by five-and-a-half per cent—a sizeable proportion of this coming from the new Pontin Holiday camp at Ainsdale.

Mr. Noad said that there had been steady progress in the field of electric central heating resulting from some very hard work that had gone before. He expressed his sincere thanks to all the members of the Commercial staff and to the supporting clerical and stores sections for their fine efforts.

Next on the programme was Mr. T. D. Hamilton (*District Administrative Officer, Liverpool*), who gave a very interesting and informative talk on Decimal Currency. In the limited time available,

he gave an account of the background to the introduction of decimalisation in this country and went on to explain the Board's plans and programme to help members of the staff assimilate themselves in readiness for 'D' Day next February. He said that any misgivings about difficulties and complications, in his opinion, were groundless. He explained that many other countries had changed over and unless we followed suit we would be the only country 'out of step.'

Mr. Hamilton expressed the view that decimalisation was considered to be an aid to productivity and that it was time saving, especially for children learning at school and to accountants in business.

He said that an eighteen month period had been allowed for the change from old currency to new, and that the 6d piece was to have a 'life extension' of up to two years. The seemingly long change-over period was to allow time for the conversion of about five million vending machines, juke boxes, office machines, etc.

He went on to say that there might be small problems while the two types of currency were in circulation at the same time, but he had not the

A sprinkling of the fair sex who attended the Meeting



MADE FOR WHITE METER TARIFF

Hot Water on the Cheap

A new prefabricated plumbing unit containing both cold water cistern and hot water cylinder was on show on the Electricity Council's stand at the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works Building Exhibition, Harrogate, a few weeks ago.

Specially designed by Harton Heating Appliances to meet the requirements of Electricity Boards' White Meter tariffs, the 50 gallon (227.3 litre) hot water cylinder has a 2kW immersion heater near the base and a 3kW heater higher up the cylinder.

This enables the whole cylinder, which is insulated

by three layers of one-inch glass fibre, to be heated to 155°F (68°C) by the 2kW heater on the White Meter tariff's low night rate. During the daytime, as water is drawn off, the top 10-12 gallons in the cylinder can be heated quickly to 135°F (58°C) by the 3kW upper immersion heater, thus retaining a full cylinder for hot baths at any time.

The unit has been primarily manufactured for bulk sale to developers at minimum cost and is eligible for grant under the government improvement schemes.

SOUTHPORT CONFERENCE—continued

slightest doubt that within a few days we would all adapt ourselves to the new system.

Bringing his talk to a close, Mr. Hamilton told of the Board's preparations, saying that all our pricing has been reviewed and odd amounts had been cleared to simplify the changeover to decimalisation. Salary scales were now rounded off to make them easily divisible into twelve equal amounts in the new currency. Weekly payroll preparation by computer was being planned as a preliminary to paying wages in the new coinage. He said that many of these preparations had been going on quietly and unobtrusively for quite some time.

(In this issue of 'Contact' and in future issues, we will be publishing progress reports on what is being done within the Board in preparation for the "D" Day.)

Back to the Meeting

At this point in the Meeting, Mr. Telfer called for a short break prior to the "Any Questions" session. First, a handful of written questions relative to the work of the District and the Board's re-organisation programme, were considered and answered by the panel. Then for a while, all was silent, despite promptings from Mr. Telfer. The experiment of bringing union officials along to have questions fired at them, or to put the Unions' point of view on staff questions, did not come off as it should have done. However, this should not deter any other Local Advisory Committee from planning a similar panel for their Open Meeting.

The Southport session was brought to a timely close by Mr. Telfer who thanked the L.A.C. Secretary, Mr. J. F. Graham Glover, for all the excellent arrangements. Everyone then settled down to enjoy a buffet meal.

The Conference was very well attended with 50 per cent. of industrial staff present and 81 per cent. of office staff, the highest percentage ever.

Obituary

It is with deep regret that we report the deaths of the following members of our staff.

Mr. S. KANE

After several weeks in hospital, Mr. Sidney Kane, a member of the Drawing Office staff at Lister Drive, passed away. Mr. Kane had worked at Hatton Garden for many years prior to transferring to District Office.

Mr. E. STOVES

Again, after a long illness and a major operation, Mr. Edward (Eddie) Stoves died in hospital.

Mr. Stoves joined MANWEB as an electrician in 1953 working in the contracting and installation inspection departments. Due to illness, he was transferred to District Office at Birkenhead on clerical duties.

A native of South Shields, Mr. Stoves came to Cheshire during the last war.

Mr. F. GORDON

A very popular member of our North Wirral District staff, Mr. Fred. Gordon, died in hospital a few weeks ago.

Mr. Gordon joined the Birkenhead Corporation Electricity Department at Craven Street as a junior clerk some 47 years ago. For the past twenty years he has worked in the consumers' records section. He was Treasurer of the Corporation Employees' Welfare Fund and Social Secretary of the Nalگو Area.

He was Treasurer and an active member of the Birkenhead Aeolian Choir. He was also a former 'Contact' Correspondent.

He will be greatly missed at Craven Street.

We offer our sincere condolences to the families of the deceased.



Staff at Marsh Lane Depot gather round to see Mr. D. E. Noad (*District Commercial Engineer*), centre left, present a farewell gift to Mr. Tinsley (*Bootle Times photograph*)

RETIREMENTS from . . .

Pumpfields . . .

Mr. G. O. TAYLOR

A storekeeper in the mains section at the Board's Depot in Pumpfields, Liverpool, Mr. George O. Taylor retired recently after serving the industry for the past 37 years.

George enjoys reading, which has been his main occupation since last December when he became ill. His recovery has been slow and his many friends at Pumpfields were very pleased to see him again when he returned for his retirement presentation and to say his farewells.

Mr. H. Telfer (*Manager Area 1*) went along to wish George a continued improvement in his health to enable him to enjoy a

happy retirement. He then presented parting gifts for George and his wife.

Marsh Lane . . .

Mr. F. TINSLEY

Chargehand installation inspector at our Marsh Lane Depot in Liverpool, Mr. Frederick Tinsley, retired recently while in his 45th year of service.

He started work with the Liverpool Corporation Electricity Department in 1925 serving his time as an electrician. He spent some time in the cooker repair section and at meter fixing and became an installation inspector just before the outbreak of the last war in 1939. He was then seconded to work as an electrician at various

factories in the area working on munitions and aircraft production.

He returned to Marsh Lane in 1945 for a spell of duty in the contracting section before again returning to installation inspection.

A few years ago, he became a chargehand and was recently put in charge of the ESMA Programme team.

As a parting gift, Mr. Tinsley was presented with an English cut glass wine decanter and six matching glasses.

North Wirral . . .

Mr. E. A. DAVIES

With nearly 40 years' service behind him, Mr. Alfred E. Davies retired from his job as electrician with the Board a few weeks ago.

During his long career with

Mr. Taylor, centre right, receives a parting handshake from Mr. Telfer, as friends from Pumpfields give him a good send-off into retirement





Mr. Davies, centre left, receives a parting gift from Mr. John Evans (Principle Assistant- Admin.)

the industry, Mr. Davies worked with the former Birkenhead Corporation Electricity Department, first of all in the mains section and later as a meter fixer.

When MANWEB took over in 1948 he became an electrician.

Before leaving for a well-earned life of retirement, Mr. Davies was presented with a magnificent pair of binoculars from his friends and colleagues.

Mr. P. J. McLEARNON

Popularly known as "Paddy," Mr. Patrick J. McLearnon joined the Board as a labourer on the cable gang in 1957. Later he was transferred to Craven Street as a general handyman, the job he retired from a few weeks ago.

Everyone regarded Paddy as a most conscientious worker and they were not slow to show their appreciation of his efforts when they subscribed to present him

with a sum of money as a farewell gift together with their united wishes for a long and happy retirement.

St. Helens . . .

Mr. J. R. GLOVER

A few weeks ago, staff at St. Helens District gathered to say their farewells to Mr. J. Ronald Glover when he retired from his job as foreman in the engineering department.

Mr. Glover had served in the electricity supply industry for the past 49 years and his retirement brought to an end a long and happy association, as members of his family have worked for the industry since 1893.

His unselfish devotion to his work is only one of the many characteristics that have made him so well-known and popular

in the District—with workmates and consumers.

On behalf of his friends at Carlton Street, Mr. Glover was presented with a cheque by Mr. J. R. Acklam (*Systems Engineer*), who, on their behalf, wished Ron a long and happy retirement.

Mr. E. BIRCHALL and Mr. J. BRADBURY

A double departure from our St. Helens District took place a couple of weeks ago when Mr. Edward (*Ted.*) Birchall and Mr. Joseph (*Joe.*) Bradbury retired from their jobs as meter reader/collectors.

Their combined service in the industry amounted to 63 years, Joe joining a year before Ted.

To mark the occasion of their departure, a presentation of gifts from their friends was made by Mr. J. Sherwen (*Principal Assistant—Admin.*) who expressed everyone's best wishes to both men for a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Mr. Bradbury then proposed a vote of thanks to his colleagues and this was seconded by Mr. Birchall.

Miss C. MEADOWS

A clerk in the consumer records section at St. Helens, Miss Catherine Meadows retired recently after completing 21 years' service with the Board.

Mr. McLearnon, centre right, says his goodbyes to Mr. Morley and colleagues at Craven Street, Birkenhead



To mark the occasion she was presented with a cheque and a bouquet of flowers from her friends and colleagues by Mr. J. Sherwen, (*Principal Assistant-Admin.*)

We join with her friends in wishing Miss Meadows many years of happy retirement.

Mr. G. E. H. WHEELER

Many glowing tributes to long and loyal service and to a cheerful personality were voiced when Mr. G. E. H. Wheeler retired from his job as District Senior Clerk at St. Helens.

He began his career in the electricity supply industry as a junior clerk at Carlton Street in 1931. Three years later he became Engineering Clerk and worked in the department until 1963, when he was appointed to his present position.

During the war he served for six years with the army.

Outside office hours, Mr. Wheeler centres his interest with



Mr. Wheeler, right, admires his parting gifts presented to him by Mr. Dodds

(*St. Helens Reporter picture*)

the St. Helens Repertory Company and has appeared behind the footlights on many occasions.

A former 'Contact' Correspondent in the District, Mr.

Wheeler was presented with a leather briefcase and a travelling case by Mr. G. H. Dodd (*District Administrative Officer*) on behalf of his friends and colleagues who wished him good health and good luck for the future.

... and Anglesey

Mr. A. H. MARSH

Staff at our Llangefni Office gathered together a short time ago on the occasion of the retirement of Mr. Alfred H. Marsh a foreman electrician, who had just completed 42 year's service in electricity supply.

Prior to the nationalisation of the industry in 1948, Mr. Marsh worked for the Holyhead U.D.C. as an electrician.

Tributes were paid to his faithful and diligent service as colleagues presented him with a farewell gift and wished him a long and happy retirement when he could devote more time to his favourite pastime, gardening.

Mr. Marsh, holding his farewell gift, with some of his friends at our Llangefni Office



Answers to Decimalisation Quiz

1. The £. s. d. system and the £p system.
2. £p.
3. Yes, but only in multiples of 6d or 2½p.
4. No. Change must be given in decimal currency only.
5. Request a further 3d from the customer to bring to a multiple of 6d (*i.e.* 1/- or 5p) and give 1p change.
6. In different coloured ink, write in the converted amount above the existing amounts shown, but do not cross out either words or figures.
7. No. It has a temporary reprieve only to allow for machine conversions.
8. £2.65.
9. 1½p.
10. The ½p, 1p and 2p coins.
11. 6 (the 50, 10, 5, 2, 1 and ½p).

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